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INSIDE

3 MINUTES WITH
LEARN MORE ABOUT SPORTS
WRITER ALEXIS MANSANAREZ
PAGE A2

**MASTERING
GARDENING**

OSU EXTENSION OFFERS MASTER
GARDENER COURSE.
PAGE A4

BUSINESS

LOCAL FAVORITE RESTAURANT
REOPENS AFTER REMODEL
PAGE A6

BY THE WAY

**Umatilla grad
honored with
Colorado memorial**

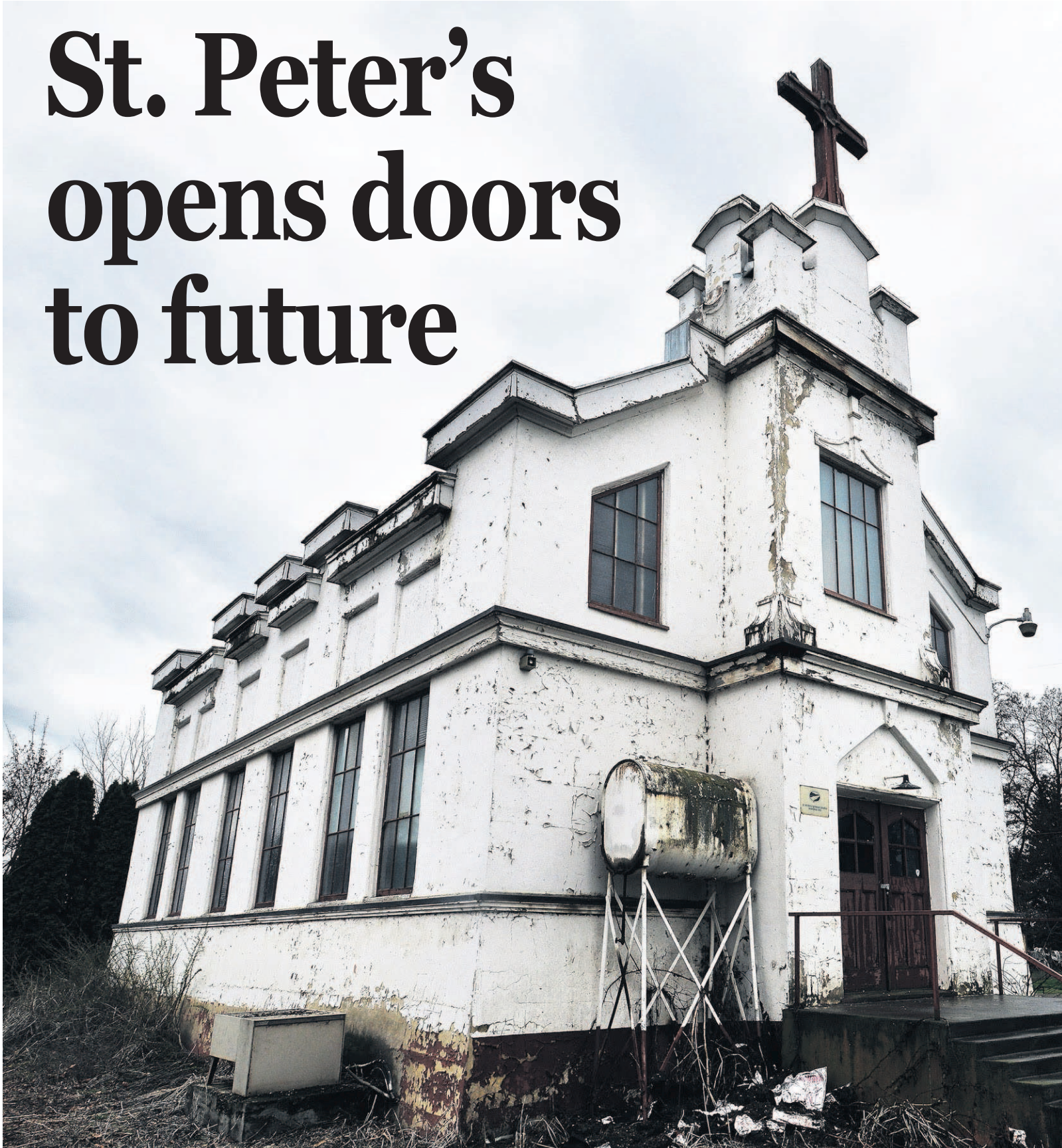
Staff Sgt. Austin Bieren, who died of natural causes March 28 while on active duty in Syria, was recently memorialized in Colorado. The 2010 Umatilla High School graduate was among five service members honored from both the 21st Space Wing and the 10th Special Forces Brigade who lost their lives in the line of duty. Bieren's wife, Rachel Bieren, attended the Aug. 20 ceremony at Mount Pisgah Cemetery in Cripple Creek, Colorado, where the service members names were added to a memorial wall. Col. Kathleen Flarity, Office of the Surgeon General, provided comments and conducted the Laying of the Wreath. The High Frontier Honor Guard performed a rifle salute and the ceremony concluded with the playing of "Taps" in their honor. Dedicated in 2007, the Memorial Wall, with 385 names engraved on it, offers a place to reflect on the sacrifices made by service members.

