

# NEW DAWG FOOTBALL SEASON

NEW LEAGUE, NEW TEAMS,  
NEW CONFERENCE >> A8

# Hermiston Herald

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Fires in Canada, Oregon and Washington create hazardous air in Umatilla County

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### CELEBRATION

Two-time Latin Grammy winner Michael Salgado to perform in Hermiston on Sept. 16.

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## BY THE WAY

### Harkenrider center to open Sept. 8

Hermiston's new senior center, known as the Harkenrider Center, will celebrate its grand opening on Saturday, Sept. 8.

The event will run from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Hermiston's new festival street on the corner of Southeast Second Street and Gladys Avenue, with a special dedication ceremony at 1 p.m.

Hermiston Parks and Recreation director Larry Fetter said the finishing touches of landscaping, parking lot paint and other details are being wrapped up now. He said the seniors are equipping the new building with a "spectacular" kitchen using over \$100,000 in funds they raised for equipment, and the new center will help them "take it up a notch" when it comes to activities offered to local seniors.

The event on Sept. 8 will include free cookies, and tickets for a barbecue are available at the

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## WANTED: NEW RIVALRY



Hermiston football players run through their new bulldog tunnel on the way to the field last year for a non-conference game against Lewiston.

Hermiston High School will be seen as the rookies this upcoming athletic year

By BRETT KANE  
STAFF WRITER

This year is Hermiston's first as a member of the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) after leaving the OSAA earlier this summer. With that comes a major cultural overhaul within the local athletics community. Their longstanding rivalry with Pendleton High School will be no more. In fact, Hermiston isn't set to face any Oregon schools at all during their upcoming season.

The Bulldogs will open their football season on Friday, Aug. 31 against Pasco, which shares the same mascot, marking their first-ever WIAA event. Still, potential new rivals are still under consideration.

"Rivalries are born from competition," said Hermiston athletics director Larry Usher. "It'll take a few years to decide. We're now in the Mid-Columbia Conference — the most competitive conference in the state of Washington. The coaches and kids are well aware that things just got real tough."

Usher says that Richland and Chiawana are shaping up to be their fiercest competitors. Last year alone, the Richland Bombers took home the state championship in football and baseball, and the Pasco Bulldogs took home the title in boys' soccer. Chiawana is the newest high school in the Tri-Cities, opening its doors in Kennewick in 2009, but they've already claimed state titles in football in 2014 and girls' bowling in 2016.

The schools that populate the Mid-Columbia Conference also dwarf the schools that Hermiston used to face in population. While Pendleton has a student body of 891, Kennewick, the smallest in the conference, practically doubles that with 1,600. Chiawana is the largest with 2,543 students as of 2017.

It isn't just Hermiston's com-

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## Lamb auction raises \$23,200 for 4-H girl with brain tumor

By JADE MCDOWELL  
STAFF WRITER

Henry the lamb might just be the most expensive lamb in history.

After Maddy Thomas, an 11-year-old 4-H student from Echo, showed him at the Umatilla County Fair his sale brought in \$23,200 — totaling about \$162 per pound at an auction where lambs were averaging \$7 per pound.

The auction marked the one-year anniversary of Maddy's diagnosis of a brain tumor, and the money will go to help her family cover continuing expenses related to her treatment. Her mother Jenny Thomas said she doesn't have words to describe how grateful she is for the "unbelievable" show of support.

"Anyone who has had a sick child knows the kind of bills that come, and I've had to miss a lot of work," she said.

The lamb didn't start out as a fundraiser

idea. Maddy just wanted to participate in a "normal" activity after finally finding a cancer treatment that was working and regaining some of her strength. She got Henry in May and began walking him, feeding him and grooming him.

"I liked him because he liked to head butt me and he was always playful," Maddy said. "I liked walking him around the house."

Jenny said the exercise was so good for Maddy — using muscles she hadn't used in months and giving her incentive to stay outdoors — that doctors told her she could drop her occupational and physical therapy. She lost some of the weight that steroids in her treatment had caused her to gain, and color returned to her cheeks.

"He gave her a purpose," Jenny said.

When fair time came, Maddy brought her lamb to the barns with the other youth and



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY JENNY THOMAS  
Maddy Thomas, 11, sits with her market lamb Henry during the Umatilla County Fair.

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