

THREE MINUTES WITH ...



JAKE BACON

Principal, Highland Hills Elementary School

When and why did you move to Hermiston?
We moved to Hermiston after joining the Hermiston School District. Our experience has been so wonderful that we moved all three kids to the district and my wife and I both work for the district.

What is your favorite place to eat in Hermiston?
We love to eat at La Palma and Yo Country!

What do you like to do in your spare time?
Spend time with my wife and kids. We are at the stage of life where all our spare time is taken following kids to their sporting events. My favorite place to be is in the mountains or at my Grandma's place in Grant County.

What surprises you about Hermiston?
I am reminded, daily how amazing our school family is. Our community, students, staff is truly one of the greatest experiences I have had professionally. I am proud to have my kids attending HSD. Our family feels very fortunate to be in a community that is so welcoming and supportive.

What was the last book you read/are currently reading?
I am currently reading "Rethinking Teacher Supervision and Evaluation" by Kim Marshall

What app or website do you use most other than Facebook or Google?
It depends upon the season. Fall – ESPN Fantasy Football & Seattle Seahawks APP. Winter & Spring – AccuWeather. Summer – ESPN & Seattle Seahawks App. Don't tell my wife, I hope she is not reading this, Groupon is year-round!

If you could travel anywhere, where would you go?
Rome, or as we are finally walking away from winter, anywhere WARM!

What is the funniest thing that's happened to you?
We were holding a Highland Hills Staff gathering and I accidentally emailed it out to the entire school district, not just Highland Hills. I was the lucky recipient to a lot of teasing by staff across the district.

What is one of your goals for the next 12 months
To win the lottery, get into shape and relax more!

What is your proudest accomplishment?
Being a father. Nothing has given me so much grief and so much pleasure all at the same time. Watching our children grow through the stages of life is truly amazing.

HERMISTON HISTORY



HH file photo

The Hermiston Herald ran a story on March 23, 1944 announcing an explosion at the Umatilla Ordnance Depot two days prior.

From the archives: "Explosion of one igloo Tuesday is fatal to six"

From the Hermiston Herald published Thursday, March 23, 1944:

Six persons lost their lives as a result of a terrific explosion about 9:30 Tuesday night at the Umatilla Ordnance Depot when a quantity of bombs stored in one of the igloos exploded. One woman and five men, all civilian employees, were killed in the only major disaster at the Ordnance Depot here since its construction about three years ago. The blast was so terrific that, although it did not cause any other damage of consequence, it was felt as far away as Lewiston, Idaho and other distant points.

The victims of the explosion were: Miss Alice Wolgamott, 20, formerly of Curtis, Nebraska where her mother resides, but since employed at the depot had lived here with her sister and brother-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Peterson.

Kenneth L. Fraser, 40, of Irrigon, leader of the crew. He is survived by his widow and four children, two are sophomores at Irrigon High School and two are in the grade school there.

Lance A. Stultz, 40, of Hermiston, residing in the Cox Addition. He is survived by his widow and one child.

Hiram Cook, 26, of Hermiston, survived by his widow and two children. They had resided with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Cook, in recent months.

William Sanders, 30, Rt. 2, Hermiston, survived by his widow and four children, all preschool-age.

Harry Sever, 33, Ordnance, survived by his widow and two children.

Outside the above victims, no one was injured in the worst tragedy that has ever struck this little community.

Colonel A.S. Buyers, commanding officer at the Umatilla Ordnance Depot, has officially announced various facts of information since the blast that vary greatly from some of the numerous rumors which usually follow this type of catastrophe. Among these are the following:

Only one igloo exploded and definitely only six persons were killed from the blast. No one else

was injured.

Very little other damage was done about the post by the gigantic blast. Although several windows were broken in the area, no damage was done to the other igloos (U.S. Army Engineers are receiving considerable mention for their planning and locating of the various igloos, to prevent further blasts by nearby igloos. The value of the sandy conditions of the soil which tends to kill concussions has been proven).

The igloo, which was used principally for the storage of huge bombs, such as 2,000-pound "blockbusters" used in aerial bombing, contained only a partial capacity of bombs.

An investigation of the explosion is underway by U.S. Army officers and pending its report no further information is available as to the exact cause of the explosion.

There is no knowledge of any sabotage connected with the explosion.

Some fear that workers might prove jittery and reluctant to go back to work was relieved when practically all employees today proved "good soldiers" and today operations are back to normal.

The explosion caused considerable excitement in the surrounding territory. Windows were smashed here and there and other minor damages resulted but as a whole major damage was confined to the igloo and its contents.

Several interesting stories are being told about the blast. Workers state that as a rule each crew is composed of eight members but apparently two of the crew were cleaning up the freight car after a shipment. At least, only six men were in the igloo at the time of the explosion. Miss Wolgamott had just driven to the scene by truck.

