



Hermiston Herald

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2015

YOUR LOCAL NEWSPAPER

HERMISTONHERALD.COM

Voters to decide whether judge is appointed

Council opts to make changes to ensure charter is approved

BY SEAN HART
HERMISTON HERALD

Hermiston residents will get to decide whether the municipal judge should be elected or appointed by the City Council.

At the regular City Council meeting Monday, council members directed city staff to prepare the documents necessary to place a revised city charter on the May 2015 ballot after they agreed to make changes to the initial proposal.

The charter serves as the city's founding document, and the last charter approved in 1954 contained outdated language, so the council spent months last year updating it based on a model charter from the League of Oregon Cities.

Most of the changes were basic and made the document more legally tenable, such as removing the requirement that councilors be property own-

SEE CHARTER/A10

TODAY'S WEATHER



Partly Cloudy
High: 54° Low: 37°

OUTLOOK

- **THURSDAY**
Times of sun and clouds
High: 48° Low: 37°
- **FRIDAY**
Mix of sun and clouds
High: 49° Low: 35°

A complete weather forecast is featured on page A2.



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FOR LOCAL BREAKING NEWS

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HPD reports significant drop in juvenile crime

Police both optimistic and nervous about drop

BY MAEGAN MURRAY
HERMISTON HERALD

A significant drop in juvenile crimes in 2014 has Hermiston Police officials both worried and optimistic about what is contributing to those lower numbers.

Hermiston Police Chief Jason Edmiston attended the Hermiston School Board work session Monday night to report that, according to the department's annual report, juvenile arrests had dropped by 32 percent in 2014 from the previous year. This has Edmiston scratching his head as to why.

"It was a little scary when you start seeing declines like that and trying to explain what is going on," he said. "It is a good

problem to have, but, over the course of three years (there has been) a 37 percent drop, 17 percent drop and a 32 percent drop last year."

Edmiston said one thing he must consider is if the police department has been turning a blind eye to juvenile crime.

While he doesn't believe that is happening, he said it is a factor that needs to be discussed.

Edmiston reported that, in 2014, 181 juveniles

were detained, and there were 354 offenses from that population. Of those, 52 were from drugs and alcohol, 102 were traffic related, 25 were theft-related crimes and four were weapons crimes. In addition, 171 offenses stemmed from charges involving curfew violation, disorderly/harassment, criminal mischief, trespass, graffiti, assault/menacing, detainment warrants, providing a false name to an officer, misuse of the 9-1-1 system

and conspiracy to commit a crime.

Edmiston said, at the county level, 519 cases were referred to the Juvenile Department in 2014, which is a slight increase from 2013, which had 512 referrals. Those numbers, however, are significantly lower from 2009, which had 1,013 referred cases.

The number of juveniles referred to and taking part in Hermiston's Commu-

SEE CRIME/A10



MAEGAN MURRAY PHOTO

Hermiston artist Michelle Hopper used those she met in treatment for anorexia and bipolar disorder this summer as inspiration for a new art piece that will be hung at TM Counseling in Pendleton.

Hermiston resident uses art to cope with anorexia and bipolar disorder

BY MAEGAN MURRAY
HERMISTON HERALD

Hermiston resident Michelle Hopper was at her lowest weight since high school last summer and was frequently told she "looked like a cancer patient."

Hopper said she has battled anorexia since she was 12. She also struggles with bipolar disorder, and, last summer, she found herself in a dangerous place after she lost control of both. While seeking treatment at a mental health facility, she turned to an art that has always given her solace — painting. This month, she left her job as a teacher to focus solely on herself and her art.

Hopper said she has painted since she was young. In the last several years, she has had a successful clothing line that features screen-printed images and drawings of her own creation, in addition to hand-printed clothing and accessories. When she was seeking treatment for her mental struggles, however, she said she decided take a new path with her art.

Hopper used some of her peers in treatment as inspiration for a colorful fine-art painting that features a row of horses all



MAEGAN MURRAY PHOTO

Hermiston artist Michelle Hopper works on a painting called 'The Drive' Monday afternoon at her home studio in Hermiston. Hopper uses painting as a means to cope with anorexia and bipolar disorder.

coming together and starting straight out of the image. She calls it "The Gathering."

"I tried to feature all of those personalities who really helped me get through that hard time as we went through it together," she said.

Now that Hopper is stable, she said she uses the craft as an emotional release on a day-to-day basis to make sure she doesn't slip back to where she was just a few months ago.

Hopper said what she believes is so therapeutic about painting is that she doesn't have to be such a perfectionist. She said, in her everyday life, she can get so focused on perfecting herself and her work that it can cause her to reach emotional levels that are unhealthy for herself both mentally and physically. With drawing and her clothing line, she said her work is much more detailed, and the perfectionist side of her shines through.

With painting, however, she said she can let loose a bit, blare music in her studio at her house in Hermiston and zone out with a few strokes of the brush and lots of wild color.

"When I'm painting, it doesn't have to be perfect," she said. "There is a pretty big difference between what I paint and my drawings. With drawing, it is a lot of concise lines and detail. With my painting, it is looser and there isn't as much detail."

Since she has started painting by traditional means using a canvas, Hopper said she didn't expect her hobby would blossom into something that could potentially turn into a full-time career. She said, since she started painting on canvas, many people have wanted to buy items in her collection, which sell for anywhere between \$300 to \$1,500. This month, she has or is work-

SEE HOPPER/A8

GSMC: Flu numbers this year no worse than in previous years

People still encouraged to get vaccinated

BY MAEGAN MURRAY
HERMISTON HERALD

Despite the fact the influenza vaccine administered this year is not as effective in preventing the illness, flu numbers have remained

stable in Hermiston.

"It's not necessarily higher than normal," Pam Schulz, infection control employee health coordinator, said Tuesday. "If you look at the Oregon state numbers on the flu out there, it is not higher than normal."

As of Jan. 26, Schulz said that 38 percent of people admitted to Good Shepherd Medical Center for flu-like symptoms tested

positive for the flu in Hermiston. Schulz said she doesn't have any specific numbers of people who tested positive for the flu, also known as H3N2, because many people who come in for flu-like symptoms won't test positive. The number of people being treated for flu is pretty average for this time of year, she said.

Even though the numbers are no higher than normal, Schulz said

she still recommends that people get the flu shot.

According to the Center for Disease Control, a vaccine's effectiveness is based on how similar the flu viruses used in vaccine production are to the flu viruses actually circulating. The vaccine is designed to protect against three or four influenza viruses, some of

SEE INFLUENZA/A10

Hermiston Herald \$1.00



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