

Morrow County students learn about manufacturing jobs

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN
STAFF WRITER

Chris Stirk had a dilemma for a group of middle schoolers.

"I need you to help me solve a problem," he said. "How do I get from this —" he held up an unpeeled onion in one hand — "to this?" He held up a peeled one in the other.

Stirk stopped by the Port of Morrow's inaugural "Nuts, Bolts and Thing-amajigs" camp, a weeklong program to help 18 Morrow County middle school students learn about careers in manufacturing, processing and technology.

Stirk, the Boardman Foods director of operations, talked to students about how onions are processed, helping them understand the purpose of different machines, production and waste.

Drawing diagrams on the whiteboard, Stirk showed students the devices they use to make processing more efficient.

He also talked to the students about the rise of automated machines to do jobs once performed by humans.

"What if the onion goes the wrong way?" He said. "Now, a person has to turn it. What I want to do is have a robot do it. Why?"

Students speculated — it's safer, you don't have to spend as much money — both things that Stirk said were factors.

He told kids that there



Sunridge Middle School wood shop teacher Ken Jacobs gives instruction on how to assemble a pallet tray Tuesday during the Port of Morrow Camp in Boardman.

STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

were many opportunities right in their own city to work in mathematics, science and agriculture.

"Not everything in this world has been invented yet," he said. "Guess what we need to invent new and better ways? Newer and better people."

The kids are spending the week listening to several speakers from Port of Morrow businesses, including Amazon Web Services and Boardman Foods. They spent time with Blue Mountain Community College instructor Jerry McMichael learning about industrial systems technology.

They took some aptitude tests to find out what types of careers they might be interested in.

They also got a chance to do some hands-on projects, applying the concepts they learned during the week.

Ken Jacobs, a woodshop teacher at Pendleton's Sunridge Middle School, was one of the instructors for the camp. He led the students in building two projects — a pallet tray and a cell phone speaker.

"We're going to take pieces of lumber that would otherwise go to waste," Jacobs said.

Students used a comput-

er-aided drafting program called "SolidWorks" to design the cell phone speakers, and got to use tools such as a miter saw and a drill press.

Alexis Partlow, an eighth grader from Boardman, said the most interesting part of the camp for her was the woodworking activity.

"I'm looking forward to creating something new," she said.

Arianna Velasco said the camp had piqued her interest in some new things.

"I learned a bit about hydraulics manufacturing, and electronics manufacturing," she said.



Alexis Partlow, 13, of Boardman uses a nail gun to secure two boards with help from OSU Extension outreach coordinator Anna Browne while making pallet trays during the Port of Morrow Camp in Boardman.

STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS



Wyatt Browne, 12, of Boardman watches as Ellie Sak, 10, of Boardman takes a measurement on a piece of wood Tuesday during the Port of Morrow Camp in Boardman.

STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

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Medical bills are stacking up for a recent **Umatilla High School** graduate.

Dayra Ugarte, 22, a paraprofessional at **Desert View Elementary** in Hermiston, has undergone several major surgeries in the past six weeks, said **Lynne Hamblin**, who also works in the school district. A community fundraiser has been scheduled to help support Ugarte.

The event is Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the parking lot at **Smitty's Ace Hardware**, 1845 N. Fist St., Hermiston. A barbecue lunch offers hot dogs, potato chips, watermelon, cookies and water for \$4. The event also features more than \$4,000 of donated raffle items. Tickets are \$1 each. And, a dunk tank will offer people a chance to send lacrosse team coaches into the water.

For more information, contact Hamblin at lhamblin@eotnet.net.

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Tacos Xavi served up

1,700 tacos at a recent patient appreciation party for **Dr. James West** and **Columbia Orthodontics** at the **Hermiston Family Aquatic Center**.

The orthodontist and his staff welcomed more than 600 patients to the pool in the 103 degree weather and offered tacos, **Yo Country Yogurt** and raffle drawings.

"Columbia Orthodontics and Dr West are very thankful to be part of this community and are already making plans for next years party," their office wrote to the *Hermiston Herald*.

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A new byline appeared in the *Hermiston Herald* last week as the paper welcomed **Brett Kane** as a news intern covering sports. Kane grew up in Hermiston and returned to the community after graduating from the **University of Oregon** with a bachelor's degree in journalism. You can read his story "Sons of Speed" on page A10, and look for him at future sporting events around the community or email sports tips to him at bkane@eastoregonian.com.

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Hermiston Police

Department has welcomed three new reserve officers to its force. **Bryce Kennedy**, **Shawnee Rodriguez** and **Sterling Hall** earned their badges last week, the department reported, after completing the 2018 Multi-Agency Police Reserve Academy. To do so they had to work 200 hours of training around their non-police jobs over the course of the last five months.

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Good Shepherd Health Care System has welcomed pediatric gastroenterologist and hepatologist **Lina Castillo**, M.D. to its staff.

Castillo said in a news release that her parents are both doctors and she felt called to the profession.

"I observed how hard they worked, the relationships they built with patients, the long days and sleepless nights, and the deep sorrows that accompany the burden of delivering a less than favorable diagnosis," she said. "It is a sacred responsibility and one that I am willing to carry."

She did her residency at **Miami Children's Hospital** and completed a fellow-

ship in gastroenterology and hepatology at the **University of Nebraska Medical Center** in Omaha.

She is welcoming new patients at the **Good Shepherd Pediatrics Clinic**, 600 NW 11th Street in Hermiston. To schedule an appointment call 541.667.3740.

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Altrusa International of Hermiston recently added four new members to its club.

