

# Drotzmann running for re-election

By **JADE McDOWELL**  
Staff Writer

Hermiston Mayor David Drotzmann says he will run for re-election.

Drotzmann, an optometrist and owner of Lifetime Vision Source, has been mayor since January 2013. He said on Thursday that he planned to file paperwork at City Hall later in the day to run for a third term.



**David Drotzmann**

Candidates have until 5 p.m. on Tuesday, March 8, to file for mayor or municipal judge. Municipal Judge Thomas Creasing has already filed for re-election. No one has filed to run against him or Drotzmann.

Drotzmann is currently serving a two-year term, but an update to the city charter approved by Hermiston voters has

since changed the mayor's seat to a four-year term starting in 2017.

If during the May 16 primary election two or fewer candidates file for a position, the election will be considered the general election. If more than two people run for a position, then the top two candidates with the most votes will advance to run against each other in the November general election.

Filing forms and manuals to run for office are available at City Hall, 180 NE Second St., or online at [sos.oregon.gov/elections/Pages/manuals-tutorials.aspx](http://sos.oregon.gov/elections/Pages/manuals-tutorials.aspx). Forms must be filed with the city recorder.

Candidates for mayor or municipal judge must be a resident of the city and have lived there for at least one year.

# Potts named interim fire chief

By **JENNIFER COLTON**  
Staff Writer

Steve Potts is now the interim chief of the Umatilla Rural Fire Protection District.

Fred Sheely, chairman of the Umatilla Fire Board, confirmed Monday the board had named Potts to the position during its February meeting.

Potts has handled most administrative duties for the district since September, when Chief Michael Roxbury went on medical leave. Potts and Roxbury are the only two paid employees of the Umatilla Rural Fire Protection District.

The two paid employees — fire chief and recruitment/retention officer — super-

vised the district's buildings, equipment and volunteers. Umatilla's roster includes 20 active volunteer firefighters and three reserve firefighters.

Potts became a volunteer firefighter with Umatilla in 1988. He accepted a full-time position as EMS coordinator in 2012 and shifted to recruitment and retention officer after the district contracted with Hermiston Fire and Emergency Services for ambulance services. The Umatilla district maintains quick response medical services as well as fire functions.

The Umatilla Rural Fire Protection District Board next meets Wednesday. Roxbury remains on medical leave.

# Two Rivers inmate dies after being found unresponsive in his cell

An Oregon Department of Corrections inmate died Saturday at a Portland-area hospital.

The inmate had been incarcerated at Two Rivers Correctional Institution in Umatilla. The death has been classified by the Department of Corrections as an unanticipated death and the Oregon State Police Criminal Investigation Division is conducting an investigation.



**Joel Abbot**

According to the Department of Corrections, staff at Two Rivers found inmate Joel Abbot, 60, unresponsive in his cell on Saturday. He was taken off-site for medical care at approximately 10:30 a.m.

The name of the Portland-area hospital where Abbot was taken was not released. The DOC said Abbot was pronounced dead at 5:05 p.m. Abbot

had in DOC custody for nearly 23 years, since March 23, 1993, and was serving a life sentence on one count of first-degree murder out of Deschutes County.

According to The (Bend) Bulletin, Abbot was convicted of killing Carolann Payne, who disappeared in 1985 at the age of 35. Her body was never found. Payne was Abbot's girlfriend at the time of her disappearance. Abbot was arrested in May 1992 after a prolonged investigation by the Deschutes County Sheriff's Office.

Next of kin has been notified. DOC said no other details were available at this time.

Two Rivers Corrections institution houses about 1,800 inmates in Umatilla.

# New Wellness Center at Hermiston High has already seen hundreds of patients

Center serves all district students and staff, seeing as many as 15 patients a day

By **JENNIFER COLTON**  
Staff Writer

On Thursday, the 225th patient walked through the doors at the Hermiston School District Wellness Center — a much higher visitation rate than the clinic's operators expected.

Opened after winter break, the clinic serves all students of the Hermiston School District, as well as district staff and their families.

"I'm elated by where we are with this partnership," Jon Mishra, district director of special programs, said Friday. "It's just incredible what has been done here. It's professional, aesthetically pleasing, and I think it's meeting a need."

The Hermiston School District began discussing the option of a wellness clinic in 2013. District staff reached out to the community to find out what was needed — and not needed — for students and staff. The district settled on a clinic on district property that functioned as a satellite office of an outside provider. The clinic would provide preventative and some emergency care but would not handle mental health or reproductive services.

"We know well kids do well in school. If you're sick or you're hurting, it eats at you and you don't do well," Mishra said. "We want to have a place for our students to go. Our purpose is to provide the care so our students and staff get their needs addressed and can return to school, to reduce time away from school for students and staff and to reduce absences."

