

SENIORS:

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Frank Harkenrider, whose name the center will bear, was front and center at the proceedings, pumping his fist and yelling "Yay!" when he reached the row of ceremonial golden shovels lined up for a photo op.

Drotzmann said the city felt it appropriate to name the center after Harkenrider in recognition of the 50 years of time he put in as a Hermiston city council member and mayor.

"That's 50 years of public service to the community," he said.

The building will include a large gathering space, two breakout rooms, office, restrooms, a kitchen, balcony, elevator and unfinished basement. A landscaped parking area will stretch across where Ridgeway Avenue curves into Northeast Second Street and into the current parking lot behind Hermiston Public Library.

To celebrate the occasion the senior center board arrived via limousine. Board member Virginia Beebe said she arranged the treat as a surprise for the group after the hard work they

have put in on the project.

Beebe said right now her biggest hope for the new senior center is for the city to "build it as fast as they can."

The building isn't expected to be ready until late 2017 or early 2018, she said, but the seniors will have to leave their current building this month to make way for the school district's demolition of the buildings on the fairgrounds.

In the interim, Our Lady of Angels Catholic Parish at 565 W Hermiston Ave. has offered up space for the senior center to continue to serve meals to seniors starting May 16.

"It's a different kitchen, but it's a doable kitchen," Beebe said.

Karen Blair, the senior center's cook, said the site of the Harkenrider Center is the former site of Armand Larive Middle School, where she attended seventh and eighth grade.

"It's kind of full circle," she said. "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."

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Jurisdiction issues held up child porn investigation

Jarvis Buck of Echo has hearing to change plea to child porn charges

By PHIL WRIGHT
Staff Writer

Jarvis Donald Buck of Echo has a hearing Friday to change his plea to charges he possessed child pornography.

The deal comes almost two years after police received the initial tip that led to his arrest.

Hermiston police chief Jason Edmiston explained the Oregon Department of Justice — by way of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children — contacted his department in June 2015 about potential child pornography at an internet protocol address related to Buck. An IP address is a numeric designation that identifies a computer's location on the internet.

Hermiston detectives started working the case, Edmiston said, but ran into a significant hurdle about a week later when internet service providers Charter Communications and CenturyLink demanded subpoenas before

releasing any customer information.

Detective Robert Guerrero testified to a grand jury to obtain the court order, Edmiston said, which allowed for the department to uncover the internet address. But that presented another complication — determining police jurisdiction.

The IP address returned to Buck, who was living in Echo, a city that receives its police services from Stanfield.



Buck

Bryon Zumwalt, Stanfield police chief, said Hermiston detectives told him about Buck, but his small department lacked the resources to take on the case. Zumwalt also said he knew Buck's family dynamics and did not consider him an immediate threat to the community, and that Zumwalt knew Hermiston's investigation was underway.

Edmiston said Hermiston detectives provided all the case information to a detective at the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office with the understanding that it would pursue the case. But Undersheriff Jim Littlefield said sheriff's detectives did not

investigate because Echo is under Stanfield's purview.

Hermiston police on March 8, 2016, received more cybertips through the Oregon justice department pointing to Buck. Edmiston said that led to conversations with a DOJ special agent and the Umatilla County District Attorney's Office.

"When we got the last tip and saw this was a pattern," Edmiston said. "It was clear we needed to take (the case) because we had the resources to do it."

Hermiston detective Randy Studebaker drew the case. He also worked on the Blue Mountain Enforcement Narcotics Team, the local task force that takes down criminal drug operations. He was due to rotate off the assignment in early 2017, Edmiston said, so the team conducted a sweep Feb. 14, 2017 that included Buck.

"Our detectives wanted to make sure Mr. Buck was dealt with appropriately," the chief said.

Edmiston said Stanfield police should have been the agency on the case, but Hermiston de-

partment members have additional training on internet crimes. He said police have to take additional precautions with child pornography cases and are "super sensitive about even how information is shared with another agency" to avoid breaking the law by sharing exploitive images of children.

Buck, 38, pleaded not guilty to five counts of first degree encouraging child sexual abuse stemming from the possession of digital images of child pornography, according to court records, and in a separate case he pleaded not guilty to possession of methamphetamine. He remains in the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton.

His defense attorney, Thomas Gray of Pendleton, filed a motion April 6 to delay the trial.

"Defendant had wanted to fire me but now fences are patched," Gray stated in affidavit, and he also needed more time to prepare and work on "an acceptable plea negotiation."

That deal could see fruition Friday afternoon during the change of plea hearing in the Hermiston courtroom of Circuit Judge Eva Temple.