The explosion was so terrific that the entire roof of the igloo and a portion of the floor was shattered to bits. Several theories have been advanced by workers as to the cause of the blast but none are printed as facts. Among these are that it might have been a defective bomb, some say a bomb might have been dropped

"just right," and still others say it might have been something else.

However, a thorough investigation is being held and some announcement may be made later. This much is known, however, that extreme precautions have always been taken to avert such explosions and the entire area was placed under strict military rule after the blast.

In Hermiston, Victory Square and Ordnance, as well as Echo, Stanfield, Umatilla, Irrigon and other places where families of U.O.D. workers reside, the night was a long one until word was received that their loved ones had escaped injury.

Several freakish instances of damage were found the next morning. Directly across the highway at Ordnance, the merchandise had been knocked from the shelf but no windows were broken. In many cases doors were blown in, and in several instances the casement went with the door. In Hermiston where the blast was felt quite heavily, in many instances residents at first thought that their stoves had blown up except for the severity of the shock.

The theory that concussion travels in waves was also proven correct because that shock was not as severe near Ordnance as it was several miles away. A check up of broken windows also revealed that the damage was very spotty and at times skipped several miles. That it traveled far is another certainty. At Spokane a seismograph registered a "very slight" earth disturbance.

Another item that traveled fast is news. The Herald office was swamped with calls Wednesday from anxious relatives far and near. It appeared that the farther the news went, the greater was the damage done. One resident of Pasco stated over the phone that "Hermiston had been leveled."

It is hoped that in spite of the great tragedy, everyone will contribute much to the war effort and that activities will not only continue on schedule but will accelerate because of the sacrifice.

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Please contact the editor at editor@hermistonherald.com or call (541) 564-4533 with issues about this policy or to report errors.

SUBMIT A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Letters Policy: Letters to the Editor is a forum for the Hermiston Herald readers to express themselves on local, state, national or world issues. Brevity is good, but longer letters should be kept to 250 words.

BTW

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equipment, such as a broken headlight, taillight and the like.

The sheriff's office is partnering with the **Oregon State Sheriff's Association** and the **Oregon State Police** to participate in the program. The voucher provides a discount on automotive parts to purchase, repair or replace the defective equipment. Drivers can redeem the vouchers at the following businesses: **Advance Auto Parts, Battery Systems, Baxter Auto Parts, Carquest Auto Parts, Clackamas Auto Parts, Milex Complete Auto Care, Mt. Angel Auto Body, Napa Auto Parts, White's Collision.**

Two members of the **Umatilla County Sheriff's Office** will receive awards for their efforts to keep impaired drivers off the road.

The sheriff's office announced the **Oregon DUII Multi-Disciplinary Training Task Force** selected sheriff's **Sgt. Josh Roberts** as the "2018 DUII Trainer of the Year" and senior deputy **Nathan Rankin** as the "2018 DUII Enforcement Deputy of the Year."

Hermiston School District recently celebrated its classified staff of the year. Those staff are: **Michelle McAllister**, career and counseling secretary at **Hermiston High School**; **Kat Mayberry**, campus monitor at **Hermiston High School**; **Tracy Hepworth**, special programs secretary at the district office; **Amy Ware**, administrative assistant at **Armand Larive Middle School**; **Carol West**, special education assistant at **Sandstone Middle School**; **Polly Briscoe**, library assistant at **Desert View Elementary**; **Jessica Brown**, kindergarten assistant at **Highland**

Hills Elementary; **Jamie Cleaver**, special education assistant at **Rocky Heights Elementary**; **Leticia Bautista**, custodian at **Sunset Elementary** and **Lyndsey McKillip**, Title I assistant at **West Park Elementary.**

Nolan Mills of Boardman and several other local farmers were recently determined to be outstanding in their fields by the **National Corn Growers Association.**

Mills took first in the no-till/strip-till irrigated category of the 2018 National Corn Yield Contest. Growing a DuPont Pioneer hybrid seed, it yielded more than 360 bushels per acre. In addition, **Dean Harris** of Umatilla placed third in the same category with more than 343 bushels per acre, also with a Pioneer hybrid. And, at the state level, **Emily Rea** of Boardman came in third with just over 274 bushels per acre. In the irrigated class, a

pair of local farmers placed in the state-level contest: **Joe Taylor** of Boardman was first with 315 bushels per acre and **Dan Mills** of Stanfield came in second with 310.

The national and state contest winners were recognized at the annual **Commodity Classic**, held Feb. 28 to March 2 in Orlando, Florida. Growers competed in six corn production classes. For a link to a list of all contest winners, visit www.ncga.com.

The menu at the **Har-kenrider Senior Activity Center** for Thursday is a hot roast beef sandwich, potatoes and gravy, vegetables and dessert. The menu for next Tuesday is spaghetti and garlic bread, vegetable, tossed salad and dessert.

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