



ABOUT TOWN

Barbecue cooks up support for local kids

A back to school barbecue will serve as a fundraiser to provide school supplies for area students in need.

The event is set for Saturday from 4-8 p.m. in the parking lot at Sub Zero Restaurant & Lounge, 100 W. Highway 730, Irrigon. The cost is \$5 for burgers and chips or \$4 for hot dogs and chips. In addition, a Bouncin' Party House will be on hand for the kids.

For more information, call 541-922-4374 or search Facebook for "Sub Zero."

Memory Care Homes sets open house

A grand opening and ribbon-cutting event is planned at Memory Care Homes.

Specializing in the care of individuals with Alzheimer's disease or dementia, the program features 16 suites in a home-like atmosphere. The project is part of Guardian Angel Homes.

The public is welcome to the celebration at 3 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 8, at 540 N.W. 12th St., Hermiston. For more information, call 541-564-9070 or visit www.guardianangelhomes.com/hermiston/home.

Tiny town puts on big music festival

HERMISTON HERALD

Shinyribs of Austin, Texas, will headline the 2016 Wheatstock Music Festival.

Kevin Russell, the band's frontman performed with The Gourds during the 2013 event in Helix. DuWayne Dunlap, president of the Wheatstock board, is thrilled to bring the showman back to town.

In its ninth year, Wheatstock is Saturday beginning at 1 p.m. at Quantum 9 Arena in Helix. Tickets are \$25. Admission is free for military personnel with identification and youths 12 and under.

The show kicks off with a Guitar Pull, which Dunlap likened it to an open mic. Musicians can come up and play a couple of songs and then pass the mic to the next person.

Other performers include Wasteland Kings (La Grande), Tylor & the Train Robbers (Boise), Frog Hollow Band (Walla Walla), Tyler Brooks & The Hook (Pendleton), Space Car (Boise) and Imperial Twang (Pendleton). Shinyribs will take the stage at 8 p.m.

The music festival, Dunlap said, is a family event. Free camping is available and people are invited to bring their chairs and find a cozy spot on the grass arena. Bouncy houses will be available and the pool will be open to the evening. Food offerings are provided by Andrae's Kitchen — named the 2016 Food Truck Restaurant of the Year.

For more information, visit www.wheatstock.org or search Facebook for "Wheatstock Music Festival."

VIGIL PLANNED FOR SHOOTING VICTIMS

By JADE McDOWELL
Staff Writer

Hermiston is looking for healing after a murder-suicide that sent shock waves rippling through the community.

The tragedy unfolded Thursday morning, when Hermiston police responding to a report of shots fired entered the home of Kenneth E. Valdez, 45, at 130 NW 11th St. to find Valdez and a fellow Hermiston High School wrestling coach Jason E. Huston, 45, dead. They also found Andria Bye, 35, with a gunshot wound. She told police that Huston had shot her and Valdez before killing himself.



Ken Valdez



James "JJ" Hurtado

Police soon learned that Huston had picked up Bye's son James "JJ" Hurtado, 14, a little over an hour before the shooting, to play disc golf. The discovery set off a frantic search of the area by law enforcement and family, ending when Oregon State Police discovered Hurtado's body that evening in a rugged location off of Country Lane west of Hermiston. They believe he was also killed by Huston.

A candlelight vigil for the victims is planned for 8:30 p.m. today at McKenzie Park.

Ky-Leigh Nelson, who helped organize the vigil along with Bonnie Griffith, Kari George and Angie Hocker, said she is one of the nursing students Bye teaches at Blue Mountain Community College.

After discussing the idea of holding a vigil for Bye at BMCC, Nelson said they decided to expand it to a community event that would allow people to show their support for all of the people affected by the tragedy.

"It's just a moment for people to shed some tears and share some support," she said.

Participants are asked to bring candles, glow sticks, small flashlights or other devices that will help light up the park.

Multiple GoFundMe ac-

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STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

Police investigate the scene of a shooting that left two dead and one injured at the corner of Northwest 11th Street and West Madrona Avenue on Thursday in Hermiston.



STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

Police officers talk outside the scene of a shooting at the intersection of Northwest 11th and West Madrona Avenue on Thursday in Hermiston.



STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

Umatilla County Sheriff's deputies investigate near where the body of James "JJ" Hurtado was discovered late Thursday evening on Friday at the end of Country Lane west of Hermiston.

Police release more details

On Monday police released more details in the ongoing investigation, revealing that Huston used a 9 mm Glock pistol to carry out the killings.

Hermiston Police Chief Jason Edmiston said it was premature to discuss a motive, but all of the people involved knew each other. Huston and Valdez had been friends since they wrestled together in high school. Huston and Bye had previously dated. And after Huston and Bye ended their relationship Huston continued to act as something of a father figure to Hurtado.

Edmiston said Bye gave a detailed statement to police, but Huston had not told her he shot her son. As police searched for her missing son that day they learned of two places that Huston was known to go shooting recreationally. "When we got that, it was starting to get dark," Edmiston said, "so we had to hurry."

Detectives went to both sites, he said, and found the boy's body off Country Lane about two miles outside the Hermiston city limits.

Police found a pickup that belonged to Huston on Bridge Road, which is near Country Lane, but Edmiston said Huston drove another pickup into town and parked it at Foxwood Apartments near Valdez's home.

While Valdez had a roommate, Edmiston said, that person was at work during the shooting.

Huston was arrested in 2009 for menacing and unlawful possession of a firearm. The state dropped the menacing charge and he was sentenced to a year of probation and 20 hours of community service after pleading no contest to the gun charge.

His family is holding a private funeral service.

—Phil Wright

City, fire district reach lease deal on fire hall

Fire district will pay \$200,000 over next four years

By JADE McDOWELL
Staff Writer

The Hermiston City Council approved leases with the fire district and school district on Monday night.

The newly-formed Umatilla County Fire District 1 will lease the current fire department building at 320 S First St. from the city at \$75,000 during the first year, \$50,000 the second and third years, \$25,000 the fourth year and \$1 per year after that.



STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

Umatilla County Fire District 1 is leasing the Bob Shannon Safety Center at 320 S First St. from the city of Hermiston.

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