First-time blood donor Muna Satter was among the 48 donors who participated in the Sept. 18 American Red Cross blood drive at Good Shepherd Medical Cen-

See ST. PETER'S, Page A16

See BTW, Page A16

St. Peter's opens doors to future



STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

St. Peter's Catholic Church was constructed in 1913 in Echo. De-consecrated in 1996, the building was donated by the Diocese of Baker to the Fort Henrietta Foundation. An open house is planned Sunday from 2-4 p.m.

Open house set for Sunday at historic church in Echo

By **TAMMY MALGESINI**
COMMUNITY EDITOR

A historic symbol of bygone days in Echo, St. Peter's Catholic Church has sat mostly empty for more than 20 years.

Constructed in 1913, the church was de-consecrated in 1996. Echo City Administrator Diane Berry said the Echo Alter Society didn't want to see the building become privately owned, which resulted in the Diocese of Baker donating it to the Fort Henrietta Foundation.

The idea was that it would become a museum. Constructed in the Portuguese Colonial Revival style, it features a distinctive stucco facade. The interior houses ornate

statues and a faux marble altar.

Shortly after being gifted to the foundation, an architectural study was conducted on the building. A Kinsman Foundation grant provided funding for a new roof and some basic stabilization, Berry said. It was subsequently added to the National Register of Historic Places on Aug. 28, 1997. However, that's when most activity with the building came to a standstill.

According to Phyllis Shovelski, the Echo Kiwanis approached the Fort Henrietta Foundation last July, offering to raise money and work towards minimizing the building's degradation. The group helped raise money through an Oktoberfest celebration in 2016 and has arranged work crews and received assistance through reduced rates and in-kind labor.

Michael Duffy, Echo Kiwanis president, said local help has generously come from Dick Snow of Muleshoe Ranches and Rock Pit, Dave Smith of O So Kleen, Larry Ables

of BD Ables Construction, beekeeper James Simpson of Baker City, Hermiston Glass, Lloyd Piercy, Jake Broyles, the Echo Fire Department and a score of Kiwanis volunteer laborers.

The future plans for the building are up in the air, but the consensus is the Fort Henrietta Foundation and the Echo Kiwanis want to save the structure.

"People that see it, whether they are Catholic or not, they love this place," Duffy said.

The Fort Henrietta Foundation and Echo Kiwanis are hosting an open house to hopefully increase interest in the building and maybe get some ideas on how to move forward. Organizers also are hoping to hear more about the building's history.

The open house is Sunday from 2-4 p.m. at 33208 Marble St., Echo. Refreshments will be provided by H&P Café. In addition,

See ST. PETER'S, Page A16

City assists pavilion project for skate park land

By **JADE McDOWELL**
STAFF WRITER

A deal between the city of Hermiston and Mitco Investments will spur public and private development along South First Place.

Mitco plans to build a 5,000 square foot event pavilion between Locust Avenue and Orchard Avenue by June 1, 2018. The Maxwell Marketplace will feature restrooms, roll-down glass doors and a 65-space parking lot.

Mitch Myers of Mitco Investments said the space could host everything from a farmer's market to a car show to Oktoberfest. "There are just a lot of great ideas being thrown at us," he said.



ARTWORK FROM MITCO INVESTMENTS

This conceptual drawing shows plans for the Maxwell Marketplace.

The Hermiston City Council approved a letter of intent Monday, pledging \$220,000 toward the project in exchange for the lease to a parcel of land across from the police station where the city plans to build a skate park, as

well as an agreement with Mitco to allow the public free use of the parking lot at the Maxwell Marketplace.

New businesses locating within 500 feet of the parking lot will be able to count the lot as the

parking they are required by city ordinance to provide, a requirement that Mark Morgan, assistant city manager, said has created barriers to new development.

Morgan said the city already owned a small triangle of land across from the police station to build a planned skate park, but it would be small with no parking. The rest of the land along the railroad tracks between Orchard Avenue and the Hermiston School District maintenance shed is leased by Mitco Investments from Union Pacific Railroad. When Mitco gives up the lease to the city, it will allow for a larger skate park as well as parking and landscaping along the entire

See SKATE PARK, Page A16



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