

Different sort of school violence in news 23 years ago

Concerns about gang violence in Hermiston reached an all-time high in October 1992

By **JADE McDOWELL**
Staff Writer

A rise in school shootings has put discussions of school safety in the news recently, but years before Columbine High School became a household name Hermiston parents were already concerned about violence in local schools.

Their concerns came to a head during an Oct. 26, 1992, meeting that drew 150 parents.

From a story in the next day's Herald titled "Parents concerned over violence, gang activity" comes the following:

"Never tell the 150 parents who came to a meeting at Armand Larive

Junior High about school violence that no one cares about the schools or kids anymore.

Those parents do care and told each other about fights in the hallways and cafeteria. They told about threats to their children's safety and about rumors of guns and knives on campus.

"If we don't approach this as parents now, I'm afraid we are going to end up with guns and knives loose in the halls," said Rene Guterrez, one of the parents organizing the meeting. "We're not Portland or Seattle but we need to stop it now."

Parents told about chil-

dren asked to join gangs and then harassed if the answer was no. Other parents said their children were afraid to go to school.

It was fear for students' safety and education that motivated a group of four parents — Rene Gutierrez, Karen Smelser, Mary Hamilton and Val Henderson — to call a meeting yesterday evening. They asked George Anderson, a local attorney, to be the moderator.

"Yes, I do believe we have a gang problem," said school Principal Shannon Gorham. "It's not like the problem in Portland, but we do have the beginning of a problem."

The Oct. 27 story was followed by another on Nov. 3, 1992, titled "Parents patrol at junior high."

The article stated that about 40 parents had gotten together after the meeting to organize volunteer patrols in the mornings and after school to help teachers "calm outbreaks of violence" that were exacerbated by overcrowded conditions that required assigning students three to a locker.

The parents also took the initiative to double up on chaperons for the high school's Halloween dance.

The concerned parents took matters into their own hands after feeling frustrated with the Hermiston Police Department's response to perceived gang problems.

In an Oct. 6, 1992, article titled "Graffiti signals gang activity," says detective" then-Chief Grant Asher was quoted

as saying he didn't believe Hermiston had a gang problem, despite an assertion by Oregon State Police Detective Dick Stein that increasing graffiti saying "Norte 14" and "13" around the community signaled that students moving to the area from Portland and California were bringing gang affiliations with them.

Asher disagreed.

"We have a bunch of people running around, but I don't see a gang problem," he told the Herald. "You've got a case of the white kids calling the Hispanic kids names and they get tired of it, get a group together and fight back. Is that a gang? In my definition, no."

Parents weren't taking any chances, however, which is why they called a

community meeting later in the month to come up with a plan for combating school violence. Later in the year they invited Stein, a gang expert, to educate parents about possible signs their children were in a gang.

Hermiston History will be a regular feature in the Hermiston Herald. If you have something to share about the history of the greater Hermiston area, send your submission to editor@hermistonherald.com with "Hermiston History" in the subject line. If you have a question about the area's history you would like the Herald staff to look into, you can send your questions to the same email address with "Hermiston History question" in the subject line.

Umatilla seeks fire bond in Nov. 3 election

By **SEAN HART**
Staff Writer

The Umatilla Rural Fire Protection District board hopes a new bond effort on the November ballot will help the agency procure safer equipment, replace 30-year-old vehicles and improve fire stations.

District residents will soon see ballot measure 30-107, which would generate about \$1.8 million from a general obligation bond. If passed in the Nov. 3 election, the bond is estimated to cost tax payers an additional 54 cents per thousand dollars of assessed property value for 15 years. The owner of a \$100,000 home would see a tax increase of \$54 per year.

The total amount generated from the bond would be similar to the amount expected from a 10-year local option tax that was voted down last year, but property owners would pay less each year. Lt. Steve Potts said the district is in the same position it was in last year.

"The need that we have hasn't gone away," he said. "We need to have the equipment, and we haven't been able to get the resources or the funds ... because, over the years, costs have gone up, and we're at a fixed property tax rate. We have enough to operate day to day, but that's just about it."

The district has identified about \$3.2 million in needed equipment replacements and upgrades in the next 10 years — far more than this bond would provide. Potts said the list was cut down to "must have" equipment.

"The air packs are 19 years old, and these are what our firefighters are using to go into deadly atmospheres

and conditions, and they're relying on that equipment for their safety," he said. The packs are recommended for replacement at 12 years. "We really need those air packs. That's the number one priority we have at this point because it deals directly with firefighter safety."

The funding would also be used to replace a 1977 water tender, or tanker truck, and a 1979 heavy rescue vehicle and refurbish or replace a 1986 ladder truck and possibly a 1997 brush truck and a 1997 engine, according to information from the district.

Potts said if the district's equipment suffers a catastrophic failure similar to its last ladder truck and it cannot afford replacements, residents may end up having to pay more to insure their homes. He said some of the vehicles are already starting to show their age.

"In the last month, two of the vehicles we are looking to replace have been in the shop for repair," he said. "These apparatus are starting to cost us money from a maintenance perspective. It's not to say that new vehicles don't have these issues, but the likelihood is much, much less. And we're not saying we're going to go out and buy brand new, but we're certainly going to get newer (than 30-year-old firefighting vehicles)."

If funding allows, the fire stations would also be upgraded to include automatic doors and living quarters for quicker response times, according to information from the district.

For more information about the bond, visit umatillafire.org or call 541-922-3718.

