

# The safe way to clear the medicine cabinet

## Drug Takeback Day is set for Saturday

By **JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN**  
STAFF WRITER

Local businesses and police departments are working to make a dent in the opioid epidemic by limiting its primary source — the home medicine cabinet.

Saturday is National Prescription Drug Takeback Day, and people can get rid of unused pills at several locations throughout Umatilla and Morrow counties.

Boardman and Pilot Rock will set up temporary drop-off locations, and there are permanent disposal boxes in the Hermiston and Pendleton police departments, Hermiston's courthouse, the Yellowhawk Tribal Health Center in Pendleton and Carlson's Drug in Umatilla.

Mike Stensrud, the prescription drug overdose prevention coordinator for Eastern Oregon, said the temporary disposal options are important, but he is working to expand permanent disposal locations around Eastern Oregon as well. Right now, he said, several larger cities in the area do not have permanent disposal boxes, includ-



STAFF PHOTO BY JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN  
**Congressman Greg Walden, center, discusses signal sidearm, a camera that activates when officers draw their guns, with Captain Scott Clark, right, and Chief Jason Edmiston on a visit to the Hermiston Police Department on Friday.**

ing Milton-Freewater, Baker City and Ontario.

"I'm actively seeking a pharmacy or police department in those locations to take on the responsibility of providing such an important community resource," Stensrud said in an email. "We're looking to avoid drug abuse as well as accidental overdoses by children. To a child, one or two opioid pills is enough to cause death."

Stensrud said national

surveys on drug use and health show that drug dealers are not the primary cause of opioid distribution. According to the survey, he said, those misusing opioids get them from a friend or a relative 70 percent of a time, and a doctor 19 percent of the time.

"A drug dealer is only used four percent of the time," he said. "So, it becomes apparent that getting rid of these danger-

ous medications properly is imperative in beginning to control the root of the problem."

But Stensrud said the problem extends beyond opioids, to any medication that can be easily abused. All medications, he said, can be disposed of at those drop-off locations.

Rep. Greg Walden stopped in Hermiston on Friday, to discuss opioid abuse and preven-

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Prescription drug overdose prevention coordinator for Eastern Oregon

tion in Umatilla County. He talked with police chief Jason Edmiston about some of the challenges of reporting overdoses publicly, and Edmiston discussed some of the dangers for police officers, such as fentanyl — a synthetic opioid that can be fatal if handled.

Walden is chair of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, which is currently holding hearings on the opioid crisis. He said he hopes for a vote on a group of bills aimed at opioid abuse prevention in May.

Edmiston said in 2017 the Umatilla County Fire Department administered 30 doses of naloxone, a drug that reverses overdoses on prescription painkillers, heroin and fentanyl, and can

save lives.

"I fully expect to see that double," Edmiston said.

Walden said Oregon just received another \$6.5 million from the 21st Century Cures Act this week, which he said will go toward fighting opioid abuse in rural areas.

He said he recently finished a series of panels about opioid use, the most recent focusing on families who have lost children.

"It helps us better understand what we need to try and change, legislatively," he said.

Edmiston said he would like to see pharmacies take a more active role in stopping over-prescription.

"They see it — they can report it," he said.

## Former police officer picked for Stanfield council seat

By **JADE MCDOWELL**  
STAFF WRITER

The Stanfield City Council has appointed Ralph "Butch" Parrish to fill a vacancy on the council.

Parrish, who is the office manager for the Boardman Police Department but lives in Stanfield, will replace councilor Pam McSpadden, who died in February.

City manager Blair Larsen said Parrish has a "pretty good history with the city" through a number of roles, including as a former Stanfield police officer in the 1990s.

In 1994, Parrish was injured in the line of duty after he stopped to help the then-Stanfield police chief with an arrest and the suspect managed to get into the front seat of a cruiser and run Parrish

over, breaking his spine and leaving him confined to a wheelchair.

After the city put out a call for city council applicants, Parrish threw his hat in the ring along with David Clark, Scott Chalis and Blaine Braithwaite. Larsen said Parrish and Clark were both present at Tuesday's city council meeting and answered a series of questions from council members before a vote was taken and Parrish was appointed.

Parrish said after years of working in municipal law enforcement he is curious to see the "other side" of the equation in sitting on the council, and excited to have an opportunity to serve the community where he was born and raised.

He said he liked the idea

of being appointed to a partial term to get a feel for the job and for the town to get an idea of whether he fits what they are looking for, before deciding whether to run for another term. He said he is trying to come into the position with a blank slate and an open mind.

"I'm a very approachable person, and I consider myself to be a fair individual," he said.

He will be officially sworn in during the May 1 city council meeting and will fill out the rest of McSpadden's term, which ends Dec. 31, 2020.

## Copper wire thieves hit substations

HERMISTON HERALD

UMATILLA — Thieves who broke into the McNary Substation in Umatilla stole 29 copper ground wires, threatening both the safety of Bonneville Power Administration employees and endangering the equipment.

According to the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office, sometime between April 13-16 thieves with knowledge of the substation and its operation cut the cyclone security fence to get in, then cut multiple copper cables. The value of the cables and the damage done is estimated to be more than \$10,000.

The station is the entry point from McNary Dam

into the regional power grid.

A BPA employee noticed the theft of the cables Monday. Each is marked with the words "Bonneville Power Administration" that can be seen when they are unfurled.

Power transmission was not interrupted.

Doug Dailey, BPA physical security specialist, said this is one of four similar thefts at substations in the area in the past few months.

Anyone with information about the thefts is encouraged to contact the sheriff's office at 541-966-3600.



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**STUDENT OF THE WEEK**

**Ethan Greer**  
Senior - Irrigon High School




Ethan is a Senior at Irrigon High School who academically is at the top of his class with a 4.0 GPA. He has earned over 30 college school credits while attending IHS. Ethan is very involved in FFA, Key club, and is a member of National Honor Society. He volunteers as a Jr Hunter Ed Instructor, and has various other volunteer projects, both through club involvement, and personal projects. When he isn't involved with school and community events he works odd landscaping jobs for neighbors and family friends, as well as running a large hog raising project for FFA. Ethan will pursue a degree in engineering at Oregon State University in the fall.

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**When:** Monday, 04/23/2018, 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM  
**Where:** BMCC Hermiston Room 133, 975 SE Columbia Drive Hermiston, Oregon 97838  
**Register:** Call or email Shayne Arndt: 541-278-5965, sarndt@bluecc.edu

**What:** Triple P Discussion Groups – Hassle-free shopping with children  
**When:** Tuesday, 04/24/2018, 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM  
**Where:** St. Anthony Hospital, 2801 St Anthony Way, Pendleton, OR, USA  
**Register:** Call or email Chelsea Maranville: 541-969-4061, cmaranville@gobhi.net

**What:** Triple P Seminar – Raising Confident, Competent Children  
**When:** Friday, 04/27/2018, 10:15 AM – 11:45 AM  
**Where:** Pendleton Public Library, 502 SW Dorion Ave, Pendleton, OR, USA  
**Register:** Call or email Chelsea Maranville: 541-969-4061, cmaranville@gobhi.net


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