

Doctor hangs his shingle in Hermiston

Dr. Daniel Buck will be the first doctor to serve the Hermiston School District's Wellness Clinic

By JESSICA POLLARD
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — Dr. Daniel Buck has a history in Hermiston and it's going to continue for a while longer.

The Hermiston School District has partnered with Good Shepherd Health Care System to provide the HSD Wellness Clinic for the upcoming school year. Buck will be the first doctor to serve the district when the clinic opens its doors Monday.

"It's a small town community," he said. "And what I mean by that is that people know who you are. It's good to be recognized by other people. In big cities, you don't get that."

Buck moved to the western Umatilla County community from Las Vegas at the age of 5, attending Highland Hills Elementary School and later Armand Larive Middle School.

Buck looks back fondly at his lifeguarding experience during the summers in high school. He still remembers when Kyle Kennison was the track coach, and the track was made of cinder.

"I was there when we raised the funds and first put in a rubberized track," he recalled.

Today, that same track is named Kennison Field for the late coach.

"I had lots of fun growing up around here," he said.

Buck graduated from Hermiston High School in 1992 and earned his associate's degree at Blue Mountain Community College.

He later got his bachelor's degree in biology with a minor in chemistry at the University of Utah, where he



Contributed photo from Good Shepherd Health Care System
Starting Monday, Daniel Buck will be serving at Hermiston School District's Wellness Clinic.

also attended medical school. Utah was the place of choice, he said, because it was close to his wife's family.

It wasn't until 2016, after he completed his medical residency in Edgewood, Kentucky, that Buck came back to his hometown of Hermiston to work as an emergency room doctor for Good Shepherd Medical Center.

Today, he works at the hospital's urgent care clinic, seeing patients of all ages and varieties.

When he's not busy at the Good Shepherd Urgent Care, Buck enjoys fishing at Hat Rock and Warehouse Beach on his boat.

He's wanted to be a doctor since childhood, and his passion has yet to waver.

"There's so much we still don't understand about how the human body works. I like being able to help people, even with simple things that improve their lives,"

Buck said.

He said it's important to provide early intervention for injuries, and that a school-based clinic like the district's will help with that.

"From what I've seen, it's great to provide medical help to sports injuries that happen at the school. Things in P.E. classes, things that happen with sports. Concussions are a very common thing now on people's minds," Buck said.

Another clinic was previously run by Family Health Associates, which opened in the winter of 2016. It was then that HSD saw other districts' success with providing on-site health care, according to HSD communications officer Maria Duron.

Good Shepherd partnered with the district earlier this year. Duron said the district's goal is to improve student attendance. Staff members, students and immediate family can have walk-in appoint-

OPEN HOURS

The Wellness Clinic will be open on Mondays from 8 a.m. to noon, and Wednesdays from noon to 4:00 p.m. Students and parents can reach the Wellness Clinic at 541-667-6199.

ments during class, lunch, or prep time.

In the past, the Wellness Clinic had seen 10 patients or so a day, according to Duron.

The clinic will be offering free sports physicals Aug. 1-2, which are required every two years for student athletes. After Aug. 2, sports physicals will be available for \$45 at the Wellness Clinic or at Good Shepherd.

The Wellness Clinic will also offer vaccinations, physical exams, treatment and illness evaluation, and even small stitches and sutures. Students under 18 must have a signed parent consent form and a medical history from a parent or legal guardian. If the student has insurance, it will be billed. The clinic's rates are the same as those at Good Shepherd.

Urgent Care practice manager Natasha Ellwanger said that the clinic will rotate doctors as the year progresses, and that there will always be a three-person staff at the clinic, consisting of one nurse or medical assistant, one receptionist, and one care provider, all from Good Shepherd Urgent Care.

Ellwanger said she has noticed in the past that Urgent Care can get quite busy during after-school hours, and hopes the clinic will help alleviate flow at Good Shepherd.

"I see it as being a benefit for the district. And, hopefully, as it picks up and if it does become a busy thing we can open more days," she said.

Updated sex abuse charges levied against Heppner man

By ALEX CASTLE
East Oregonian

HEPPNER — The Morrow County District Attorney's Office upped the child pornography charges against Tyler Allen Christian following a review of the case's evidence.

District Attorney Justin Nelson said the state dismissed the prior case against Christian, 22, and a grand jury indicted him again on nine counts on May 29, this time all in the first degree.

Police arrested Christian on Jan. 24 in Pendleton on four first-degree and five second-degree charges of possessing and distributing visual recordings of sexually explicit conduct involving a child.

According to a search warrant affidavit, the Oregon Department of Justice received a tip from the National Center for Missing or Exploited Children

in 2018 that an unidentified person uploaded 50 digital files depicting the sexual abuse of children to the social media website Tumblr between Aug. 4-7.

The justice department's investigation of Christian included looking into the Tumblr posts, tracing the email and internet addresses associated with the account, along with surveillance of his residence in Heppner.