Holly Woods, **Marcy Rosenberg**, **Cynthia Trainer** and **Linda Monroe** were presented by their club sponsors during the July 19 initiation meeting. **Dawn Long** is the current club president.

Altrusans work together to create better communities. The name "Altrusa" is derived from combining altruism and USA.

To learn more about the club, contact hermiston-altrusa@gmail.com, visit www.districttwelve.altrusa.org or search Facebook.

You can submit items for our weekly *By The Way* column by emailing your tips to editor@hermistonherald.com.

Man fails at armed robbery in Hermiston

The Umatilla County Sheriff's Office is looking for the suspect that tried but failed to pull off an armed robbery.

Two employees of the Short Stop Gas, 32553 E. Punkin Center Road, Hermiston, were working outside Sunday morning at about 4:15 when an armed man approached on foot from the road. The sheriff's office in a written statement reported the suspect held a black rifle and covered his face in a dark green bandanna.

"According to the employees," the sheriff's office reported, "the suspect ordered one of them to go inside the store. Instead, both employees ran across Highway 207 and called 911."

They also told law enforcement the suspect tried to open the store's cash register, but it was locked. When he could

not open the register, he bolted from the store, taking nothing.

He ran west on East Punkin Center and got into a white four-door sedan. The car headed west on East Punkin Center, the sheriff's office reported.

The employees told the sheriff's office the suspect was about 6 feet to 6 feet 2 inches tall and weighed approximately 120-140 pounds. He wore a black hooded sweatshirt, a black baseball cap, dark-colored gloves and white plaid shorts with lime green and navy stripes and white socks that covered his calves.

"We are reviewing video footage from the store and the investigation is continuing," the sheriff's office also reported.

"Please contact the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office with any information at 541-966-3651."

Hermiston sets online student registration

The Hermiston School District is preparing to assist parents with online registration/renewal of information now through Friday, Aug. 10. Elementary and middle schools will have staff and computers available from 8-11:30 a.m. and 12:30-3 p.m. Also, Hermiston High School parents and students may drop in Aug. 13-17

from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. to register and pay applicable student fees.

Students returning to Hermiston schools will receive a letter in the mail. It will include their "snapcode" to login at www.hermiston.k12.or.us/apps/pages/registration/ to update information.

New students and those

entering kindergarten need to visit the website to begin the registration process. In addition, they also must visit the school to submit a record of their birth, proof of address, health record, and previous report cards or transcripts.

The district's open house will take place Thursday, Aug. 23. Elementary schools will be open from 5:30-6:30

p.m., middle schools from 6:30-7:30 p.m. and the high school from 7-8:30 p.m. The district encourages students and parents to attend and get acquainted with their teachers and school staff.

For more information, parents can contact the school their child attends. The district office can be reached at 541-667-6000.

Fighting Oregon wildfires have cost state \$25.3m

By CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE
CAPITAL BUREAU

SALEM — The state has spent \$25.3 million on fighting wildfires this year, according to the Oregon Department of Forestry.

That figure came before this week's 10,250-acre Lake Wallula Fire outside Hermiston.

Those are gross costs. The federal government will reimburse the state for

some of that cost, but it can take years for the reimbursements to come through, a spokesman for ODF says.

And that amount doesn't include the agency's "base budget" for fire protection, which is about \$48 million for permanent personnel, equipment, facilities and the cost of fighting smaller fires.

As of Friday, about 20,800 acres were burning in 585 fires across the state

on ODF-protected lands.

A spokesman cautioned that those numbers should be taken with a grain of salt, as fires are dynamic by nature and their more precise size will take time to confirm.

The Oregon Department of Forestry protects about 16 million acres of forestland — both public and private — from fires.

Over the past 10 years, the average number of fires

on ODF-protected land on July 27 has been 416 fires, with 13,405 acres burning.

The state agency maintains a public information site about the status of state wildfires at wildfireoregon.deptoofforestry.blogspot.com.

You can also check on smoke conditions in your community and throughout the state at oregonsmoke.blogspot.com.

POLICE LOG

TUESDAY, JULY 24

5:35 a.m. — A missing person was reported at Southwest Seventh Place.

1:42 p.m. — Child abuse or neglect was reported at Northwest 11th Street.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 25

2:11 a.m. — A prowler was reported at South Highway 395.

8:21 a.m. — Someone at West Tamarack Avenue reported that his daughter was assaulted last night by her boyfriend.

THURSDAY, JULY 26

4:39 p.m. — Police responded to a death investigation on East Main Street. A 45 year-old man died in the parking lot of a car wash, of what police suspected to be a heart attack.

FRIDAY, JULY 27

8:28 a.m. — A caller said at Riverfront Park on Southwest 23rd St., there has been a female at the park every morning for several weeks, approaching everyone and asking

them for money. The caller said she is bothering everyone who is trying to use the park.

SATURDAY, JULY 28

12:14 p.m. — A caller reported a dog in a car with the windows rolled up at North First Street.

12:47 p.m. — Someone on East Sunset Drive, reported that the back window of her truck was broken out last night, but nothing was taken.

6:57 p.m. — A man had been down in the front yard on West Madrona Avenue since 9:30 a.m., near the blue shop.

SUNDAY, JULY 29

8:16 p.m. — A caller said someone on East Beebe Avenue was out of control, and pushed the caller.

MONDAY, JULY 30

9:30 p.m. — A man was lying on the grass with an unknown medical condition, near the main entrance of a building on Southwest 11th Street.

All addresses are in Hermiston unless otherwise noted.

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