

A snow day in the Blues



Fresh snow blankets the Blue Mountains on Monday, March 22, 2021.

Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

Walla Walla woman injured in Highway 11 crash

By JEDIDIAH MAYNES
Walla Walla Union-Bulletin

MILTON-FREEWATER — A second three-car crash within one week on Highway 11, north of Milton-Freewater, sent another person to the hospital on Friday, March 19.

Deloris J. Woerner, 85, of Walla Walla, Wash., was transported to Providence St. Mary Medical Center with minor injuries, according to Oregon State Police. The hospital is not releasing conditions of patients during the COVID-19 pandemic, citing staffing issues.

The three cars involved in the crash were damaged and had to be towed from the scene, troopers noted.

According to the report, the incident began with Woerner exiting the

Sinclair gas station north of Milton-Freewater around 10:27 a.m., turning south across the four lanes of traffic.

Woerner's Subaru Forester was struck by a Buick Envoy driven by Fred

fic, according to the report.

OSP Sgt. Jeremy Gunter said the stretch of Highway 11 north from Milton-Freewater to Stateline Road — and Washington state Route 125 from Stateline Road to Walla Walla — is a hazard-

coming toward you. Don't allow yourself to become distracted while preparing to enter the highway."

Gunter said people should be aware of how to use the center turning lane as well.

"It is not an acceleration lane," Gunter said. He said it's designed for cars to stop and wait for traffic to clear while entering or exiting the highway, but it's often misused by drivers wanting to get in and out of traffic quickly.

Gunter said the three main factors leading to the majority of crashes on this particular stretch of road are distracted drivers, speeding and improper lane usage.

On Sunday, March 14, another three-car pileup on Highway 11 sent two people to the hospital.

"THE MOST IMPORTANT THING DRIVERS CAN DO IS BE PATIENT."

— Jeremy Gunter, Oregon State Police Sgt.

E. Moore, 80, of Walla Walla, who was driving north on the highway.

Moore's vehicle veered toward the center turning lane and ran into a BMW 325, operated by Brian K. Butler, 59, of Dayton.

Woerner was cited for failing to yield to oncoming traf-

fic, according to the report.

"The most important thing drivers can do is be patient," Gunter said. "Take your time and wait for safe openings in traffic before entering the highway. Make sure there is not another vehicle in the blind spot behind the vehicle

LOCAL BRIEFING

Vaccine clinic for farm and food processing workers

BOARDMAN — The Boardman Chamber of Commerce announced that a COVID-19 vaccine clinic specifically geared toward farm and food processing workers will be held from Wednesday, March 24, through Saturday, March 27, at the Sage Center on Northeast 101 Olson Road in Boardman, according to a press release.

The clinics will be held on March 24 from 1 p.m. to 8 p.m., March 25 from noon to 7 p.m., March 26 from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m., and March 27 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Those who wish to be vaccinated do not need health insurance, but are encouraged to bring a health insurance card if they have one.

The chamber is asking that residents make an appointment, but said "vaccinations without appointment will depend on availability."

Residents can call 541-481-4200 to make an appointment for their vaccine.

Second doses of the vaccine will be provided in April.

Hermiston School District shuffles administrators

HERMISTON — Hermiston School District is moving some of its administrators around to new jobs next year to fill open positions from within the district.

The district announced that Director of Student Services Neely McKay will serve as director of special programs. McKay had been serving in the position on an interim position during the current school year in addition to her job in student services, but will permanently fill the director of special programs position on July 1.

Desert View Elementary School Principal Daniel Gree-

nough will become the new director of student services, according to the news release, drawing on his experience working as a principal of both elementary and high school students over his career.

Sandstone Middle School Assistant Principal David Melville will move to Desert View to replace Greenough as principal. His past experience includes teaching and a position as a high school dean of students.

Joshua Browning, an instructional coach who has been training teachers in the district and working with data to help meet student needs, has been named the new principal of Loma Vista Elementary School. The new school is scheduled to open its doors in the fall of 2022, and Browning will help hire staff and plan for its opening over the course of the next year while the building is under construction.

— EO Media Group

OSEA fosters help for kids in transition

By TAMMY MALGESINI
For the East Oregonian

GETTING HELP

As resources are available, Cathy Keeney said the local OSEA chapter will consider helping other groups and organizations who are in need of support. For more information, contact Keeney at cathy.keeney@hermistonso.org or 541-667-6025.

HERMISTON — Area foster children will benefit from the recent generosity of members of Hermiston Chapter 10 of the Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA).

Association member Cathy Keeney said they learned that kids are often removed from their homes with only a few belongings that can fit in a small bag. To help ease the transition of local children into foster care, Keeney said the association decided to donate tote bags and stuffed animals to the Hermiston office of the Oregon Department of Human Services-Child Welfare.

Each year, members of the school district's classified staff participate in a community service project. Keeney said Karen Harris, another association member, became aware of the needs of local foster kids and reached out to Jaime Meakins of the local DHS office.

Many of the kids that end up in a local foster home are already a part of the community and attend school in the district, Keeney said. Chapter 10 association members, she said, were quickly on board to provide support to the children.

"It's the whole concept of supporting each other," Keeney said. "They are our kids."

In addition, the group voted to make the donation in honor of the Hermiston School District Board of Education as part of January's School Board Appreciation Month. Keeney said they wanted to recognize the school board for its ongoing support of the association's community service projects.

The association was able to provide 48 tote bags along with stuffed animals to be given to foster kids. On Feb. 8, Keeney and Harris presented the items to the Hermiston DHS office.

Expressing appreciation for the generous donation, Meakins said the contribution makes it possible for the agency to provide children entering foster care with an overnight bag, which can be filled with necessities or used to put their personal belongings inside the bag.

"We try to provide every child who enters foster care a new backpack/bag, a new pair of pajamas, new blanket, new socks, underwear, hygiene items, a stuffed animal, and a book/journal to help with the traumatic transition into foster care," Meakins said.

In recent years, members of the association have helped make a difference at the Hermiston Warming Station. They placed boxes in each of the schools to accept donations, including everything from socks and gloves to snacks and cleaning/personal hygiene supplies. However, Keeney said because of COVID-19 restrictions, the association decided against a donation drive and sought to find another way to actively support the community.

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