

# EAST OREGONIAN

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HERITAGE STATION MUSEUM GOES TO SUMMER HOURS

## Hermiston mourns death of John Perkins

Beloved Hermiston Santa Claus and community volunteer died July 27

By JOHN TILLMAN  
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — John Perkins, beloved Santa Claus for the children of Hermiston and other local communities has died. He was 70.

“We were deeply saddened by John’s passing,” Hermiston Parks and Recreation Director Brandon Artz said. “For over a decade, he would stop in throughout the year, bringing joy every time. We’d see him beardless, then getting ready for Christmas.”

Parks and Rec would have him to its events. Perkins helped raise donations for the teddy bear campaign for nursing home residents whose families weren’t able to visit often.

“He was one of a kind,” Artz continued. “He told us stories about what Christmas meant to him. He was unique. We’ll miss him even more when planning for the Christmas tree lighting this year.”

Artz recalled Perkins’ appearance at the aquatic center pool in July 2019.

“We said it would be fantastic for him to show up for Christmas in July,” he said, “but it’s going to be 100 degrees. He said he was cooler in his Santa suit than without it.”

John Richard Perkins was born Sept. 25, 1951, in Pendleton. He died from pancreatic cancer July 27, 2022, at his home in Umatilla.

He grew up with an absent father and an abusive brother, he said in a 2021 interview, and his family suffered from poverty. He explained, when he turned 14, his mother no longer qualified for government assistance.

Perkins quit school in the 10th grade to support his mother. He accepted agricultural work, then he was a truck driver. He joined the U.S. Navy in 1970, serving three tours in Vietnam on USS Midway before his honorable discharge in 1976.

His service was difficult, he said, as exposure to Agent Orange in the Vietnam War eventually caused him to lose feeling in his legs. His service also left him with post-traumatic stress disorder, which

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## ENRIQUE CHAGOYA

exhibit coming to Pendleton



Journey Hahn, left, and Roberta Lavadour hang Enrique Chagoya’s work “Aliens San Frontiers” on Wednesday, Aug. 3, 2022, at the Pendleton Center for the Arts in Pendleton. Lavadour, the arts center’s executive director, said this may be one of the center’s biggest exhibitions to date. Hahn is the arts center’s program assistant.  
Yasser Marte/East Oregonian

## Artist’s work ‘provides an entry point to talk about difficult subjects’

By ANTONIO ARREDONDO  
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — For years, the Pendleton Center for the Arts has brought in notable artists from around the world; but later this week, they’re slated to unveil one of their most impressive showcases yet.

The solo art of acclaimed Mexican-born American artist Enrique Chagoya opens Friday, Aug. 5, and runs through Oct. 6, 2022. The exhibit begins with an opening reception on Aug. 5, 5:30-7 p.m. The event is free to all members of the public.

PCA Executive Director Roberta Lavadour said she is over the moon about having Chagoya’s work at the center. This is the fifth year the PCA has welcomed an exhibit of this nature.

“(Chagoya’s) work is so yummy,” Lavadour said, “his sense of satire and humor provides an entry point to talk about difficult subjects.”

Born and raised in Mexico City, Chagoya’s works have been featured in the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art among others.

His art is known for his inclu-



Yasser Marte/East Oregonian

Roberta Lavadour, executive director of the Pendleton Center for the Arts, examines artist Enrique Chagoya’s work “Pyramid Scheme” Wednesday, Aug. 3, 2022, at the arts center in Pendleton. Lavadour scrutinizes each installation before placing it on display at the museum.

sion of pop icons, such as Superman and Mickey Mouse, to juxtapose secular, popular and religious symbols from both United States and Latin American culture. Chagoya’s style is based on painted books — codexes — that many indigenous peoples in Mexico and Central America used to record history, and many of those paintings will be on display in Pendleton.

This may be one of the bigger exhibits that the PCA has received, but it is by no means the first big showcase. The center has featured pieces from artists such as Chuck Close, Louise Bour-

geois and Kara Walker. All of those exhibits have been in partnership with the Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation.

Schnitzer is one of the most prominent developers in Portland and has a passion for art. He began collecting in 1988. His foundation’s collection exceeds 20,000 works. He has worked with the Pendleton Center for the Arts on numerous occasions, including the Kelly and Bourgeois exhibits.

As part of the collaboration, Lavadour and her staff are sure to carefully inspect each item, noting its condition before and

### IF YOU GO

The Pendleton Center for the Arts is on the banks of the Umatilla River at 214 N. Main St. and is open Tuesday through Friday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday 12-4 p.m.

after its time in Pendleton. Lavadour said she had to receive curatorial training at the Museum of Contemporary Craft in Portland to gain access to the artwork.

“We go over every inch of, document everything,” she said. “Even the dust collecting on the top of things.”

All of this work, all of this art also is thanks to the relationship Schnitzer has with not only Lavadour but the town of Pendleton. After attending his first Round-Up in 1987, Schnitzer grew close to the area thanks to its hospitality and friendships made there.

“I feel like it’s my second home,” Schnitzer said in 2019.

That connection has given Pendleton a larger voice in the art community than most towns its size, something that Pendleton Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Cheri Rosenberg noted. The center is known for punching above its weight in terms of its showcases.

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### HERMISTON

## Irrigation District manager celebrates 20 years of service

By SHANNON GOLDEN  
The Observer

HERMISTON — Hermiston Irrigation District Manager Annette Kirkpatrick just celebrated 20 years with the district.

In the last two decades, Kirkpatrick remained one of the few female district leaders in the state, and has made continuous strides towards modernizing the region’s irrigation systems.

Kirkpatrick is the only full-time female district manager in Oregon. Still, she credited fellow female leaders in the irrigation industry — and managers across the state — for fostering a collaborative environment.

“We’re all very supportive of each other, and it’s nice to have that cam-

aderie amongst us,” she said. “We can get information from each other and pass on experiences.”

Kirkpatrick started at the district in 2002, after moving to Eastern Oregon from California. She became the manager in 2015.

“Historically, a lot of irrigation district managers were people who had experience in construction and irrigation,” she said of her predecessors.

With a background in legal research, business management and accounting, Kirkpatrick made an unlikely candidate. But when it came to tackling the ever-changing irrigation practices and growing modernization efforts, her time in law offices and accounting firms came in handy.



Yasser Marte/East Oregonian

Annette Kirkpatrick, Hermiston Irrigation District manager, works from her office Friday, July 29, 2022, at the district office. Kirkpatrick is celebrating her 20th anniversary in the position and is one of the few female district leaders in Oregon.

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