During the investigation in the fall of last year, according to the affidavit, Christian worked at Amazon as an overnight security guard.

Christian has been out of the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton, on a conditional release since May 30. Nelson said a June 17 closed-door conference to reach a plea deal failed.

Christian's first pre-trial hearing was July 11, with his next one takes place Aug. 22.

Sheriff says suspect cleans house, takes guns

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The Umatilla County Sheriff's Office asked for the public's help finding a burglary suspect.

The sheriff's office reported it has a warrant for the arrest of Amanda Marie Warren, 38, of Pendleton, who also uses the last name Hernandez, for a home burglary and eluding police.

The sheriff's office Wednesday at approximately 6 p.m. responded to a report of a theft at a residence on Birch Creek Road northeast of Milton-Freewater. The victim, an elderly man, stated a woman he did not know came to his home and asked to clean the place. He agreed, she cleaned the home, and left.

After she was gone, according to the sheriff's office, the victim discovered items missing, including his

wallet and two firearms (a revolver and a semi-automatic pistol).

The sheriff's office warned Warren may still possess the two guns. She also could be connected to an older white sedan.

Sheriff's Lt. Sterrin Holcomb said investigators tied Warren to the crime but she could not release more details because the case is active.

The sheriff's office also cautioned residents, especially elderly who live alone, to be aware of how the suspect pulled off the crime and urged anyone having additional information to call detective Kacey Ward at 541-966-3638 or the 24-hour dispatch center at 541-966-3651 and reference case No. 19-1009. In case of an emergency, call 911.

Anyone who knows of Warren's location should not approach her, the sheriff's office warned, but call the dispatch or 911.

Umatilla County readies for more courthouse improvements

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Umatilla County is keeping up its program to stay on top of facility maintenance.

The county board of commissioners during its public meeting Wednesday in Pendleton approved three projects for bids: replacing the roof on the east wing of the courthouse, replacing a failing boiler and replacing a failing chiller. Commissioner George Murdock noted the trio of projects is within the county's preventative maintenance master plan for the coming year.

Dan Lonai, county direc-

tor of administrative services, told the board the east wing over the law library leaks, and that section of the roof is the last to use ballast. The project will get rid of the ballast rock, which makes finding leaks difficult, and replace it with a membrane roof similar to what the courthouse has on other sections.

The second request for proposal would replace one of the two boilers. The county replaced one about a 18 months ago and now is the time to replace the other. One boiler, he said, cannot keep up with below-freezing temperatures in the winter, and the replacement qualifies for

energy incentives.

And the building's chiller is at its end. The chiller is from 1955, Lonai said, and the county has paid for repair work multiple times, including five years ago. But now the machine is past any modifications, he said, and one of its three chambers failed, leaving the other two to work harder to keep the courthouse cooler, which means they will fail sooner.

The project has a bit of hurdle, he said. The county in 1984 built the sally port on the courthouse, and that blocked the way to remove the chiller from the basement.

"We can't get the old one out unless we chop it up," he

said, "but we can't chop up a new one to put it in there."

Instead, the new chiller probably will go on the roof.

The board of commissioners voted 3-0 to seek bids for the repairs. The board also gave approval for two other projects.

Health department staff can negotiate with contractor Kirby Nagelhout Construction Co. for renovations to the two school-based health centers up to \$100,000, the amount covered under a federal grant. And the county will contact with Pendleton Floors for about \$6,900 to replace the kitchen, day room and hallway flooring in transitional housing.

BRIEFLY

National forests move to Phase A to reduce fire risk

PENDLETON — An increased fire danger and dry weather conditions has prompted forest officials to implement Phase A of the Public Use Restrictions (PURs) for smoking, off-road travel, and chain saw use.

The restrictions will go into effect on the Umatilla and Wallowa-Whitman national forests at 12:01 a.m. Friday. Phase A is the first level of wildfire-prevention restrictions, generally implemented when the fire danger is moderate to high. PURs are phased in as conditions warrant and may differ from forest to forest.

The public is also encouraged to be very careful with campfires when recreating

in dispersed and developed campsites.

The public's awareness of the increasing fire danger and cooperation is essential to a safe fire season. Recreationists, firewood cutters, hunters, and other forest users can all help by closely adhering to restrictions, operating safely and cautiously and keeping updated on the latest orders and regulations.

Walla Walla hires M-F library director

WALLA WALLA — The Walla Walla Public Library didn't have to look too far to find its next director.

The city of Walla Walla announced Thursday that it had hired Milton-Freewater Public Library Director



Wells

Erin Wells to replace its retiring library director.

Wells has managed the Milton-Freewater library since 2014 and has previously worked as the director of the Greeley County Library in Tribune, Kansas.

A Portland native, Wells has a bachelor's degree from Portland State University and a master's degree in library science from Emporia State University in Kansas.

Wells will start her new position on Aug. 26.

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