what would work best with the climate and soil type of the area.

"I wanted them to get an opportunity to be creative and come up with their own ideas," he said. "They are so used to doing it in the classroom and not being able to be as creative. So I tried to get them to think outside the box and utilize their abilities that will be easy maintenance, have curb appeal and be family oriented.'

Bennett said he invited the students out to his home in Hermiston so they could see some of the plants and projects he was experimenting with there. He and the students then took a trip around town where students examined landscaping examples at various businesses and lots.

Sophomore Wyatt Paschal said the whole experience has been useful to him because he too hopes to become an agriculture teacher one day, and he appreciates the opportunity to be mentored by someone who already is in the field. Like Vandehey, he said he will use the skills he learns with his future classes.

"We might be able to plant a garden," he said. 'It gives me a background on what to know. I think it will be pretty useful."

So far, the students have mostly only tackled planning for the project. With spring right around the corner, however, the students are excited to get their hands dirty.

We are just starting to be able to do some stuff," junior Jansen Edmiston said this week. "We're digging the fire pit right now, and we're working on the back yard. We did



From left, Hermiston High School junior Jansen Edmiston, junior Emily Vandehey and sophomore Wyatt Paschal work on plants that will be sold in the school plant sale in May. Each of the three students are participating in the school's advanced landscaping class, which is doing the design and landscaping work for the Columbia Basin Student Homebuilder program's first student-built home.

the planting of the flowers by the main sign."

The overall design of the yard has yet to be completed, Bennett said, but students are slowly making strides with the limited time they have available to get everything done. He said, in addition to a fire pit, the students would like to add a bench swing in the back yard and a variety of plants that will suit Hermiston's climate. He said they have yet to start on the

front yard.

Edmiston said she is most excited to see what the final project looks like when it is completed at the end of the year.

"I'm excited to see it all come together," she said. Vandehey agreed.

"Twenty years later, when we drive past the house, we can say, 'Hey, I put that there," she said.

Paschal said he is also excited about learning the business side of landscaping. For the project, the students had to work with Davies to come up with a budget like they would in a real-life scenario.

"You get to go through your goals and priorities," he said. "I like learning all the business perspectives."

Bennett said he has enjoyed mentoring the students, even though they have struggled with staying focused at times.

"It is rewarding in a sense because, when we get it finished, they are going to be able to see it and reflect on it," he said. "With this millennials generation, maybe some of them will want to become gardeners. This might help them find out what they are interested in."

Bennett said the goal is to teach students the basics of landscaping and give them a background that could be useful in a multitude of career paths.

"I think this is very ben-

eficial," he said. "They get the construction side of it and the landscaping. Students learn some skills that they will maybe be able to learn in the future. Maybe they don't want to be sitting in an office and want to be out doing more hands-on skills ... It's all about encouraging them to keep an eye open, get them to think about 'What else can I do?' What I'm trying to do is teach them life skills.'

## continued from page A1

possession of the Umatilla County Fairgrounds, which houses the current center, and the fair moves to the new Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center under construction near Hermiston airport.

Fetter said the committee has toured other senior

centers in the area to generate ideas for the new facility, and he has brought back pictures from others he has toured. After developing criteria for the location near services, town center and parks, driving access, walkways, visibility and low noise — and the site at least 1.5 acres, expandstruction — the committee access, proximity to shopevaluated and debated the

merits of potential sites for several months before making its recommendation.

"We want to be able to tell the council we've exhausted this discussion, and this is what came out of it," Fetter said to the committee Tuesday before the vote.

The committee said the large size, expansion ping and "park-like, natural beauty" with the nearby canal as reasons for the choosing the site. The second preference was a site in downtown Hermiston on East Ridgeway Avenue and Northeast Second Street. and the third was the old Goodwill building on West Hermiston Avenue.

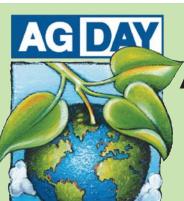
center Senior board ability and ease of con- potential, flat land, easy member and committee the grant application promember Virginia Beebe said she and many seniors

she asked preferred the Aspen Site.

"I think that's where it should be because of the park-like setting we could make there and a relaxing atmosphere," she said.

Committee ber Perry Hawkins, who liaison to the city during cess, said he is happy the process is moving for-

"This has taken us a little bit of time to get to this point, but I want to make sure we don't hastily get to where we really don't want to be in the long term, but I myself really like the Aspen one," he said. "To served as the senior center me, if we're going to do it, let's do it on good ground, clean ground and just put everything in and get this built."



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