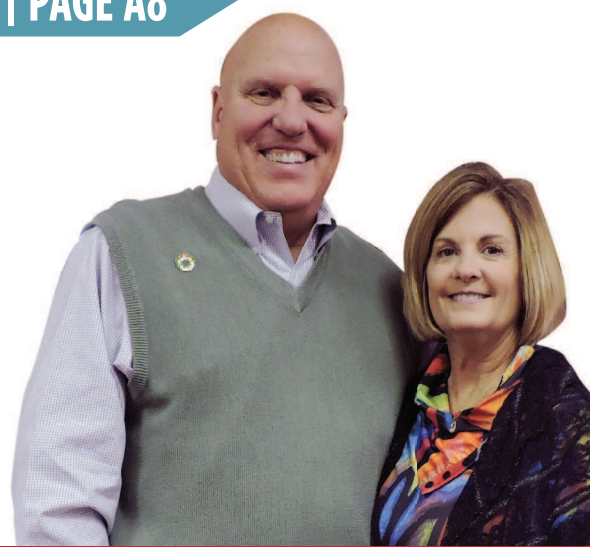


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BY THE WAY

Help for opioid abuse is coming

Umatilla County, labeled a "high-intensity drug trafficking area" because of its location at the intersection of interstates 82 and 84, is getting some help combating opioid addiction. It's one of four Eastern Oregon counties receiving federal funds to fight opioid abuse, in a partnership with the Oregon Health Authority.

Umatilla, Union, Baker and Malheur counties will receive \$200,000 over two years, which health departments in those counties will use to target prescription drug abuse in the area. We'll have more on the program and it's goals in next week's edition of the Hermiston Herald.

Umatilla County Health Director **Jim Setzer** and **Mike Stensrud**, the new prescription drug overdose prevention coordinator for the four counties, will focus their attention on prevention, treatment and risk reduction.

Stensrud noted that around the holidays, people can be at an even greater risk of opioid overdose.

"It's a time of high relapse risk that can arise from not having family to spend the holidays with, or experiencing a 'trig-

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2017

The year that was



HH FILE PHOTO

Mark Davis helps shovel snow off the roof of Columbia Outdoors Sports and Surplus on Main Street, Hermiston, on January 11.



HH FILE PHOTO

BMCC student Melanie Sederburg carries alfalfa over a fence to give to cattle that were confiscated by the Umatilla County Sheriff's department on January 25 outside of Hermiston.



HH FILE PHOTO

Hermiston Mayor David Drotzman speaks to a crowd gathered at the site of the future Harkenrider Center on April 26 at the official groundbreaking. Frank Harkenrider, for whom the center is named, listens on.

A look back on the biggest stories from the Hermiston area

HERMISTON HERALD

There's no such thing as a slow year in Hermiston.

Though it comes in as Oregon's 31st largest city — this year leap-frogging Central Point in the estimates by Portland State University — steady growth and the continual impact of nearby agriculture mean there's always something happening.

We've compiled a list of some of the highlights from the year that was, a mix of accomplishments and tragedy, developments and disagreements. They are published below in approximate chronological order.

PUNISHING WINTER: As travelers battled icy streets and highways closed intermittently from January to March, students trudged through the winter months, with snow days pushing the end of the school year out by at least a week for most local schools.

The state waived 14 hours of the missed instructional time, but schools still had to add days to the end of the year. Drivers faced bad road conditions throughout Umatilla and

Morrow counties, with several wrecks on I-84, the highway closed in the Columbia Gorge several times, and with I-82 shut down in January due to ice and a wreck.

NEW BUS SERVICE: Living in Hermiston without a vehicle got a little easier in 2017 after the city of Hermiston unveiled its new free public bus service around town, operated by Kayak Public Transit.

The Hermiston HART operates in a continuous loop around town on weekdays, and got a good initial reception from those who were able to use it to visit stops like the library, hospital and grocery stores. In October some little-used stops were removed and the route was adjusted to address feedback from riders that the wait between pickups was too long.

CATTLE IN CRISIS: Early in the frigid winter of 2017, 14 dead cattle were found at the Cedar Creek Cattle Company ranch near Hermiston and another 15 were severely malnourished.

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Lamb Weston fry factory to grow

\$250 million project expected to add 170 full-time jobs

By **GEORGE PLAVEN**
EO MEDIA GROUP

To feed the world's growing appetite for french fries, Lamb Weston announced Thursday it will build a new, state-of-the-art processing line at its Hermiston facility on Westland Road.

The \$250 million expansion will add capacity for another 300 million pounds of fries per year, while also creating approximately 170 full-time jobs, according to the company.

Tom Werner, president and CEO of Lamb Weston, said demand for french fries around the world has challenged the industry's capacity to keep up in recent years.



COURTESY OF LAMB WESTON

Lamb Weston recently made a \$200 million investment in this potato processing plant in Richland, Wash. A similar investment is planned for a Lamb Weston potato plant in Hermiston.

"This investment in a new french fry processing line in the Columbia Basin reflects Lamb Weston's continued commitment to support our strategic partners as they continue to

grow their businesses in North America and abroad," Werner said.

Elsewhere around the basin, Lamb Weston finished a similar \$200 million expansion at its french fry factory in Richland, Washington, which opened in October.

The company also spent \$200 million to expand its Boardman facilities at the Port of Morrow in 2014. All potatoes are sourced from local farms.

Shelby Stoolman, spokeswoman for Lamb Weston, said the Hermiston facility was established in 1972 and currently has 450 employees. The new line is expected to be up and running by January

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