



STAFF PHOTO BY JADE MCDOWELL.

Greater Hermiston Area Chamber of Commerce executive director Debbie Pedro shows off the reception area of the chamber's new offices.

Chamber opens new office

By JADE MCDOWELL
STAFF WRITER

The new year comes with new digs for the Greater Hermiston Area Chamber of Commerce.

The chamber opened their new offices in the Cornerstone Plaza, 1055 S Hwy 395 Suite 111, on Tuesday. There were still some moving boxes to be seen on opening day, but executive director Debbie Pedro said it wasn't stopping chamber staff from serving customers.

"We've already had quite a few people in this morning," she said.

The chamber had to move out of its offices at the Hermiston Conference Center — now being re-branded

as the Hermiston Community Center — by the end of 2017 after the city of Hermiston decided to take over management of the center and move its parks and recreation department into the space. Pedro said the chamber would love to own its own building eventually but for now they are excited they found a space visible to travelers on Highway 395.

Racks of information for visitors, plus pamphlets and business cards from chamber members, line the walls of the reception area of the new office, which used to be a photography studio. There are also individual offices for chamber staff and an open space that will act as a conference room. The chamber is renting stor-

age space elsewhere. Phone numbers will remain the same as before the move.

Pedro said the chamber will continue to do everything it did before — including acting as Hermiston's visitor center and providing services for members such as educational classes — besides running the conference center. Giving up that duty will free up the chamber to spend even more time focusing on new ways to serve chamber members and the community, Pedro said, and she was excited about some new initiatives that will be announced in the coming months.

The new address has also provided incentive to start work on updating the chamber's website and other

offerings, and to find new locations outside of the conference center to hold things like the chamber's Business to Business luncheon, which is being revamped in 2018 to a longer event held quarterly.

"There are a lot of partnerships being formed, and partnerships that have been longstanding that will continue," Pedro said.

Over at the community center, the parks and recreation office was still in the middle of unpacking on Tuesday morning, but is expected to transition staff over from city hall on Wednesday. Phone numbers for the parks and recreation department will also remain the same despite changing locations.

County gets funding to fight opioid abuse

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN
STAFF WRITER

Though opioid abuse is an epidemic across the nation, locals may have reason to take heart: four Eastern Oregon counties are 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.



STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

Epidemiologist Jim Setzer comes to Pendleton from Namibia to direct Umatilla County Public Health.

forums and education, the program will aim to increase local participation in Oregon's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, a database that lets pharmacies and physicians document and monitor patient prescriptions, and potentially spot and stop opioid abuse.

Stensrud, whose position is funded through the grant, said Umatilla and Malheur counties are two of about 10 in the state that are "high-intensity drug trafficking areas," which he attributed to their location — close to major transportation corridors, like I-84 and I-82. The others in the state, Setzer said, are along I-5.

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 'trigger,' such as seeing an old friend or family member you used to get high with," he said.

Stensrud said it's even more important during the holidays to keep prescription opioids locked up, to prevent guests from taking medications, either accidentally or on purpose.

He said there are a few hotlines substance abusers can use for immediate assistance — they can call Lines for Life at 800-923-

4357, or text RecoveryNow to 839863.

Treatment options

Stensrud and Setzer said one of the program's goals is to see more medical providers prescribing Suboxone. The medication for medically-assisted therapy is a combination of Buprenorphine and Naloxone. According to American Addiction Centers, Buprenorphine is a "partial opioid agonist" that produces a milder form of the effects that opioids have. It gives the user the same effect as an opioid without the same high, which makes it more difficult to abuse. Naloxone blocks the effect of opioids.

"There's no risk of overdose as with a straight opioid," Setzer said.

He said that unlike other treatments, such as methadone, Suboxone can be prescribed by a doctor and administered at home.

While it's an effective treatment option, Setzer said there's a lack of providers that prescribe Suboxone.

Chuck Hofmann, a doctor at New Directions Northwest, an integrated mental health and substance abuse facility in Baker County, said many providers don't prescribe Suboxone because of the time involved to get certified.

Umatilla man threatens family with ax

Kasey Shawn Pankey, 26, of Umatilla was arrested Friday night in Hermiston for threatening to kill members of his family with an ax during a family meal.

The Umatilla County Sheriff's Office was called to the disturbance on Baxter Road at 10:46 p.m. after family reported Pankey

had become upset and was making threats. One family member fought to take the ax from Pankey. No one was injured.

