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INSIDE

SCREEN TIME

Check out the Hermiston Herald's new Screen Time insert, with 24 pages of entertainment features, puzzles, televised sports, streaming highlights, cooking programming, movie listings, and more. **INSIDE.**

NET NEUTRALITY

Hermiston's Joseph Franell, president of Eastern Oregon Telecom, testified on a hot button issue in front of Congress last week. **PAGE A3**

SNOW DAY

Hermiston students took advantage of a snow day Tuesday to get in some sledding at Butte Park. **PAGE A13**

BY THE WAY

Iowa State's Sam Colbray and Oregon State's Bob Coleman were teammates when Hermiston won the 2016 Oregon 5A state team title in wrestling. They both won individual state titles — Colbray at 195 pounds, and Coleman at 182.

Monday night, the former teammates were back on the mat together, this time as competitors in a dual in Corvallis.

Colbray beat his former teammate 13-4 in the 184-pound match at Gill Coliseum, helping the 17th-ranked Cyclones to a 23-14 victory over the Beavers.

Colbray, a redshirt sophomore, had the initial takedown in the first round, and led throughout. He led 6-2 after the first round, and 10-4 at the end of the second.

Colbray improved to 20-5 on the season, while Coleman, a junior, dropped to 13-13.

It's time to imbibe in delectable cheeses and chocolates, as well as palate-pleasing beer and wine.

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YOU'VE GOT MAIL

— Cupid shoots virtual arrows online —



Contributed photos from Tashina Rushlow and Jazmin Avalos

ABOVE: Tashina Rushlow and Chris Benson met online three-and-a-half years ago and are still dating. **BELOW:** Jazmin Avalos, 25, has been using dating apps for about five years.

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN AND JADE MCDOWELL
STAFF WRITERS

Online dating has come a long way since Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan traded anonymous emails in "You've Got Mail."

While the virtual venues aren't a magic cure-all for the ills of pursuing a relationship, many of those who met their significant other online say dating websites have helped them overcome barriers such as shyness or an odd work schedule.

When Tashina Rushlow and Chris Benson of Hermiston met on OkCupid three-and-a-half years ago, they were both working evenings. Graveyard shift made it difficult to attend social gatherings with other single people.

"I'm not a person who goes out a lot or been very social, and I was working a lot," Benson said.

At the time, Rushlow was living in Irrigon and Benson was living in Stanfield. Both joined OkCupid about the same time, and after two days on the site Rushlow sent a message to Benson.

"I loved his picture," she said. "It was all bug-eyed and funny."

The two started messaging on the site, then graduated to video chats over Skype. They tried to meet up three different times, but each time Benson had something come up and ended up canceling. Finally, they both committed to meeting at the bowling alley in Hermiston.

"It was nerve-wracking," Rushlow said.

Benson said he remembers walking in the door and seeing Rushlow walking toward him for the first time and thinking, "Yep, that's her."

The date went well and the pair started dating seriously after

that, eventually buying a house together. Benson said he thinks one of the secrets to successful online dating is talking to the person for a while online and building trust instead of jumping straight to meeting in person.

Joshua and Tammy Nycz of Hermiston also found each other online. They have been together for about five years and were married in August.

Joshua said he doesn't even remember the name of the dating site where they met (he thinks it might have been Plenty of Fish), but he does remember how attracted he was to Tammy's smile in her profile picture. He messaged her something innocuous, and she asked if he was related to someone she knew with the same last name. Soon they were checking in regularly, asking how the other person's day went.

Tammy's older sister had signed her up for the site and created her profile, and she had been talking to a few of the men who had sent her messages. Joshua said he signed up because he's not into drinking, and it's hard to find social gatherings for single people not centered around alcohol.

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Snow strands Hermiston drivers on I-82

By JADE MCDOWELL AND PHIL WRIGHT
STAFF WRITERS

Hermiston residents trying to get home from the Tri-Cities had a harrowing experience Saturday after white-out conditions and a multi-vehicle pile-up stranded hundreds of drivers on Interstate 82.

Mackenzie Colgan left work at about 2:45 p.m. and didn't get home until 11:30 p.m.

"Longest trip home from the Tri-Cities ever," she said. "It was terrifying."

Washington State Department of Transportation

declared Interstate 82 closed about 2:30 p.m. but Colgan said there were no signs up to warn her when she got on the Interstate in Kennewick and started following a semitrailer crawling its way through the snow storm. About 15 minutes later the semi hit its brakes and she swerved into the shoulder to avoid it.

"Once we stopped we didn't move again until 10 p.m.," she said.

Colgan said one of her best friends, Destiny George, turned out to also be stranded less than half a mile ahead, so they stayed on the phone most of the time to keep each

other company. Luckily, both of them had enough gas in their tanks to keep their cars idling and the heat on through the whole ordeal, but Colgan said she did get hungry.

"I was thinking, my dad is going to be mad at me because I didn't have any food or water with me," she said. "But I did have blankets and my snow boots and a heavy coat."

She also said she learned her lesson about keeping snacks and water in the car, and about always checking to see if the roads are closed before setting out.

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Contributed photo by Mackenzie Colgan
Mackenzie Colgan snapped this photo through her windshield while sitting about seven hours on Interstate 82 while it was closed Saturday.