Super Crossword

Answers

S	M	E	A	R	S	T	I	E	G	S	T	O	T	H	E	M	A	X	
H	O	W	L	A	T	A	N	N	O	Y	A	R	O	U	S	I	N	G	
O	V	I	E	D	O	R	I	C	A	N	N	E	B	R	A	S	K	A	
C	I	N	C	I	N	N	A	T	I	B	A	N	G	L	E	S	E	L	M
K	E	G	C	E	O	S	N	O	P	E	T	H	R	E	E				
			F	A	R	R	H	O	U	S	T	O	N	R	O	A	S	T	S
L	E	G	A	L	E	P	A	T	E	S	T	R	U	N	S				
A	G	A	R	A	M	I	N	O	I	A	N	O	V	A					
T	O	R	O	N	T	O	P	A	R	R	O	T	S	T	R	A	V	I	S
E	M	I	S	A	R	I	W	I	S	H	U	S	U	R	E	R	S		
N	A	S	T	Y	S	T	R	E	A	M	E	R	S	S	E	R	G	E	
E	N	H	A	N	C	E	A	L	T	O	Y	E	A	S	S	I	S		
S	I	L	I	C	A	A	T	L	A	N	T	A	F	L	A	C	O	N	S
S	A	Y	P	A	Z	D	O	N	U	T	O	L	I	O					
			W	H	O	D	U	N	I	T	Y	S	L	R	A	D	A	R	
I	N	D	I	A	N	A	R	E	C	A	P	S	T	R	E	X			
C	U	R	E	R	B	E	B	E	T	I	E	D	S	P	A				
A	G	O	P	I	T	T	S	B	U	R	G	H	P	A	R	T	I	E	S
R	E	N	T	E	R	I	A	E	L	S	I	E	M	O	I	N	E	S	
U	N	E	R	R	I	N	G	R	A	I	L	S	E	S	C	A	P	E	
S	T	R	E	S	S	E	S	G	R	A	D	E	D	E	S	I	S		



Is Your Daughter Celebrating Her Quinceañera?

Share the happy news with a **FREE** announcement!

Hermiston Herald

Submit your info online at:
www.hermistonherald.com/hh/submit-quinceanera
or e-mail us at: editor@hermistonherald.com



GUARANTEED

to beat

VERIZON & AT&T

PLUS, YOU'LL GET A \$150 PROMO CARD INSTANTLY.



Just bring in your bill and we guarantee we'll beat the price on your current Verizon or AT&T plan. If we can't, you'll get a \$50 Promo Card.

Plus, you'll get a \$150 Promo Card instantly to make that switch even sweeter.

SAMSUNG Galaxy S6

Undo your contract. Learn more at uscellular.com/undo.

Things we want you to know: Offer applies to current Verizon and AT&T customers on Shared Data Plans only and applies to the monthly recurring price plan only. Any applied discounts shall be valid for the first 24 months. Regular pricing applies thereafter. Must port in all lines of service on account. Offer valid on Shared Connect Plans up to 20GB. Offer valid only with the following devices: handsets, Tablets, routers, modems, hotspots and Home Phones. Customer must provide their current wireless bill for review. U.S. Cellular, at its sole discretion, has the right to deny an offer for any bill that appears altered or fraudulent. Shared Connect Plan and Retail Installment Contract required. Credit approval also required. A \$25 Device Activation Fee applies. A Regulatory Cost Recovery Fee applies (currently \$1.82/line/month); this is not a tax or gvmnt. required charge. Additional fees, taxes, terms, conditions and coverage areas apply and may vary by plan, service and phone. **\$50 U.S. Cellular Promotional Card:** If U.S. Cellular's Shared Connect and Retail Installment monthly plan price cannot beat your current Shared Data monthly plan price with AT&T or Verizon, you will be provided a \$50 U.S. Cellular Promotional Card issued by MetaBank, Member FDIC, pursuant to a license from Visa U.S.A. Inc. Valid only for purchases at U.S. Cellular stores and uscellular.com. One per account. To receive card, customer must go to beatyourplan.hit2o.com to register. Card will be received in 6-8 weeks. **\$150 U.S. Cellular Promotional Card:** Issued by MetaBank, Member FDIC, pursuant to a license from Visa U.S.A. Inc. Valid only for purchases at U.S. Cellular stores and uscellular.com. Must port in current number to U.S. Cellular. New line activation and Retail Installment Contract required. **Device Protection+:** Enrollment in Device Protection+ required. The monthly charge for Device Protection+ is \$8.99 for Smartphones. A deductible per approved claim applies. You may cancel Device Protection+ anytime. Federal Warranty Service Corporation is the Provider of the Device Protection+ ESC benefits, except in CA and OK. Limitations and exclusions apply. For complete details, see an associate for a Device Protection+ brochure. **Device Turn-In:** Customer must turn in all active devices from their former carrier's plan. Customer is responsible for deleting all personal information from device and removing any storage cards from devices. Devices must power on and cannot be pin locked. Device must be in fully functional working condition without any liquid damage or broken components, including, but not limited to, a cracked display or housing. Devices will not be returned to customer should they cancel transaction. Not eligible for U.S. Cellular's in-store or mail-in trade-in program. To be eligible, customer must register for My Account. **Kansas Customers:** In areas in which U.S. Cellular receives support from the Federal Universal Service Fund, all reasonable requests for service must be met. Unresolved questions concerning services availability can be directed to the Kansas Corporation Commission Office of Public Affairs and Consumer Protection at 1-800-662-0027. Offers valid at participating locations only and cannot be combined. Not available online or via telesales. See store or uscellular.com for details. Limited-time offer. Trademarks and trade names are the property of their respective owners. ©2015 U.S. Cellular