

Maxwell Siding Pavilion opens Friday

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

It took a little longer than expected, but the Maxwell Siding Pavilion is finally ready.

The 4,600-square-foot pavilion, 255 N. First St. in Hermiston, will function as an open-air shade structure in the summer, while giant glass doors can be rolled down to enclose the space in the winter. It will host Hermiston’s farmers market this summer.

Owner Mitch Myers said he is excited about the history of the site, which at Hermiston’s inception housed the Maxwell railroad siding.

“Had this site not existed as the Maxwell Siding, Hermiston would not exist,” he said.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s the stone and lumber that built Hermiston’s oldest buildings were delivered to the site, along with regular deliveries of food and other supplies for the homesteaders carving a town out of the sagebrush.

Decades later, buildings along the railroad tracks were demolished or stood empty. In the last few years Myers sold one piece of property for the Holiday Inn Express to be built, built the Maxwell Event Center on another, created the Maxwell Siding Pavilion and is renovating another building farther north.

“There was a big divide between east and west in Hermiston, and I feel like those improvements brought



Photo contributed by Mitch Myers

The Maxwell Siding Pavilion was recently completed in Hermiston and will host its first major event on Saturday.

Hermiston together,” Myers said.

While the pavilion itself is finished, Myers said when the weather gets a little warmer he has a replica of a metal bell that used to stand in the corner of the property that he will install on the site with a plaque about the Maxwell Siding.

To celebrate finishing the pavilion, Myers is hosting the Maxfest craft beer festival there on Saturday from 4-10 p.m. and a grand opening event on Friday from 6-10 p.m. that will include a silent auction to benefit Jasmine Ellwood, a local high school student with cancer. Silent auction items include

a Traeger grill and some “gorgeous” wooden cutting boards created by Ellwood’s father, Mike Ellwood.

“It just felt like a great opportunity to give back,” Myers said.

Tickets to Saturday’s Maxfest are \$30, and a \$40 VIP ticket will include free food and drink at Friday’s event and other perks on Saturday.

On Saturday, the 21-and-older Maxfest will include live music from the Wasteland Kings and Brewer’s Grade. Myers said craft offerings from about 20 local breweries and wineries will be available for purchase, as well as fresh sea-

food from oyster shuckers out of Seattle. The pavilion will be heated and enclosed for the event.

The Maxwell Siding Pavilion was supposed to host the farmer’s market — rebranded Maxwell Market — in 2018, but its construction was delayed by a dispute between Myers and the city’s building department and the market was moved to a nearby parking lot. Myers plans to host the 2019 Maxwell Market at the new pavilion this spring, and is also making it available for event rentals.

For more information about Maxfest or the pavilion, call 541-561-1047.

Area cities set record lows

PENDLETON — The National Weather Service reported Pendleton reached 3 degrees at 9:50 p.m. on Monday, 4 degrees lower than a record for the day that stood since 1896. The thermometer in Hermiston dipped to 2 at 10:54 p.m. The previous record was 15 set in 2015.

The temperatures were 30 degrees colder than the norm for Pendleton and 28 degrees below the norm for Hermiston.

The Weather Service’s winter weather advisory

remains in effect until Wednesday at 10 p.m. for a swath from central Oregon to southeast Washington, including most of Umatilla County.

The chill grew deeper Tuesday morning, with more records falling.

Pendleton dropped to 1, besting the 12 from 1916. Parts of Hermiston hit 0, knocking off the 8 from 1955.

And Meacham’s temperature fell to -6, 2 below the old record, also from 1955.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

A row of icicles, some more than 3 feet long, hang from the gutter of a residence near the 1200 block of Northwest Despain on Monday in Pendleton. More cold is on the way Tuesday evening with snow and freezing rain in the forecast, according to the National Weather Service.

Gold miner loses court fight

East Oregonian

Gold miner John Wasson is leaving his claim in the Umatilla National Forest for a 60-day stint in jail.

Wasson, 74, of Irrigon, has been fighting the federal government in court since 2013 over how long he could live on Slippery Rock, a 12-acre site on the North Fork John Day River. He lost that fight in November 2018 when a jury in federal court found him guilty of depredation of government property, a felony.

