



Staff photo by Ben Lonergan

Oregon Travel Information Council employee Rod Ritchie clears snow from the Deadman Pass Rest Area at I-84 eastbound Milepost 228.9 early Wednesday morning.



Staff photo by Ben Lonergan

Trucks sit gathering snow outside of the Oregon Trail Store and Deli in Meacham on Wednesday morning.



Staff photo by Ben Lonergan

Snow covers the road on Old Emigrant Hill Road in the foothills of the Blue Mountains on Wednesday morning.

Town halls on Umatilla County ballot measures

East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The Umatilla County Republican Party is hosting town halls the next two weeks in Pendleton, Hermiston and Milton-Freewater on the Nov. 5 special election.

Umatilla County voters get to decide on two measures that would change the county charter. One would change “Law Enforcement Department” in the charter to “Sheriff’s Office.” That would align with the name of the sheriff’s office as well as reflect the position of sheriff is an elected official.

The second measure would change the election of county officials to the November election and only require a primary election if more than two candidates

were filed in a race.

Umatilla County Commissioners will talk about the measures. The town halls start at 6:30 p.m., and also will provide information on the local proposals that would affect each community.

- The Pendleton town hall is Oct. 15 in the meeting room at 501 S.W. Emigrant Ave. Commissioner George Murdock will address the county measure, and a representative from the Pendleton Fire and Ambulance Service will provide information on the five-year local option tax for fire protection services, which Pendleton residents will decide during the election.
- The Hermiston town hall is Oct. 23 at Armand

Larive Middle School, 1497 S.W. Ninth St. with Commissioner Bill Elfering. Echo voters get to decide on continuing the levy tax to support the Echo Rural Fire Protection District. Fire Chief Delbert Gehrke will speak on the measure. And Hermiston schools Superintendent Tricia Mooney will discuss the district’s \$89 million bond proposal that will be on the ballot.

- And the Milton-Freewater town hall is Oct. 25 at the Community Building, 109 N.E. Fifth St. Commissioner John Shaffer will be on hand for the county measures. Milton-Freewater voters also decide on a measure to fund the Milton-Freewater Rural Fire Department and the Ambulance Service.

Umatilla School District rolls out wellness program

Students will have the option to receive services from Family Health Associates

By JESSICA POLLARD
East Oregonian

UMATILLA — All students in the Umatilla School District are now eligible to enroll in a new wellness program.

The district is partnering with the Family Health Associates clinic in Umatilla, which opened last November, to provide the three-pronged program. Students will be able to receive child and adolescent well-care visits, vaccinations and acute care for symptoms like sore throats.

“We still have, and will continue to have, dental cleanings and vision screenings,” said Umatilla School District Superintendent Heidi Sipe. “But this is the first time we’ve been able to offer health services directly.”

For parents that have it, insurance will be billed for services. Vaccines and well visits will come with no out-of-pocket expenses, but acute care will have the same rates as an office visit and insurance will be billed

if the parent has it.

According to a notice sent out to district parents, the schools will be able to provide transportation to and from school for appointments at the clinic. Parents will be notified if their child needs to come home.

Sipe said she hopes this relieves stress for working parents.

There is no charge from the district for appointments and transportation. Sipe said the district will be able to schedule same-day appointments.

Sipe said that last spring, the district began a request for proposal process, and that Family Health Associates was the only applicant for the program.

“Luckily, they had a really strong proposal,” she said.

Sipe said the district and the district have a profit-sharing agreement, and that any revenue generated beyond the cost of services will get split between the two entities. The district’s share will be put into a separate account that eventually will be used to fund mental health services.



Sipe

“Our school counselors do a wonderful job, but some kids need specialized mental health services,” she said.

Sipe said the program was made possible in part with funding from Medicaid, and that inspiration for the program came from a conference Sipe attended last year about rural communities.

“I’m excited for this. Healthy students are healthy learners. I wish this had existed when I was a working parent,” she said.

BRIEFLY

Roads closed for construction in Hermiston

HERMISTON — Short sections of Northeast Fifth and Sixth streets just north of Highland Avenue are closed this week for paving projects.

The paving is in conjunction with new subsidized apartments being built by Northwest Housing Alternatives at the location. The apartments on Sixth Street are expected to be complete in December, and the Fifth Street buildings in January.

The city of Hermiston has wrapped up several paving projects in the past few weeks. Hermiston Avenue is back open after a week of closure to rebuild the travel lanes and sidewalks between First and Third streets.

Last week, the city finished a rebuild of Harper Avenue next to Highway 395 and repaved the road up to Geer Road. The city also repaved West Highland Avenue from Southwest 11th Street to Southwest 15th Place, including restriping the road near 14th Street to add a turn lane.

— East Oregonian staff

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