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HERMISTON

Making history

Jackie Linton is first African American to serve on the Hermiston City Council

By ERICK PETERSON
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — Jackie Linton is set to be the first African American person on the Hermiston City Council, according to the mayor and several people within Hermiston city government.

"I'm very happy," she said in an interview last week.

Election Day was May 17.

On Memorial Day, Monday, May 30, the vote count in her race against City Councilor Lori Davis was 906-817, giving Linton roughly a 5% advantage over the long-serving and well-respected incumbent. While these figures remain unofficial, people at the city are accepting Linton's victory as fact and planning for her to take an oath of office with other recently elected city council members at the start of the new year.

"Hermiston City Council has worked hard over the last decade to reflect our diverse population and Mrs. Linton, being the first African American, and another female to serve on the council, shows the commitment to our community to reflect its diverse makeup," Hermiston Mayor David Drotzmann said. Linton is a member of the board of the Hermiston Public Library and regularly attends, and speaks up at, city council meetings. She ran against Davis to join the council in 2018 but lost that election.

"Jackie has been an active citizen participant at our city council meetings and various committees for well over a year," Drotzmann said. "She's engaged in her community and will be a welcome addition to the council."

A voice of change

Linton pointed out that there are not many Black people in Hermiston. If there were more, she said, it would have been more likely for African Americans to have run for and won offices. She said she saw more people of her race when she was a child, but many moved out of town, as they chased jobs in bigger cities.

She did not seek office to help the people of one particular race.

"I want to help all of Hermiston," she said, and people voted for her because they wanted change.

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Students walk to classes during passing time Friday, May 27, 2022, at Sunridge Middle School, Pendleton. Charles Byram, Pendleton police chief, said his department's response to a shooter in a school is to set up a command post, identify the threat, get people out and "to take out the threat."

Kathy Aney/
East Oregonian

'Sworn to take out the threat'

Local police chiefs explain procedures for taking on school shooters in wake of Texas massacre

By JOHN TILLMAN and PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Police not taking action May 24 to stop a gunman in Uvalde, Texas, before he slayed two teachers and 19 children again raised the issue of what police should do when a school is under attack.

Some local police chiefs addressed their departments' procedures and training when it comes to taking on a school shooter.

"Our best practice standard in active shooter situations is to go 'direct to threat,'" Pendleton Police Chief Charles Byram said. "We are sworn to take out the threat."

The first person on the scene responds and communicates with other police, fire and health departments.

"We can mitigate the situation after the fact," he said. "Responders can't foresee everything, so we have to remain fluid. We set up a command post, identify who is the threat and get people out."



East Oregonian, File

Officers from multiple law enforcement agencies clear classrooms of victims during an active shooter drill April 13, 2018, in Boardman.

Pendleton police protocol is to train in the schools, with district staff, when not in session.

"The fire and health departments are familiar with our verbiage," Byram said. "We plan for the worst, always looking for new ways to respond to schools or big box stores. To use a sports analogy, we practice like we play."

Hermiston Chief of Police Jason Edmiston said no one can know how individual officers will respond when their own lives are on the line, but he was adamant about

his force's protocols and training for active shooter situations.

"The lesson Columbine taught us, now almost 25 years ago, was that you can't wait to form up a team to go in, much less for SWAT, which we don't even have in Eastern Oregon. Oregon State Police SWAT takes four or five hours to get to us."

All Hermiston police officers have a master key that opens all doors in all schools, Edmiston stated.

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Holocaust survivor recounts life under Nazis

Anneke Bloomfield has packed house for presentation at Pendleton library

By JOHN TILLMAN
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Anneke Bloomfield was 5 years old in the Netherlands in May 1940 when Nazi Germany invaded her country.

The occupation regime ordered Dutch males ages 16-40 to turn themselves in for forced labor. German troops blocked off streets and searched houses. Bloomfield was traumatized when soldiers pounded on their door, demanded entry and searched every room, including hers.

"I was so scared when he came to my bedroom," Bloomfield said. "I had nightmares for a couple years after that."

Now 82 years later, Bloomfield, an outreach speaker for the Oregon Jewish Museum and Holocaust Education Center, recounted her young life under the Nazi occupation to a packed house Tuesday, May 31, at the Pendleton Public Library. The presentation was in conjunction with the traveling exhibit "Americans and the Holo-



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian

Holocaust survivor Anneke Bloomfield shares her memories of being a child from the Netherlands hiding in safe houses to a large audience Tuesday, May 31, 2022, at the Pendleton Public Library.

caust," on display at the library until July 1.

Her partner, Jerry Paster, said Bloomfield dedicates her talks on

her experiences in World War II to her father, Thomas Siebel. He worked for oil company Royal Dutch Shell. Her mother was a

former school teacher.

Avoiding the 'J' stamp

Bloomfield was born in The Hague, seat of government of the Netherlands, in April 1935. She said her father saw the threat Nazis posed before the war began in 1939. He made every effort to remove Judaism from his family's life. They moved from the Jewish quarter of The Hague to a Christian neighborhood, where they bought a three-story house.

They stopped going to temple and instead attended church on Sundays. Her father started working in the church library, so community members would see him and think he was Christian.

Bloomfield and her siblings were taken out of Jewish day school and put into Christian schools.

"There was a big school open to all just two blocks away," she said, "but he sent me to a Christian school seven blocks away."

Bloomfield's maternal grandparents were rich but stuffy. She adored her father's poor but loving parents. Even though they lived in Delft, 7 miles distant by road, he visited them on the blue scooter she got from her rich grandparents on her fifth birthday.

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