

# Ride safety a priority at Umatilla County Fair

Ride similar to one that failed at Ohio State Fair not coming to Umatilla County Fair

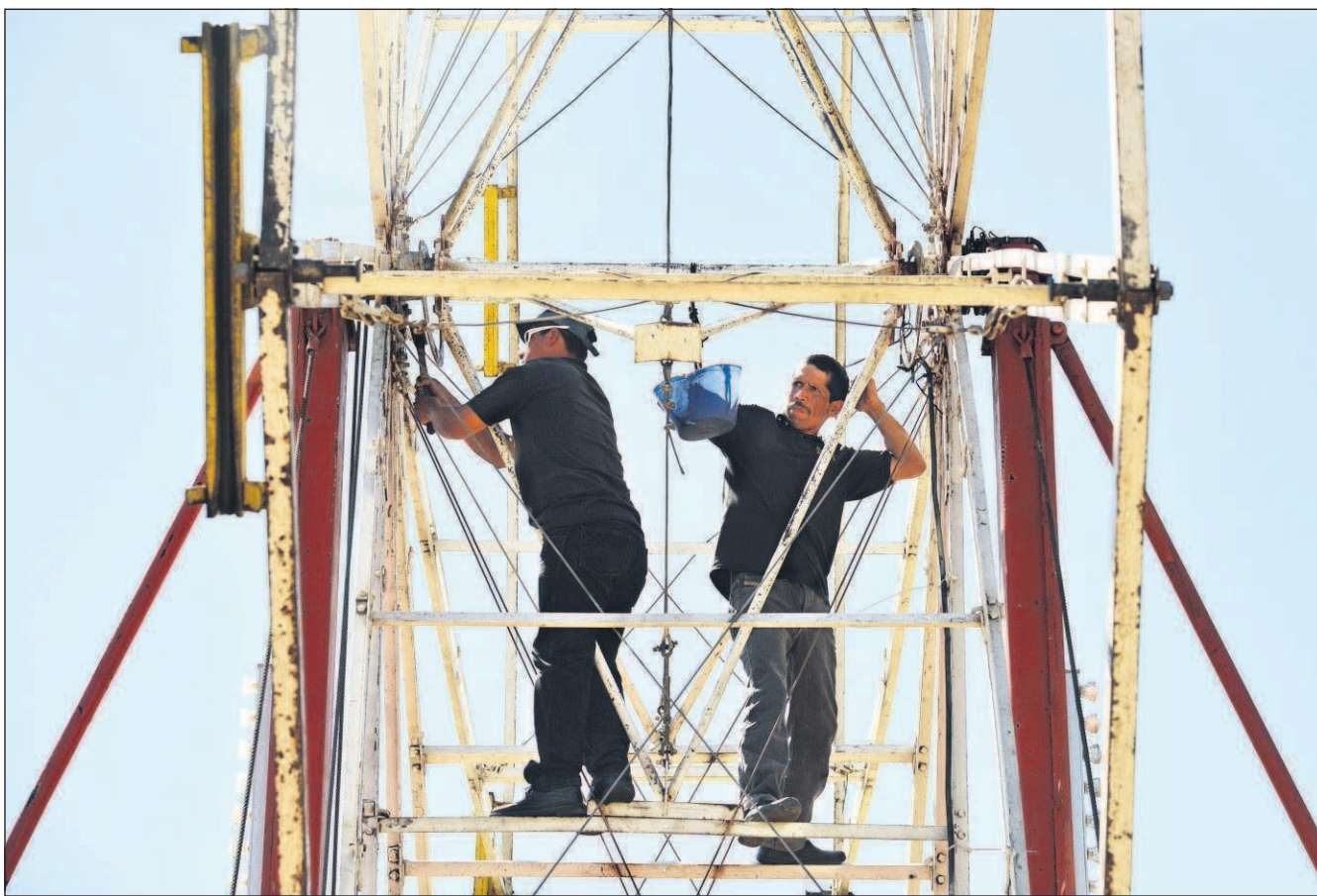
By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN  
STAFF WRITER

Carnival rides are, for many, the highlight of a county fair. But a recent ride malfunction at Ohio State Fair that killed one person has brought carnival safety to the forefront for some parents leading into this week's Umatilla County Fair.

"Safety has always been a number one issue," said Dan Dorran, a fair board member, which hasn't changed just because of the accident in Ohio.

He added that Oregon has different inspection laws than Ohio.

"Oregon has some of the strictest inspection laws, from electrical to mechanical," he said. "They get inspected by the state."



Carnival workers assemble the Ferris wheel last year at the Umatilla County Fair in Hermiston.

FILE PHOTO

The Umatilla County Fair will be getting its carnival rides from Davis Amusement Cascadia, a

company based in Clackamas. Dorran said the fair has used Davis rides for more than 20 years.

"We've never had a ride accident," he said.

Cathy Davis, who co-owns the business with her

husband, said they are hyper-aware of safety issues, but not just since the Ohio State Fair incident.