EOTEC:

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advertising.

During a public hearing before the county commission on Wednesday, Culp recommended that the city instead change Airport Way to Municipal Airport Way, and commissioner Bill Elfering said that was one option the county could bring to the city before making a final decision.

Others testified they would go through similar expense and inconvenience, and presented the commission with a petition with 34 signatures, representing 17 addresses on Airport Way. The language of the petition also stated that there is "no system of checks and balances" on EOTEC since the project's partners are the city and county and they are the ones making decisions about things like renaming Airport Road.

Chris Waive, a resident of Airport Road who estimated he lives about half a mile from EOTEC, said the clearest example of the city and county's conflict of interest on EOTEC is with noise complaints.

He said the pounding bass from weddings, quinceañeras and other parties held at EOTEC on a regular basis can be heard from inside his home. The noise used to go as late as 2 a.m., he claimed, as people technically stopped their events at midnight but played music during "cleanup." After frequent complaints, the noise usually stops at midnight now, Waive said, but it still disrupts neighbors' way of life.

"The neighbors don't feel midnight is a reasonable time," he said. "We don't go to bed at midnight. We have to sit there and listen to the bass going boom boom boom while trying to sleep."

When Waive complained about the noise, however, he was told by the city that since his residence was outside the city limits the city's noise ordinance did not apply to his complaints. He was then told by the county that since EOTEC is inside the city limits the county had no authority to enforce its noise ordinance on events at EOTEC.

He also said that neighbors are acting as "hall monitors for EOTEC" as party-goers sometimes park along Airport Road or on private property after events, "getting high or getting busy" in their vehicles.

Richard Misener, another neighbor, echoed complaints about the noise level during events and said he was frustrated by the lack of recourse.

"They think they're exempt from their own city ordinance," he said.

Smith acknowledged that neighbors were in a legal "no-man's land" the way the city and county's noise ordinances were written, but said the city had tried to be responsive.

"We have been trying to be conscious of that concern and make sure things get shut down at mid-

night," Smith said.

He said recently after a neighbor called dispatch to complain about the noise, a Hermiston police officer headed to EOTEC to see if he needed to tell event-goers to quiet down. He said, however, that the officer reported that he could "barely hear" the noise while standing in the parking lot.

Smith said Rotary Club is donating trees to the project and as those trees grow they should help provide a natural buffer for noise.

Planting trees was one

of the suggestions made by neighbors, but another suggestion — that events shut down at 10 p.m. — Smith said would be more difficult.

"People don't want their event to end at 10 and so they would go somewhere else," he said.

Another complaint from neighbors has been a lack of communication. Mariah Murray said her family came home one day to see their fence and trees along the fenceline gone. She said someone at the county told the family that they had re-surveyed the property and found that the

fence was actually on EOTEC property. Later, she said, they discovered more trees had been removed to make way for new power lines running to EOTEC.

"We do not have a problem with change," she wrote in an email. "It is inevitable. We are willing to coexist. But there has to be communication and they can not just waltz in and take what they want."

Smith acknowledged that there had been a "miscommunication" with the Murrays and also that the fence could have been restored more quickly than it was.

He said that the city, county and EOTEC board understand that living next to an event center instead of an empty field is a hard adjustment for neighbors. They are striving to improve their communication with neighbors, he said, which is why they went door to door and invited them to a meeting in March to air all of their concerns. He said the board is working to find solutions for concerns voiced at the meeting.

Contact Jade McDowell at jmcdowell@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4536.

5TH ANNUAL CRUISIN' FOR SCHOLARSHIPS CAR SHOW

Blue Mountain COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SATURDAY MAY 13 9am-2pm

BMCC Pendleton Campus Main Lawn

A car, truck, and motorcycle show with proceeds benefiting the BMCC Diesel Technology Program and student scholarships.

Car Registration: \$20, includes dash plaque and first 50 entries receive complimentary goodie bag.

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Hermiston's Aging Buildings

Rocky Heights Elementary (53 years old), Highland Hills Elementary (35 years old), and Sandstone Middle School's utility mechanisms are in need of repair due to failing infrastructure or core components. Roofs, mechanical units, and utility mechanisms should be replaced.

Examples at Rocky Heights: Garbage cans have been placed in various classrooms to catch water dripping from the ceiling. Overheated or freezing cold classrooms are due to the outdated heating & cooling system, making it an uncomfortable learning environment.

PROPOSED SOLUTION:

- Replace Rocky Heights and Highland Hills Elementary Schools on same site; address deferred maintenance and obsolete, failing heating and cooling systems at Sandstone Middle School.

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