

CONSTRUCTION

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you were good to go,” he said.

Deciding to save money by doing some work themselves has added more time than expected as well. The building — which has served as everything from a Sears to a church — is getting an extensive makeover with a completely new layout.

Lambert said new “to do” items keep popping up as they go along. They decided to double-insulate all the interior walls with sound-proofing materials, for example, because they plan to lease part of the building to professionals such as lawyers and doctors, who want to keep conversations confidential.

Still, he said, they are lucky to be able to continue operating out of their current building they can stay in until the remodel is finished, and they are excited about the chance to customize a new, larger office.

Another business move still waiting to happen is Delish Bistro, which is located at 1725 N. First Street but is also leasing the former Stet’s Steakhouse building on Highway 395. The bistro at one point was slated to move to the former steakhouse building in February 2018, but is still at its original location.

Herman Hull said the restaurant plans to remodel the kitchen before moving in, but is waiting on the financing to do it.

“It’s going to be a while yet,” he said.

The move will provide indoor seating, and a larger kitchen will open up new options on the menu. If anyone is interested in participating in a private financing initiative — 9 percent annual interest paid monthly — they should get in touch with Delish Bistro, Hull said.

The Union Club, a project that originally envi-



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Financing has held up Delish Bistro’s planned move into the old Stet’s Steakhouse in Hermiston.

sioned a summer 2018 opening, is now looking at opening its doors during the upcoming summer instead.

“Obviously I can’t say anything with complete assurance, because you’ve seen how it’s been, but I’m more sure now that I have been,” said Justin Doyle, one of the partners in the project.

The club will be a coffee-by-day, bar-by-night gathering space that plays homage to the original Union Club of the 1940s. The building on the corner of Main Street and Northeast Second Street, which was erected in 1906, was most recently home to Roemarks Men’s and Western Wear.

Doyle said he wasn’t interested in recounting a blow-by-blow of what the holdups have been, but he did say that remodeling a historic buildings comes with extra challenges. It’s a “game” of finding out which elements — plumbing, wiring, etc. — need replaced, and special care also needs to be taken to preserve the building’s historical integrity as much as possible.

“It definitely adds additional layers of discovery, but the value of keeping the history alive outweighs all the difficulties,” he said.

Doyle said they are getting ready to sign off on a bid and final design, however, and contractors should be starting on the four- to five-month project within weeks.

“It’s been challenging, it’s taken longer than we thought, but we’re still here,” he said.

Other Hermiston-area projects delayed but still in the works include Ranch & Home. The retailer was originally slated to open by Jan. 1, 2018, but has yet to announce an opening date. While the company has mostly been silent about the construction process, it did cite a problem with finding electrical subcontractors when discussing an extension of its incentive package with the city of Hermiston in early 2018. Because the retailer missed a June 2018 deadline, it is missing out on \$100,000 in reimbursed development costs from the city of Hermiston.

The Maxwell Pavilion, originally slated to host

the summer 2018 farmer’s market in Hermiston, is still putting finishing touches on the project after a disagreement between owner Mitch Meyers and the city’s building department resulted in a stop-work order over the summer.

The city was set to build an RV park at the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center in time for the 2019 Umatilla County Fair, but a ruling by the city’s own planning commission, banning construction at the site until an overflow parking plan is approved, has put the original timeline in doubt. The delay is far from the first construction delay for EOTEC.

In December the Washington State Department of Transportation announced that the Interstate 82 bridge across the Columbia River would not be finished in 2018 as originally planned, but instead finish up sometime in the spring or summer of 2019. The department blamed “additional work” that cropped up unexpectedly, causing workers to not get concrete pouring finished before the weather turned too poor to continue.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Deacon Eddie Cobbs of Pasco gives the opening prayer Monday during a service for Martin Luther King Jr. Day in Hermiston.

LEGACY

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said, and “seeks to defeat evil, not people.” It is also built on the belief that the universe is on the side of justice.

“Nonviolence is not for cowardly people,” he said. “You have to be able to know how to take it.”

He said King may be commonly associated with fighting for civil rights for black Americans in particular, but what King was really against was injustice of all kinds.

Whitfield noted the large number of children and teens in the audience, and said he was glad to see the next generation coming out to honor King’s legacy. John Witherpoon, a Tri-Cities area performer, also addressed the young people in the audience before performing two original raps.

“Step out of your shell,” he said, encouraging them to stand up for what is right. “Step out of that thing. Who cares if someone makes fun of you or calls you stupid?”

He told them that things like video games or scrolling endlessly through Facebook were distractions from “who you’re supposed to be.”

Younger children in the audience were also encouraged to do what is right, as they listened to Jackie Linton of Hermiston read the children’s book “Let the Children March” by Monica Clark-Robinson. The book details the 1963 Birmingham Children’s Crusade, explaining how young people stepped up to march against segregation despite being met with fire hoses, police dogs and arrests.

The Martin Luther King Jr. event, hosted by the Hermiston Cultural Awareness Club, began with a short march through Hermiston’s downtown, including a stop at city hall. There, city manager Byron Smith thanked participants for doing their part to carry on King’s legacy in Hermiston.

“Our community is rich and vibrant because of you, the people who are here, the people who are trying to make it a better place to live,” he said.

He quoted from King’s famous letter from Birmingham Jail:

“Human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability; it comes through the tireless efforts of men willing to be co workers with God.”

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