"That's all we think about," she said. "When something like in Ohio happens, it brings everything right to the front of your mind. We're making sure we've done, and are continuing to do all the right things."

Davis said they have a ride similar to the one that malfunctioned in Ohio, supplied by the company Amusements of America. Although it's not manufactured by the same company, they've temporarily pulled their ride for further safety inspections.

Even for their other rides, Davis said, there are daily inspections.

"We go off the sheets from our manufacturer and we add a few extra points," she said. "Every morning, prior to opening, we start up the generators for an hour, doing safety checks with seat belts, latch bars, whatever's mandated by the ride manufacturer."

Davis said her company does about 75 events per year, and owns about 42 rides.

"We're very careful about safety, and have a very good record," she said. "We don't take chances."

## Rivera accepts EOTEC interim manager post

By JADE McDOWELL  
STAFF WRITER

Nate Rivera will serve as interim general manager for the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center for up to six months after the facility hosts its first Umatilla County Fair.

He will retain his position as general manager of Hermiston Energy Services and said that job will take first priority, but he is working with Byron Smith — who will oversee both sides of the equation as city manager and EOTEC board chair — to strike a balance between obligations to both jobs.

Rivera was part of the original planning group for EOTEC, and said he has always been passionate about helping it succeed.

"I'm excited to be part of the project again," he said.

The EOTEC board voted on a motion during a special meeting Monday to extend Rivera an offer of the interim position for a period "not to exceed six months," and Rivera said he hopes to help the board hire a new manager sooner than that and then assist in the transition before returning his full focus to Hermiston Energy Services.

The plan is to have others pitch in with the day-to-day operations like answering phones

and locking up after events while Rivera works more "behind the scenes" to craft a business plan, staffing plan, maintenance plan and guide to policies and procedures for the facility. He said those projects should help the board in its search for someone to run the facility for years into the future.

"This is not a long-term solution," Rivera said of his interim position. "The idea is not for me to transition up there. My role is to help create a long-term solution."

Rivera officially starts Monday, Aug. 14, as business manager Heather Cannell leaves for a new job at the SAGE Center. Cannell has been handling day-to-day operations, marketing and booking for the event center with the help of an administrative assistant and janitorial contractor, but as construction on the rest of the project wraps up the EOTEC board has been advertising for a general manager.

Final touches like fencing and signs are being placed on EOTEC this week as the facility gets ready to host the Umatilla County Fair and Farm-City Pro Rodeo next week. Rivera said he will be spending time on-site during the fair getting trained on the ins and outs of the facility.

"I'm looking forward to re-engaging with the EOTEC project," he said.

## Spray park hours shortened in August

HERMISTON HERALD

Hermiston's spray park will operate on shorter hours the rest of the summer after complaints about children slipping and falling.

The splash pad at Butte Park will be open from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. seven days a week through the rest of August to allow for an attendant from the Hermiston Family Aquatic Center to supervise.

Larry Fetter, the parks and recreation director, said when the city painted the cement surface a few years ago they mixed sand into the paint for traction. But the water has since worn down the surface. Barefoot children dripping



FILE PHOTO

Hermiston Parks and Recreation Department art instructor Regan Boysen puts the finishing touches in 2014 on her theme at the spray park in Butte Park.

slippery sunscreen over the smoother surface and then running over it have caused some spills this summer.

After a few parents called to complain, Fetter said the department will add more traction to the cement in the off-season and

look for other ways to increase safety, but he didn't want to completely close down the spray park during the year's hottest weather to perform the work.

"The point behind the attendant will be to keep kids from running, which is going to be quite the challenge," he said.

The new hours were selected via informal feedback from parents on Facebook. Fetter said some people have complained about the shortened hours, but overall seem glad the city is trying to address the problem.

"We're not trying to be mean or mess up moms' schedules, we're just trying to be responsive to a safety concern," he said.

## Local agencies check police cruisers for possible carbon monoxide leaks

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN  
STAFF WRITER

Local law enforcement agencies are taking steps to check patrol vehicles after reports of officers in other jurisdictions getting ill from carbon monoxide poisoning in a vehicle also included in local fleets.

Police officers around the U.S. have recently had their vehicles recalled after carbon monoxide leaks and health issues have been reported in Ford Explorer police cruisers in Massachusetts, Texas and Washington.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, more 700 complaints have been re-

ceived about carbon monoxide leaks in the vehicle. CBS reported that one police officer in Massachusetts passed out while driving and crashed, a result of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Local law enforcement officials also drive the Ford Explorer SUVs and are tak-

ing note of the issues around the country.

The Hermiston Police Department has six Ford Explorer SUVs, and though it hasn't seen any problems yet, plans to monitor carbon dioxide in them.

"We are aware others are having problems and

we will be moving forward with (carbon monoxide) detectors to ensure our officers are safe," said Hermiston Police Chief Jason Edmiston. He added that on Thursday, Aug. 3, three people from his department were traveling to Portland to pick up two new patrol vehicles.

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