“Beginning in 2012, Wasson developed a personal interpretation of mining laws that permitted him to take any action on the claim that he believed to be reasonably incident to his mining,” according to the statement from the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Oregon.

“Over a period of years, despite court orders, misdemeanor convictions and the U.S. Forest Service officials’ repeated attempts to work with Wasson to bring his conduct into compliance, Wasson’s misuse of the claim grew more expansive and egregious,” the statement continued.

Wasson returned to court Tuesday to face sentencing, and U.S. Judge Michael H. Simon sentenced him to five years probation, including 60 days in a community corrections facility for the crime.

The court also ordered Wasson to pay \$28,817 in restitution.

Billy J. Williams, U.S. attorney for the District

of Oregon, said in a written statement Oregonians expect public lands to be protected from degradation and misuse and Wasson “treated Forest Service land as if it were his own, causing significant environmental damage.”

He also stated his office takes these crimes seriously and will “continue to pursue those who violate our shared resources.”

Forest Service officials by 2017 observed Wasson established a semi-permanent encampment on the claim, violating regulations that prohibit occupancy for more than 14 days in a 30-day period without Forest Service authorization. Wasson’s camp included three tents, one with a foundation Wasson constructed of treated lumber, sand and gravel; a camper; a truck and a pop-up outhouse. Wasson had driven through a riparian area, compacting soil and native vegetation, to make a new road, according to federal prosecutors, and he created a walking path across the John Day River and used plastic sheeting to line a wing dam to hold water.

That dam, however, caught and held juvenile steelhead, preventing them from accessing the flowing portion of the river.

The Forest Service paid a hazardous waste disposal company more than \$19,000 to remove three quarters of a ton of contaminated soil, 90 gallons of vegetable oil and quantities of pesticides, insecticides and rodenticides from the campsite.

Kindergarteners in Pendleton decline in early testing

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

Pendleton School District kindergarten students went into 2018-19 school year with a little less knowledge than the year before, but the district is confident it can make up for it by the end of the school year.

The district’s kindergarten assessment scores for behavior, math, and reading all declined from 2017, although Pendleton was more middle-of-the-pack compared to other districts in Umatilla County.

Pendleton’s 3.8 out of 5 on the child behavior rating scale — which measures children’s ability to engage in basic classroom behaviors like sharing and sitting still at their desks — is above the state average and is slightly below where it was last year. Pendleton was one of only three districts in the county to exceed the state average.

Matt Yoshioka, the Pendleton School District’s director of curriculum, instruction and assessment, said he has issues with the behavior assessment.

“This assessment, to be honest, I don’t give a lot of credence to,” he said.

Yoshioka added that kindergarten students can show model behavior the first few weeks of school when the assessment is administered, only to regress later, or can show dramatic improvement after an initially rough start.

While the district’s math scores only fell slightly from 2017, the declines in English letter sounds and an average of upper and lower case English letter names were more pronounced.

Yoshioka noted the declines, while adding that the assessments were done very early in a kindergarten’s academic year.

“This is really an

assessment of parenting and preschool,” he said.

Put into the context of other local school districts, Pendleton’s scores are close to the norm.

Many districts met or exceeded the state average in only a handful of counties, and between Umatilla and Morrow counties, only the Athena-Weston and lone school districts exceeded the state average in every category.

But despite having a lot of ground to make up at the beginning of the year, Yoshioka said the data shows that students are in a much better position by the end.

“The good news is that these little guys are sponges,” he said.

For instance, students in the 2017-18 school year started the year by knowing an average of about 10 letter sounds. By the end of the year, 79 percent of students could recite all 31 letter sounds. In several other literacy areas, more than 60 percent of students passed the year-end assessment.

Yoshioka attributed the success to the Pendleton Early Learning Center, a centralized kindergarten facility that also hosts preschool and other early learning services.

Although many preschool services are run by Umatilla-Morrow Head Start, the Pendleton School District also teaches 30 4-year-olds through its own preschool.

