

National Night Out encourages community connections

By **TAMMY MALGESINI**
COMMUNITY EDITOR

Several area communities are encouraging people to get out and get to know their neighbors Tuesday, Aug. 1.

In its 34th year, National Night Out promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to help in creating safer living environments.

The program's purpose is to enhance relationships between neighbors, law enforcement and other first responders while fostering a true sense of community. In addition, it brings police and neighbors together under positive circumstances.

Local law enforcement personnel and community leaders tout the benefits of National Night Out.

Chief Jason Edmiston of the Hermiston Police Department said the program provides an important opportunity to engage the public in a positive manner. The timing, he said, is especially relevant



FILE PHOTO

Erica Sandoval of the Hermiston Police Department talks with an attendee during an ice cream social block party during a past National Night Out in Hermiston.

with some perceptions about law enforcement.

"National Night Out is just one day out of the year where we can try to enhance the existing relationships and partnerships we have," Edmiston said.

Laurie Nelsen of the Echo Public Library said the event helps in creating a sense of community. Also, she said it assists in building positive relationships with law enforcement and other city leaders.

"If people aren't afraid of police officers, they would be more willing to contact them if something is needed," Nelsen said.

Tim Miers, training officer/evidence custodian with Hermiston Police Department, agreed — saying it provides an avenue for the public to connect with first responders.

"People can get to know each other in a relaxed atmosphere," he said. Joyce Wright, Stanfield

Police Department community resource officer, said National Night Out facilitates bringing the community together — creating an opportunity for neighbors to get to know each other. When neighbors communicate, she said, it has a direct impact on criminal activity.

"I think it helps immensely with cutting down crimes," Wright said.

For more about National Night Out, visit <https://natw.org>. Area community activities include:

HERMISTON

In conjunction with city officials, the Hermiston Police Department has coordinated National Night Out activities for 19 years.

The National Night Out treasure hunt is currently underway in Hermiston (see bonus clue and more information on Page 1). In addition to an ice cream social block party held Tuesday at 6:15 p.m. in the neighborhood of the person who finds the golden

medallion, block parties are expected to spring up all over town.

Law enforcement, first responders and city officials hope to visit neighborhoods that are having parties. To inform the police department of planned parties, leave a message at 541-667-5112.

ECHO

In its 11th year of celebrating National Night Out, Echo will host a community event Tuesday from 6-8 p.m. at George Park and the Echo Masonic Lodge.

The event includes free hot dogs, hamburgers, chips and drinks. A bicycle rodeo is planned for youths with prizes being awarded to participants. Also, local businesses have donated items to be used as door prizes and raffle drawings. Bingo and other games will provide fun for all ages.

Also, a resident will be recognized as the Neighbor of the Year (nominations accepted through

Monday). For more information, call Echo City Hall at 541-376-8411 or Stanfield Police Chief Bryon Zumwalt at 541-449-3245.

STANFIELD

After a 13-year hiatus, the Stanfield Police Department is heading up National Night Out festivities Tuesday from 6-8 p.m. at Bard Park.

Activities include a youth bicycle rodeo (prizes provided) and a drone obstacle race. In addition, a free barbecue features hot dogs, hamburgers, chips and drinks.

The event also includes door prizes and raffle drawings. The evening concludes with free popcorn and an outdoor movie.

Also, one special citizen will receive the Good Neighbor of the Year award (nominations accepted through Monday). For more information, visit www.cityofstanfield.com or call Zumwalt at 541-449-3245.

City begins water meter replacement

The city of Hermiston has begun the process of replacing its water meters.

Personnel from National Meter and Automation will be stopping by homes around town to clean debris out of the meter boxes and modify lids in preparation for installation of the meters. The company will also be installing a long-term form of insulation that does not need to be taken out each spring. At no time in the process will contractors need access to the inside of the home.

Once the meter has been replaced customers will need to run their bathtub or outside faucet for about two minutes to expel any air or debris before using the water in their home. The contractors are beginning in the southwest corner of Hermiston.

The new "smart" meters can be read remotely and will also give customers a more detailed record of their daily water usage.

The meters will also be insulated preventing the need for homeowners to add insulation around the meters as winter approaches and remove it again in the spring.

For more information call City Hall at 541-564-5521 or visit the city's website at www.hermiston.or.us/meter-replacement.

Council votes to fine Stanfield plant

By **JADE McDOWELL**
HERMISTON HERALD

Frustration with the rotten smell hanging over Stanfield came to a head last week as the city council unanimously approved a motion directing city staff to fine 3D Idapro Solutions and seek a court order to shut down the company's dehydration plant.

In a free-wheeling meeting that often involved multiple citizens talking over each other at once, more than two dozen residents packed into council chambers and demanded to know why the city had not shut

down 3D Idapro Solutions already or prohibited them from coming into Stanfield in the first place.

City manager Blair Larsen explained multiple times that he hadn't taken those actions because he did not feel the city was legally allowed to do so, but others in the room — including Mayor Thomas McCann — weren't having it.

"Nobody in their right mind should have to put up with that in their city," McCann said. "Shut it down until you've got it fixed and approved. If people are working out there, they're going to be talented enough

to find other work. They're not going to be left destitute."

The company employs 40 people, including 13 Stanfield residents, according to a letter Larsen read from vice president of operations Mark Johnson.

In the letter Johnson explained that a fire in February had burned up the plant's scrubber used to mitigate odors and the new one rushed into use had turned out to be inadequate. He said the company has hired engineers to custom-build a new system that should reduce the problem once it is in place by November.

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