



Hermiston Herald

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YOUR LOCAL NEWSPAPER

HERMISTONHERALD.COM

Farley named new Rocky Heights principal

The Hermiston School District announced today Superintendent Fred Maiocco will recommend Jerad Farley to serve as the new Rocky Heights Elementary School principal effective July 1.

Farley will replace BJ Wilson, who will become the school district's new special education director. The Hermiston School Board will vote on Maiocco's recommendation at its April 13 meeting.

Farley was selected from three finalists. The other two, Michelle Jensen and Stacie Roberts, are currently employed by the Hermiston School District. Farley comes to Hermiston from the Othello School District, where he currently serves as a district instructional coach at Wahitis Elementary School. While serving in Othello, he also completed his administrative internship. He received his Bachelor of Arts in elementary education from Eastern Washington University in 2006. He previously taught fifth and sixth grades.

TODAY'S WEATHER



Cloudy
High: 68° Low: 50°

OUTLOOK

- SUNDAY
Showers
High: 57° Low: 40°
- MONDAY
Mostly cloudy
High: 62° Low: 40°

A complete weather forecast is featured on page A2.



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FOR LOCAL BREAKING NEWS

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Committee recommends tougher park rule

Police could ban violators for 30 days

BY SEAN HART
HERMISTON HERALD

A proposed ordinance in Hermiston would allow the police department to ban people from parks for 30 days for misusing park equipment.

At the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting Thursday, members unanimously agreed to recommend the City Council amend a city ordinance to give police another option to help deter problems that have been reported frequently this school year.

In a letter to the city manager, Hermiston Police Chief Jason Edmiston recommended the ordinance change to

address "a significant problem" with a group of 15- to 19-year-olds who congregate at McKenzie Park during the day and early evening hours. He said, since September, the department has received numerous complaints about inappropriate language and "activity that could be disorderly by nature," such as causing public alarm by pretending to fight.

Edmiston said the group

predominantly gathers in the Rotary cook shack, where police and park department employees have discovered evidence of people urinating, defecating and littering, including condoms. He said officers have tried to persuade the group to move elsewhere but lack the authority to require it because it is difficult to catch someone in the act of committing a crime.

The majority of the group,

Edmiston said, attend the alternative school, which has staggered attendance hours throughout the day, so officers cannot know when the students are supposed to be in class. He said, however, members of the group sit on the countertops in the cook shack daily, which is not the intended use.

Where the current or-

SEE PARK RULE/A8



U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, Oregon talks with a group of Umatilla students Friday morning about the great strides they are making with robotics.

Wyden chats about education, state and federal initiatives

BY MAEGAN MURRAY
HERMISTON HERALD

Students and community members got a chance to voice their concerns about state and federal programs Friday when U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, Oregon, visited Umatilla for his yearly town meeting.

Students from Umatilla schools took the first round of questions, asking how Wyden plans to help improve the education system so that they won't have to suffer from large class sizes, why more funding isn't available for schools, as well as why graduation rates are so low compared with the rest of the nation.

Wyden said the root of the solution to the gradu-



U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, Oregon, talks with Clara Brownell Middle School robotics team 'The Nerdy Girls,' Friday morning during his visit to Umatilla for a town hall meeting.

ation rate question is getting students excited about their education.

Prior to taking questions, Wyden toured each of the Umatilla School District's robotics team stations and even got to

drive a few of the students' robots. He said programs like robotics get students excited about school, while also preparing them for life after high school.

"You are on the right

side of history," he said to the students as he test drove their robots. "Keep it up. We are very proud of what you have accomplished."

Wyden said the Umatilla School District

offers a variety of programs pertaining to science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields, like robotics, that are keeping students engaged and interested in school. He said the key to solving problems like graduation rates will be to add more of those types of programming so even more teens are engaged. He said playing basketball kept him interested in school. Regarding class size, Wyden said he agrees that more than 30 students to a classroom is excessive, which is what Umatilla is experiencing in the higher grades at the elementary school.

As far as funding, Wyden said he recently co-sponsored a bipartisan bill to renew programs such as the Payment in Lieu of Taxes and Secure Rural Schools programs, which would generate nearly \$1 million

SEE VISIT/A8

McNary Heights student testifies in support of more school funding

Umatilla faces \$500,000 shortfall if proposed budget passes

BY MAEGAN MURRAY
HERMISTON HERALD

Compared to when his sisters were in elementary school, McNary Heights Elementary School fifth-grader Alfonso Bernal said his elementary school education looks much different, and not in a good way.

Bernal testified before the Ways and Means education subcommittee Tuesday to talk about how years of state budget cuts



Bernal

have affected him negatively, especially when compared with the opportunities his two older sisters had no more than 10 years ago.

"Now, we have to hope that Walmart donates the unsold school supplies to our school because many of our families can't afford to buy them for us, and the school doesn't have them," he said.

While his sisters had class sizes of 24 students and access to school supplies, Bernal said his class size is in the low 30s, which isn't even the highest at the Uma-

SEE FUNDING/A18

Commission weighs in on landscape requirements

Lack of Hermiston ordinance unique among cities of similar size

BY SEAN HART
HERMISTON HERALD

To make Hermiston more attractive, properties being developed may soon have to dedicate a portion to landscaping.

At the Planning Commission meeting Wednesday, City Planner Clint Spencer said he has been researching landscaping ordinances in other cities and has yet to find a similarly sized city without some requirement to enhance aesthetic appeal.

He said the Community Enhancement Committee has spent

several months working on a proposed landscaping ordinance, but it wanted feedback from the Planning Commission before finalizing any recommendation for consideration by the commission and City Council.

The draft ordinance requires people to submit a landscape plan with all new development applications and establishes minimum landscaping coverage. Different developments and zones would have different requirements: For multi-family residential developments, 15 percent of the developed area would require landscaping; central commercial zone, 3 percent; outlying commercial zone, 6 percent; industrial zones, 3 percent or 10,000 square feet; and downtown commercial overlay, where the buildings occupy most of

SEE AESTHETICS/A18

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