Deputy Nathan Rankin responded took Pankey into custody on six domestic violence counts each of second-degree attempted assault, menacing, coercion and recklessly endangering.

POLICE LOG

POLICE

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driver was reported on S Highway 395.

MONDAY, JAN. 1

12:04 a.m. — A fight was reported on Diagonal Boulevard in Hermiston.

1:05 a.m. — A fight was reported on W Hermiston

Ave.

11:27 a.m. — A burglary was reported on E Newport Ave.

8:47 p.m. — A possible burglary was reported on E Gladys Ave.

11:36 p.m. — A caller reported two people were placing graffiti on a metal shed on E Dogwood Ave. in Hermiston.

ANNIVERSARY

The Jessens in 2016

Jarry and Dixie Jessen of Hermiston are celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary. They were married Jan. 5, 1968, in Stirling City, Calif.

Jarry retired from Union Pacific Railroad in 1991. He enjoys hunting, fishing and the great outdoors. He also loves to putter around his shop, and spend time with his children and grandchildren.

Dixie's main claim to fame is her enjoyment in taking care of her yard and garden. She also spent many years bowling. She looks forward to spending time with family whenever possible.

The couple has three children: son Stacey Jessen of Heppner and daughters Kathi Keefer of Honolulu, Hawaii, and Kelli Biecker of Pendleton. They have seven grandchildren: Kevin, Tyler, Gunner, Maycee, Elijah, Jared and Tresten; and one great-grandson, Daniel.

The Jessens in 1968

WORSHIP COMMUNITY

Echo Community Church

21 N. Bonanza Street, Echo OR

Phone: (541) 376-8108

Sunday School • 9:30am

Worship • 10:45am

Children's Church • 11:15am

Potluck & Communion ~

First Sunday of the Month

NEW BEGINNINGS

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Worship Service 10:30 AM

Sunday School 9:00 AM

Pastor J.C. Barnett

Children's Church & Nursery Available

700 West Orchard Avenue

P.O. Box 933

Hermiston, Oregon

541-567-8441

First United Methodist Church Hermiston

191 E. Gladys Ave., Hermiston OR

Sunday Worship 11am • 541-567-3002

Nursery available Check us out on Face Book

Worship Livestream at herfumc.com

Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors

Rev. Dr. Jim Pierce, pastor

First Christian Church

"Proclaiming the Message of Hope, Living the Gospel of Love"

Sunday School 9:15am

Worship Gathering 10:30 am

Children's Church 10:30 am

567-3013

775 W. Highland Ave., Hermiston

Our Lady of Angels Catholic Church

565 W. HERMISTON AVE.

DAILY MASS: Monday-Friday

.....English 7:00 am

Thursday.....Spanish 6:00 pm

SATURDAY:.....English 5:00 pm

.....Spanish 7:00 pm

SUNDAY:.....English 9:00 am

.....Bilingual 11:00 am

.....Spanish 1:00 pm

Office.....567-5812

Seventh-day Adventist Church

Saturdays

Sabbath School.....9:30 a.m.

Worship Service.....11:00 a.m.

English & Spanish Services

567-8241

855 W. Highland • Hermiston

LANDMARK BAPTIST CHURCH

125 E. Beech Ave. • 567-3232

Pastor David Dever

Sun. Bible Classes.....10:00am

Sun. Worship Service.....11:00am

Sun. Evening Worship.....6:00pm

Wed. Prayer & Bible Study.....6:00pm

www.hermistonlmbc.com

Grace Baptist Church

555 SW 11th, Hermiston

567-9497

Nursery provided for all services

Sunday School - 9:30 AM

Worship - 10:45 AM

6:00 PM

Wed Prayer & Worship - 7:00 PM

"Proclaiming God's word, growing in God's grace"

St. Johns Episcopal Church

Join Us

On Our Journey With Jesus.

Scripture, Tradition and Reason

Family service 9am Sunday

N.E. Gladys Ave & 7th, Hermiston

PH: 567-6672

We are an all inclusive Church who welcomes all.

HermNaz

the best thing about Sundays

1520 W ORCHARD AVE

Sunday Worship Service

10:30 am Classes for Kids @ 9:15 am

SEEKING JESUS, SHARING LIFE, SERVING PEOPLE

www.hermistonnazarene.org

To share your worship times call 541-278-2678