As legislators and other government officials discuss expanding funding for early learning, Yoshioka said Pendleton would be best served with additional state funding to expand its own preschool beyond two classes.

To gauge whether the district’s preschool is better equipping students to demonstrate basic skills in math, English and behavior, Yoshioka said he’s currently studying the data from preschool students who graduated to Pendleton kindergarten.

BRIEFLY

AARP offers driver course on Saturday

An AARP Smart Driver course will feature a refresher on rules of the road, offer defensive driving skills and offer information on age-related factors that can impact driving.

While the class is geared for those who are age 50 or older, any driver can attend. The upcoming class is Saturday from 8:45 a.m. to 4 p.m. at St. Anthony Hospital, 2801 St. Anthony Way, Pendleton. To register, call Nikii Murtaugh at 541-861-0024.

The course costs \$15 for AARP members or \$20 for non-members. People are responsible for their own lunch during a provided break.

There are no tests required to pass the course. In addition, participants are encouraged to impact their

insurance agents as they may be eligible for a discount after completing the class.

Loughmiller shares power of gratitude

HERMISTON — With a focus on the importance of expressing gratitude, Jenny Loughmiller will share about the Hundred Hearts Project.

Hosted by Good Shepherd Health Care System, the free event is Tuesday, March 12 from 5-7 p.m. in the hospital’s Women’s Center, 620 N.W. 11th St., Hermiston. Refreshments will be provided.

During the summer of 2016, Loughmiller’s life imploded, sinking into a deep depression. She decided to focus on what she was grateful for and began to paint, creating

100 hearts for women who touched her life.

The concept of the Hundred Hearts Project is simple — expressing gratitude to 100 people in any way, including thank you notes, art, poems, service, etc. When practiced routinely, Loughmiller said sharing one’s gratitude establishes new thought patterns that naturally focuses on the positive — leaving no room for negativity.

For more information about the program, call 541-667-3509 or register at www.eventbrite.com. For more about Loughmiller’s project, visit www.hundredheartproject.org.

Umatilla chamber gets set for awards banquet

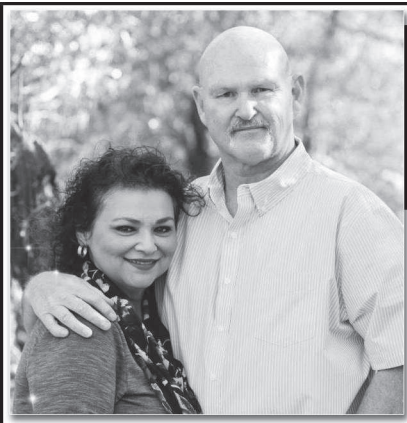
UMATILLA — Nominations are still open for the citizen and business of the

year in Umatilla.

The awards banquet is Thursday, March 21 from 6-8 p.m. at El Rodeo, 705 Willamette Ave., Umatilla. The banquet also will feature dinner and a raffle, including gift cards and baskets from area businesses, a Pendleton Round-Up package and tickets to area attractions.

Banquet tickets are \$25 each and can be purchased at the Umatilla Chamber of Commerce 100 Cline Ave., Rae’s Dayz Diner and Cakery, 1290 Sixth St., or the city of Umatilla, 700 Sixth St.

In addition, tickets and nomination forms are available at www.umatillaor-chamber.org. For questions, call 541-922-4825.



BAKE AUCTION/RAFFLE
Friday, March 8th • 7pm
Regency Hermiston
970 W. Juniper Avenue

The family of Regency Hermiston is hosting a bake auction/raffle to raise money to help with medical expenses for Gary Myers who was diagnosed with stage 4 metastatic stomach cancer.

Gary is the husband to our beloved employee Irma Myers. The auction will be held in our activities/long term dining hall.

Please come join us.

If you have questions or would like more information about what you can do to help, please call or text Jamie at 509.759.4719



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ED 4:50 9:50

ALITA: BATTLE ANGEL (PG13)
4:00
6:00 6:40 9:30

ISN'T IT ROMANTIC (PG13)
4:20 9:40

GREEN BOOK (PG13)
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