Once the plan was set, the district started talking with Dr. Derek Earl, of Family Health Associates. The Hermiston medical practice won the bid for the Wellness Center and prepared for the expansion, and in late 2015, district crews and contractors transformed the former print shop with its open warehouse, long counter and rows of shelves into a professional medical clinic.

This week, student artwork provided the final cosmetic touches for the center. The hardest part for FHA was anticipating what needs would arise.

"We honestly had no idea what a school clinic like this would do," Earl said. "Our hope was to get an average of four patients a day so we didn't take a huge financial loss. We beat that in the first week."

The Wellness Center has been open almost two months and has never had a day without a patient visit.



STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

Dr. Derek Earl is the medical director for Family Health Associates and is one of seven doctors that will spend time working at the wellness center at Hermiston High School.



STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

Student artwork hangs on the walls of the waiting room at the new wellness center at Hermiston High School.

Providers have seen as many as 15 patients in one day.

Tiffany Fitzmorris, center supervisor, said the Wellness Center is an added resource for parents and school staff. School nurses can refer students to the center, and parents can keep students on campus instead of taking them out of school for a half or full day.

Parents can schedule appointments at the center just like they would at any doctor's office, but because the Wellness Center only serves the district, it has shorter wait times and tailored appointments. Patients at the Wellness Center have ranged from adults nearing retirement to infants just weeks old. The needs have ranged as well, from colds to concussions.

"We're really all about trying to get that kid seen and get them well. We're working with the parent or guardian, we're working with the school, we're working with the patient to get them seen and well," Fitzmorris said. "We've seen a couple of kids and stitched them up after their laceration and they come back in for their suture removal. We've seen everything from the common cold to the well-child check to make sure they're caught up on their vaccinations. Whatever comes through the door is usually seen or taken care of."

The facility is not open to the general public, and students are only seen with

written consent from parents. New patients who walk through the door can fill out paperwork and bill their insurance just like they would at the FHA main office at Good Shepherd Medical Center.

Family Health Associates includes four doctors and three nurse practitioners. The providers each rotate through the Wellness Center so the

office is staffed each day it is open. Earl is no stranger to the Hermiston School District: His own three children are students, and he has done sports physicals for more than a decade.

"A large number of the students and staff were already our patients at Family Health Associates, so it is an extension of that," he said. "It's also given us an opportunity to serve people we don't normally see a doctor."

"The biggest surprise for us is that we've had consistent patients. Our goals for this was never to make money — it was to provide a service."

He said the clinic is now considering expanding hours to meet the need.

The Wellness Center is open from 8 a.m. to noon on Mondays and from noon to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday. The center is open on district inservice days but closed on district holidays, such as spring break.

**BABYSITTING BASICS**

For babysitters ages 10-15. Learn childcare techniques, children's developmental stages and what to expect, basic first aid and infant and child CPR. \$30, includes lunch & all class materials.

**9:00am - 3:00pm**  
**March 12 or April 2**

Must pre-register and pre-pay, call 541-667-3509

**SELF DEFENSE**

Learn self-defense techniques, including: Awareness, home security, verbal de-escalation, evading and escaping maneuvers. This is a contact class. Age 12 and up. Free, but must pre-register. Call 541-667-3509.

**March 31 • 6:00 - 8:00pm**  
**GSMC Conference Center 2**

**LIVING WITH ALZHEIMER'S MID-STAGE:**

This FREE program is designed to provide caregivers with the knowledge, tools and strategies needed to cope with a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease or dementia.

**March 10 • 2:00 - 6:00pm**  
**GSMC Conference Room 2**

**POWERFUL TOOLS FOR THE CAREGIVER:**

A FREE program for family caregivers. Build a toolkit for taking better care of yourself while caring for a loved one. Learn how to reduce stress and relax, communicate effectively, reduce guilt and anger, make tough decisions, set goals and problem solve. Must attend the first class. Registration is required as space is limited. **Sign up by 3/18.**

**Tuesdays • 4:00 - 7:30pm**  
**March 22 through April 26**  
Call 541-667-3509

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**HEALTHY FRIDAYS**

FREE health screenings & health coaching: Blood pressure checks, weigh-ins, body mass index, cholesterol and glucose.

**First Friday of each month**  
**9:30 - 11:30am**  
**Third Friday of each month**  
**2:00 - 4:00pm**  
GSMC Conference Center 7 (by Education Dept)

Information or to register call (541) 667-3509 or email

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*Tim & Annette Terraberry's*  
**Dinner & Auction**

**Sunday, March 13th**  
**4:00pm**  
**Hermiston High School Commons**

*Tim is battling Cancer, so please help support this wonderful couple.*

**Doors open 4pm • Tri Tip dinner buffet 5pm**  
**Silent Auction • Tickets \$35**

Tickets may be purchased at the Hermiston Chamber, American West Properties and Oasis Vineyard Church. A table for 8 can be purchased for \$280.

If you have any questions or would like to volunteer, please call or text Nancy Walchli at 541-571-1723.