

## Steps to better health

Good Shepherd joins walking program to encourage better community health

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN  
East Oregonian

There's strength in numbers, and Good Shepherd Medical Center is hoping to capitalize on that idea as they encourage community members to join them in a national exercise challenge.

The hospital's Education Department has created a team for the "Billion Steps Challenge," an effort by the American Public Health Association to get participants to collectively walk one billion steps. The challenge started at the beginning of 2019, and participants have until April 7 to join the "Hermiston Walks" team.

Jaime Crowell, the hospital's Community Health Educator, said so far there are 3,000 participants nationwide, which have so far reached 300 million steps. But only five people have signed up for the Hermiston team. The Hermiston team's goal is to collectively walk 5 million steps by the end of the challenge.

"If you break that down to 10,000 steps a day, that's only 50 people that need to do that many steps, for 10 days," Crowell said. "And we have way more than 10 days left."

But more than reaching the goal, Crowell said the point of the challenge is to get people exercising.

"It's to show that physical activity can be fun, and a good way to jumpstart physical activity is through competition or doing a challenge," she said.

She encouraged fam-

ilies to make their own goals, or compete with each other to reach a certain number of steps.

Participants can sign up for the challenge by creating a Movespring account, where they can sync their device to track their steps. They can also manually enter their steps, or enter the distance they walked or ran.

She said although the team is named "Hermiston Walks," it's open to anyone in the surrounding areas, too.

In a few months, Crowell said the hospital hopes to debut another tool that they hope will encourage people to walk more — the Northeast Oregon Prescription Trails website. The website, modeled after a program in New Mexico, will have a catalog of local parks and trails, with photos, descriptions of the trails, and things users need to be aware of, like accessibility for wheelchairs.

"Doctors, dentists, even veterinarians can write prescriptions for exercise as part of management of chronic diseases," Crowell said. "Exercise has been proven to be as effective if not more in prevention of diseases."

She said that she hopes the tools will help the community shift toward relying on exercise as a sustainable way to improve health.

Crowell said there are other ways people can learn to form healthy habits if they need some extra help. The hospital has free classes, like a physical activity class, and a "jumpstart weight loss through exercise" class.

# City announces road closure ahead of capital plan discussion

By JADE MCDOWELL  
East Oregonian

A portion of South First Street in Hermiston will be closed for several weeks starting Feb. 4.

The bridge over the canal between Southeast Crestline Drive and Southwest Desert Sky Drive, about a mile south of the Hermiston Agricultural Research and Extension Center, is expected to be closed for about 45 days while contractors replace it. Signs will warn of the impending detour starting Feb. 1.

According to a news release from the city, the existing canal crossing is "approaching the end of its useful life" and will be replaced by a significantly wider box culvert.

Replacement of the bridge has been one of the top capital improvement goals for the city since 2017. During Monday's city council meeting, the council plans to award a bid for another capital priority: replacing 650 feet of sewer line along Southeast Seventh Street between Main Street and Newport Avenue.

According to a memo in the council's agenda packet, the size and condition of the current 8-inch diameter pipe presents risks from continued development on the south side of the city and



Staff photo by Jade McDowell

The canal bridge on South First Street between Southeast Crestline Drive and Southwest Desert Sky Drive will be closed for about 45 days starting Feb. 4.

"has been such a concern for surging in to homes in the area that city crews have installed temporary bypass pumping here for the past two years during the Umatilla County Fair."

The council will consider a bid of \$132,595 from Sineco Construction of Hermiston. The project would be the first phase in a larger pipe up-sizing plan that is expected to total about \$600,000.

On Monday the city

council will consider adoption of a capital improvement master plan for water, sewer and streets that the city's infrastructure committee has been working on with staff for more than a year. The five-year plan lists and prioritizes the city's most-needed improvements to its 83 miles of water main, 72 miles of sewer pipes and 161 "lane miles" of roadway.

Projects in the proposed document, which city staff

anticipate could be funded and completed by the end of the 2023-2014 fiscal year, have been narrowed down to \$4.4 million in water projects, \$6.5 million in sewer projects and \$7.95 million in street projects, with more than \$20 million additional projects listed in the appendices as possible additions should funding come available.

The city council meets at 7 p.m. Monday at city hall, 180 N.E. Second St.

## Sheriff's office rescues men stuck in snow

East Oregonian

The Morrow County Sheriff's Office rescued two Heppner men after their pickup truck got stuck in the snow on Shaw Grade Road.

According to a news release from MCSO, Philip Mullins called 911 about 8 p.m. Thursday to report that he and Kim Martz were stuck six or seven miles up the southern Morrow County road. Spotty cell-phone service meant the dispatcher was able to get

very little information from Mullins, but dispatch staff contacted family members and discovered the men had likely been headed to the lookout at Chicken Springs.

A search and rescue mission was mobilized and a command post was set up in the area of Willow Creek Road and Shaw Grade Road. Sergeant Nathen Braun and Sergeant Todd Siex searched on snow machines, Lieutenant Terry Harper assisted and Heppner Ambulance was put on standby.

At 10:21 Mullins was again able to connect with dispatch and communicated that he and Martz did not have any food or water left but had been able to stay warm in the truck.

They were located by Braun and Siex at few minutes before midnight, but the waist-deep snow meant it was not safe to bring them out on the snow machines. Heppner resident Thomas Wolff arrived at 1:18 a.m. with a tracked snow UTV to assist, and the rescuers and rescued men arrived at the

command post about 3 a.m. They were driven back to their residences after it was determined they did not need medical treatment.

"This was a great team effort by all involved," Undersheriff John Bowles wrote in a statement. "We would like to thank Morrow County Dispatch, Sgt. Braun and Sgt. Siex for a job well done. Also thank you to Thomas Wolff for assisting with his tracked snow UTV. Without his assistance this mission would have taken a lot longer."

### SIGN UP FOR "HERMISTON WALKS"

Go to <https://link.movespring.com/join>

Go to "sign up now"

Enter the organization code: APHA2019

Scroll down and click on "join team"

Search for the team name "Hermiston Walks."

## Fallen power line cancels Umatilla High School on Friday

By JADE MCDOWELL  
East Oregonian

Umatilla High School students got an extra weekend to wrap up their assignments for the semester after a downed power line caused school to be canceled Friday.

Superintendent Heidi Sipe said a custodian entered the high school about 5:30 a.m. Friday to find lights flashing on and off and various bells and alarms going off intermittently.

"It was very clear there was some sort of electrical challenge," she said.

The district called Pacific Power, which determined a fallen power line near the school was causing the problem and would not be resolved by the start of school. Friday was the last day of the semester and had been planned as a "finish Friday" for students to finish up any remaining assignments for the semester. Instead, Sipe said, the semester will end Monday.

After-school programs at the high school and middle school were canceled for Friday, but basketball was not. Sipe said if the high school was still having problems

when the games were scheduled to begin, teams would play in the middle school gym instead.

On Dec. 13, the high school and middle school were evacuated for a gas leak at Clara Brownell Middle School. Sipe said the district always builds more school days into its schedule than required and so will not need to make up the recent missed days. Earlier in January there was a power outage across Umatilla during the school day, but Sipe said in that case the district opted not to send students home early.

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## Diabetes Education Series



### Diabetes Self Management Series

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