



# Hermiston Herald

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## BRIEFLY

screen-free week



Activities offered during Screen Free Week

People are encouraged to read, play, think, create, get active and spend more time with family and friends during Screen Free Week.

Organized by the Healthy Communities Coalition Children's Health Committee, some free activities are planned:

- Monday, May 8 from 6-7 p.m. at Sunset Elementary School, 300 E. Catherine Ave., Hermiston. People can play disc golf, participate in early childhood activities, engage in parachute play and Food Hero recipe tasting. Free dental kits will be distributed to kids.

- Thursday, May 11 at 5:30 p.m. at Lovin' Spadefuls Community Garden at Good Shepherd Medical Center, 610 N.W. 11th St., Hermiston. A walk and bike event for all ages. It includes Food Hero recipe tasting, a planting activity and free dental kits for kids.

For more information, contact Angie Treadwell at 541-567-8321 or [angela.treadwell@oregonstate.edu](mailto:angela.treadwell@oregonstate.edu).



## HARKENRIDER CENTER TO BRING SENIORS DOWNTOWN

By **JADE McDOWELL**  
Staff Writer

Construction is now under way on a new and long-awaited senior center in Hermiston to be known as the Harkenrider Center.

Ground was broken in a ceremony last Wednesday for the new center. The Hermiston Senior Center board and city haven't always seen eye to eye on design and future use of the building. It will be the exclusive home of the senior center for its first five years and in 2022 will expand to some community use in the evenings. But Kathy English, a prep cook for the center's twice-a-week meals for seniors, said there was a lot to look forward to about the new building.

"I actually think it's going to be wonderful," she said. "It's going to be bigger and better for us."

Mayor David Drotzmann called the groundbreaking a "historic event" taking place amid major changes to Hermiston. Those changes include a new trade and event center being built south of town and the sale of the former Umatilla County Fairgrounds, where the current senior center sits, to Hermiston School District.

"There is a lot of change going on, but this community does as it always does and rallies around a cause," he said.

Drotzmann said the Harkenrider Center wouldn't be possible without collaboration from a number of entities, including the "guidance and leadership" of the senior center board, a 50-year lease of the site from Hermiston School District, a \$2 million Community Development Block Grant from the federal government and \$750,000 from the city of Hermiston.

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STAFF PHOTOS BY KATHY ANEY

**Above:** Frank Harkenrider (right) stands with Hermiston Mayor David Drotzmann at the official groundbreaking of the Harkenrider Center in Hermiston on Wednesday. **Top:** Hermiston Mayor David Drotzmann speaks to a crowd gathered at the site of the future Harkenrider Center on Wednesday at the official groundbreaking. Frank Harkenrider, for whom the center is named, listens on.

**"IT'S KIND OF FULL CIRCLE. IT'S JUST KIND OF CRAZY, SO MUCH HAS CHANGED. BUT THIS IS HOME, AND TO HELP OUT WITH THE SENIORS, IT'S A BLESSING FOR ME."**

KAREN BLAIR - SENIOR CENTER COOK

## Neighbors take issue with EOTEC noise

Residents and business owners opposed to changing the name

By **JADE MCDOWELL**  
Staff Writer

Construction of the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center will provide a bigger, better venue for events like the Umatilla County Fair, but that community benefit has come with a price for the project's neighbors.

Property owners in the area have banded together to form the Hermiston Airport Road Neighborhood Association to address nuisance complaints and to fight a proposal to change the name of Airport Road which they share with the project.

The city of Hermiston has petitioned Umatilla County to change the name of the road where EOTEC is located in order to mitigate confusion with Airport Way, which also branches off of North Highway 395 but dead ends into the parking lot of the Hermiston Municipal Airport.

City manager Byron Smith said delivery trucks and visitors frequently turn down the wrong road and have to turn around in the airport parking lot and make a left turn back onto Highway 395. People in town may eventually get used to turning onto the right road, he said, but one of the goals of EOTEC is to bring in events that will attract out-of-town visitors too.

"We want to make it easy to find," he said.

The city chose to pursue a name change for Airport Road instead of

Airport Way because they believed the word "airport" should stay with the road actually leading to an airport.

Airport Road residents and business owners, however, said the inconvenience of an address change for them would be significant. Gary Culp of Gary Culp Machine said it would be an "absolute nightmare" for his business.

"I'm 100 percent against it," he said.

He said Gary Culp Machine and his secondary business Gear Tec, which manufactures and sells tool kits nationally, would be hurt when mail from customers and suppliers was lost in the confusion. There would also be a cost for updating everything from legal paperwork to

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