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Samantha Steffey, playing the character Sandrine, kisses Aurelio Marin, playing the character Jimmy, in scene two, Sad and Glad.

INSIDE

CINCO DE MAYO

Hermiston celebrated Mexican culture this weekend with music, food and the Miss Cinco de Mayo pageant.

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SCREEN TIME

Families flock to downtown Hermiston to celebrate National Screen-Free Week.

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RODEO MAN

Preston Pederson of Hermiston won the all-around title while representing Blue Mountain Community College at the Northwest Regional Finals.

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BY THE WAY

It's Teacher Appreciation Week

This week is **Teacher Appreciation Week**.

Teachers around the state are rallying this week to shine a spotlight on the need for more funding for schools. While some teachers are choosing to walk out of their classrooms, teachers in Hermiston are planning a “walk-in” on Wednesday by inviting government leaders to visit the school Wednesday morning and hear firsthand from educators about what is needed to fund their classrooms.

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The **Northeast Oregon Home Builders Association Home Tour** is scheduled for May 18. The tour includes four homes built by local builders who “have lived in Hermiston most of their life and like giving their customers the best home possible.”

One of the homes was built by **Hermiston High School** students for their student home building class. Pictures of the homes on the tour and a map of the tour will be available starting May 14 at www.neohba.com.

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Seeing triple



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Tammy and Josh Nycz hold their triplets, from left, Alexander, Amilia and Rylee while sitting on the couch in their Hermiston home.

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
NEWS EDITOR

Mother's Day will take on a whole new meaning for Tammy Nycz this year.

The Hermiston mom, whose older children are now ages 19 and 20, gave birth to triplets in March.

“It's like starting all over again,” she said. Fortunately she's not alone — her husband, Josh, is walking this journey with her, and when the couple are exhausted the triplets' grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins and half siblings provide reinforcements.

Amilia, Rylee and Alexander (Xander for short) came home two weeks ago. The triplets were born March 11, but at less than 3 pounds each needed to spend some time in the NICU at Legacy Emanuel Hospital in Portland before coming home to Hermiston. They now weight close to five pounds.

Tammy had already been at Legacy Emanuel for quite some time before they were born. Her high-risk pregnancy required bed rest at the hospital starting in January.

“I did a lot of Sudoku,” she said. During that time she and Josh were featured in the *Hermiston Herald's* Feb. 13 article about dating online, which is where they met six years ago. They said they wanted to update people on how the family was doing once the triplets arrived.

Triplets are unusual — less than one-tenth of one percent of live births in the United



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Tammy Nycz holds out her finger as her son, Alexander, grabs it as he rests on the chest of his father, Josh.

States. These particular triplets are even more unusual. Amilia and Rylee are identical twins, split from the same egg, while Xander was born at the same time but came from a second egg.

Until Amilia and Rylee begin developing more distinct personalities, family members can tell them apart by a small, light birth mark

on Rylee's eyelid. “The doctors suggested toenail polish,” Josh said.

The ultrasound technician at Good Shepherd Women's Center who discovered they were having multiples said he had never seen

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Washington legislature makes sales tax exemption more difficult

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
NEWS EDITOR

Umatilla County residents who make regular shopping trips into Washington will likely start seeing sales tax added to their bill in July.

Last week Washington legislators passed Senate Bill 5997, which would end the practice of retailers taking sales tax off of Oregonians' purchases after they show ID. Instead, out-of-state residents who paid more than \$25 in state sales taxes in a year would have to fill out tax forms once a year asking for reimbursement.

The bill is now on Washington Gov. Jay Inslee's desk, where he can choose to sign it, veto it or take no action. It

would take effect July 1, and proponents of the bill estimate it would raise about \$53 million per biennium from visitors who won't bother to submit the forms or won't reach the \$25 minimum.

The change has the most impact on residents living on the state line, such as Hermiston residents who shop in the Tri-Cities or Milton-Freewater residents who buy items in Walla Walla.

Luann Garner, of Hermiston, said she frequently shops in the Tri-Cities and usually gets lunch while she's up there. Now she plans to stay in Oregon because she is tired of being “taxed to death.”



Vehicles head across the river into Washington on the Interstate 82 bridge in 2018. Fewer shoppers may head that way in the future if they have to pay sales tax in Washington.

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