

Hermiston Fire launches video series online

Videos highlight fire operations

By **JENNIFER COLTON**
Staff Writer

Hermiston Fire & Emergency Services wants you to know what they do — 50 seconds at a time.

The organization recently launched a web series focused on the staff, actions, and experiences of Hermiston firefighters and paramedics. The first video introduces host Josh Smith and the idea; the second talks about a firefighter's work schedule, and the third demonstrates firefighter turn-out gear. Each is about one minute long.

"We show up when people need something, but they don't really know what we do," Chief Scott Stanton said. "This gives people an idea. These guys are out there every day."

The first video was uploaded to Facebook on Feb. 22 and has more than 2,400 views. The success surprised not only Stanton, but Smith, the video's host and director.

"I didn't think anyone outside of the fire department would watch it, much less like it, but I've been getting people from Portland, Hermiston, people I've never met sharing it," he said.

Smith, a firefighter paramedic, has been with Hermiston Fire and Emergency Services for seven years. Smith said the idea for the series came from a brainstorming session for Umatilla Fire District 1, the proposed consolidation of the fire districts for Hermiston and Stanfield.

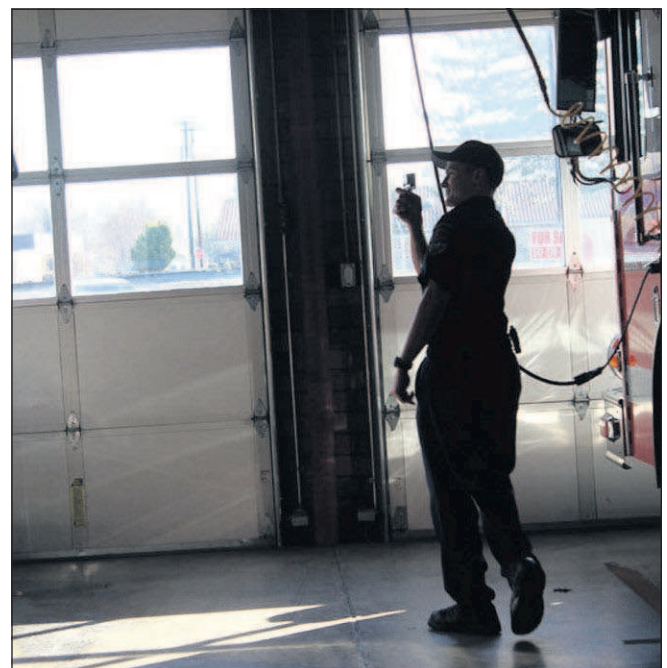
"We identified information as one of the primary reasons this failed last time, so we were brainstorming ideas about how to get the information out," Smith said. "After the first episode, we saw it as a tool for more than just reformation. We can use this to show people what it is we do, to answer questions, and to make sure people know we're real people."

What started as a proposal for a 40-second commercial about the reformation transformed into an ongoing web series providing snippets and information about the life of a firefighter. So far, Smith has filmed each episode



STAFF PHOTO BY JENNIFER COLTON

Josh Smith, firefighter and paramedic, is filming a new web series for Hermiston Fire and Emergency Services using a GoPro.



STAFF PHOTO BY JENNIFER COLTON

Josh Smith, firefight and paramedic, films a tour of Fire Station 1 for Hermiston Fire and Emergency Services' new web series, launched late last month.

with his Go-Pro camera. The first video — 41 seconds long — took 3 1/2 hours to complete, partially because it was Smith's first time on the camera and partially because he was still hammering out the details of the new venture.

Smith has already started filming videos that tour the station and explain different equipment. He plans to shoot some video out on calls as well, but, so far, his shifts have been too busy with response calls to take the extra time to film.

"I don't want it to get boring and mundane of me just sitting at a desk," Smith said. "I wanted to get some action shots yesterday, but we were too busy. I got some of Code 3 driving from behind the dashboard, but that's about it."

The district hopes to upload a video about twice a week and will continue as long as there is community interest — regardless of the results of the May election.

"We started the series specifically for the vote, but my goal isn't to film the reformation, it's about getting people talking," he said. "If people have questions or comments, post those on the video, and then I will address them. As long as people are interested, we'll keep going."

To view the videos, visit the Hermiston Fire and Emergency Services' Facebook page.



STAFF PHOTO BY JENNIFER COLTON

Firefighters Josh Smith, left, and Jesse Brown discuss film editing for Hermiston Fire and Emergency Services' new web series.

Firefighters climb for charity

Department raised \$19,000

By **JENNIFER COLTON**
Staff Writer

It takes 69 floors of stairs and 1,356 steps in full firefighting gear to reach the observation deck of the Columbia Center in downtown Seattle, the second highest building west of the Mississippi.

Despite the climb, nine Hermiston firefighters made the trek for a good cause this weekend.

The Scott Firefighter Stairclimb supports The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, raising money through sponsorships, individual and department fundraising and entry fees. Firefighters — in full turnout gear — race



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to the top of the building, and Hermiston Fire and Emergency Services again sent a team to the fundraising challenge.

Firefighters are timed for how long it takes to climb all 69 floors in full gear. Hermiston's times this year were:

Destry Stewart- 17:26

Dennis McClure- 22:07
Corey Gorham- 26:44
Ed Clark- 27:06
Jesse Brown- 27:44
Mike Bozeman- 32:02
Jesse Reagan- 38:51
Daniel Hinton- 35:26
Mathew Hodge- 43:00
Hermiston Fire's team raised a total of \$19,005 this year.

"I'm proud of the efforts of those guys that do this year in and year out. I did it last year, and I know how hard it is," Hermiston Fire Chief Scott Stanton said Monday. "It's for a great cause and they do a great job representing Hermiston in Seattle."



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