

**CERAMICS:**

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ally do a 3-D piece. It's really different when you're used to doing something flat," she said. "It's really cool to have this opportunity in my last year."

To Galaviz' right, fellow senior Monica Aguilar agreed with the opportunity.

"It's different than anything we've ever had," Aguilar said. "This is really cool."

Both seniors said working with ceramics is more difficult than they expected. At a nearby table, juniors Dalton Hains and James Zwiefelhofer also called the unit fun and challenging.

"It's really interesting doing something new like this," Hains said. "I came into this class thinking I'd be doing a lot of the same things I've been doing the past couple years, but this is completely different."

The students will form the clay, let it dry for a week or so, then fire it in the high school kiln. After the material has cooled, it will be glazed with color and then re-fired.

Students in three classes are working with the program, and each student will complete three different ceramic projects this year. In the future, Smith envisions pottery wheels for the students to experience spinning clay and to grow the program into ceramics classes instead of just a unit in the advanced art classes. Smith herself, however, will be unable to continue with the program. Smith's husband, Wade, recently accepted a position as superintendent of the Walla Walla School District, and the entire family will be relocating.

"It breaks my heart that I am having to leave a program that has so much potential, and has already shown growth," she said Tuesday. "Our plan at this point is to find someone who is going to continue the drawing and painting, but who is also very driven to continue the ceramics program on the path it is headed."

Smith said the art cohort has begun discussions of how to continue the program and re-



Junior James Zwiefelhofer places clay for a coil pots Monday at Hermiston High School. The school recently revitalized its ceramics program thanks to two grants.

STAFF PHOTO BY JENNIFER COLTON

place Smith on the staff. She said it is essential the new high school art teacher continues to maintain ceramics, contests, volunteer work and the art club that have been established in the last few years.

"I think people are aware of how important it is that stu-

dents express themselves. Self expression is something these kids need, especially at this point in their lives. This is an outlet for them," Smith said. "It's phenomenal what these kids can do when they have an outlet. When you give them an opportunity to shine, they

will."

Grants for the Hermiston Education Foundation are given twice a year to teachers in the Hermiston School Districts for projects that enhance educational experiences. The most recent round of grants total \$20,230.

**MURDER:**

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Scientific Services Bureau of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department for finding clues that helped confirm what police thought was taking place.

Edmiston, though, said he could not discuss a theory of the crime or provide certain details because he did not want to jeopardize the investigation. Umatilla County District Attorney Dan Primus said much the same.

He and Edmiston met for lunch last week and discussed the homicide. Primus, who is running for re-election, said Hermiston police keep his office informed about developments and actions in the case. He explained providing details of a crime, though — what kind of gun a shooter used, for example, or where the victim was shot — makes it harder for police to sort out what happened and then for his office to bring charges.

Law enforcement in Morrow County is in a similar hard place with the murder of 16-year-old Ariel Velasco. Someone gunned him down in the street the night of Dec. 18, 2010. So far, no arrests.

Morrow County District Attorney said without a cold case team to crack the case, police have to wait for someone to spill a new clue.

"I think there's still people out there that know," he said, "... but no one has come forward."

Nelson said Velasco's older brother, Alexandre "Alex" Perez Velasco, 24, is wanted on an attempted murder charge for the November 2012 shooting of David Ramirez in Boardman. And Ramirez, 33, of Irrigon, was one of 13 people the Blue Mountain Enforcement Narcotics Team arrested in late February. He now faces drug charges.

Nelson said maybe with time a person would mature and break from the gang rules of staying silent. But until then, it looks like a killer remains free.

Edmiston said Hermiston police are on the right track to find who killed Madrigal, even if the case is a slog.

"A handful of people have intimate knowledge of what took place that night," Edmiston said. "We're confident knowing that the people involved have had criminal histories in the past and will continue to have engagements with law enforcement."

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