

DERAILED

Continued from Page A1

ations will continue there, but stated the company would move some of Hinkle's operations to yards in Portland, Spokane, Ogden, Utah, Pocatello, Idaho and Nampa, Idaho.

"The workforce reduction is the result of accelerating (Union Pacific's) continuous improvement plan and implementing Precision Scheduled Railroading principles," he wrote in an email.

Union Pacific announced its Unified Plan 2020 last year to improve efficiency. It announced record earnings in 2018 of more than \$6 billion, and during a first quarter earnings call with shareholders on April 18 announced record 2019 first quarter net income and a 15% increase in earnings per share compared to 2018, despite the fact that total volume decreased by 2% compared to the previous year.

During the call, Chief Operating Officer Jim Vena said UP increased train length by 7% and was focused on reducing "touch points" where trains are handled. He said the company had "stopped humping cars at Hinkle and Pine Bluff, Arkansas, and curtailed yard operations in Salt Lake City, the Kansas City complex and Butler Yard in Wisconsin, to name a few."

State Rep. Greg Smith, R-Heppner, called the cuts at Hinkle "devastating" for the area.

"These are good family wage jobs with benefits," Smith said. "That job loss is going to have a significant economic effect throughout the region."

State Sen. Bill Hansell, R-Athena, said he found out about the job cuts Tuesday afternoon.

Hansell questioned whether legislation such as the recent gross receipts tax is making neighboring state's more attractive to business. That's been the

talk in some circles at the Capitol, he said, and perhaps Union Pacific relocating operations from Hinkle to Idaho and Washington signals that is happening. However, Hansell cautioned, he does not know if that's the case here.

George Murdock, chair of the Umatilla County Board of Commissioners, said Union Pacific has long been a "major employer" in the county.

"These are the kind of jobs people occupy for an entire career, so their loss is particularly acute," he said. "I had heard rumors that it was a possibility but had hoped it was only a rumor."

Murdock said his understanding was Union Pacific would continue to have a presence at Hinkle and the county will remain a major freight route. He said it will be important to work with the unions and affected employees in the coming months.

While the jobs represent a significant loss for the

area, Hermiston's increasingly diversified economy helps absorb the blow. Drotzmann pointed to the closure of the Simplot plant in 2004 and the closure of Hermiston Foods in 2017 as an example of times that Hermiston lost one of its largest employers but continued to grow.

"This community is really resilient," he said.

That might be small comfort to the employees whose jobs have been cut in recent months. Locals took to community Facebook forums on Tuesday to share that family members had been laid off or to share condolences with friends who had lost jobs.

Oregon has designated CAPECO in Pendleton as the lead organization for when major job losses occur in Hermiston, and CAPECO will conduct trainings and job fairs for former Hinkle employees in June. In the meantime, some employees will be eligible to apply for transfer to one of Union Pacific's other rail yards.



Contributed photo

A student interviews for an internship in Morrow County.

Morrow County works to connect students with jobs

BY HERMISTON HERALD

Students in Morrow County will soon have the opportunity to work right in their own backyard through a new program, the Morrow County Student Internship Program. Several partners are involved in the program — Morrow County School District, Ione School District, the Port of Morrow, the InterMountain Education Service District and multiple community businesses.

The program is funded through the Morrow Education Foundation, which receives funds from CREZ 11.

The internships are open to high school seniors and juniors who qualify. Students will be employees of the IMESD and will be paid minimum wage. Students can receive high school credit for their work experience, but must maintain 90% attendance at school and at their place of work.

More than 25 busi-

nesses are on board to hire interns, including Bank of Eastern Oregon, City of Boardman, Columbia River Health, Port of Morrow, Morrow County Grain Growers, Blue Mountain Manufacturing, Boardman Foods and Lamb-Weston. Students will learn from medical providers, mechanics, analysts and IT professionals representing multiple potential career pathways.

Students will start working this fall when school is back in session. Jobs are available for a semester or the entire school year. Students will work an average of 10 hours per week.

The students applied for the jobs in April and went through the interviewing process on May 14 and 15.

For more information about the program, please contact Kalie Davis, Workforce Training Program Manager at the Port of Morrow, at kali@dportofmorrow.com.

CITY

Continued from Page A1

This year's I Love My City cleanup was perfect timing for Riverfront Park, which was damaged by floodwaters after the Umatilla River overflowed its banks in April. Much of the heavy lifting has already been completed, but Saturday morning dozens of volunteers were at the park pulling weeds, sweeping dried mud off the trail and refilling the playground area with bark chips after the river washed all of them away.

Judy Vogt stood under the swing set with a rake, spreading bark chips as they were dumped in by the wheelbarrow-load. She joined the event through Oasis Vineyard Church.

"My church likes to help the community," she said. "We're not just a sit-at-home church."

She said she was enjoying meeting new people at the event and was happy to see all ages participating.

Sharon Welsheimer said it was her first time participating in the I Love My City cleanup day because she has been out of town previous years.

"We love our city, what can I say?" she said when asked what brought her out to the park that morning.

Gina Castillo, who was weeding the landscaping around the park's paths, echoed that sentiment.

"The name says everything," she said. "I love my city and I want to be a part of it."

On the other side of the park, Hermiston High School's Eco Club was painting over the graffiti covering the underside of the Highland Avenue bridge.

Rachel Cairns, the club's advisor, said they were hop-

ing to persuade the city that the area needed to be covered with a mural and a statue now that the new West Highland Trail travels underneath.

"Research shows that once you beautify a public space in a more permanent way, graffiti artists tend to leave it alone," she said.

Harrison Temple, who was using a roller to spread gray paint over names and swear words scrawled over the underside of the bridge, said most of the graffiti wasn't very family-friendly and he was glad to help get rid of it, but there were a few things that he was a little sad to paint over.

"This is something we've been planning for a long time, but this is the city stepping in and giving us some resources," he said. "This is not the end of what we want to do here. We want to make it a family-friendly art

space."

Saturday's cleanup also included sending volunteers to wash cars for free and to show some "laundry love" by cleaning up laundromats and offering to pay for people's laundry.

Pastor Terry Haight said the event encompassed eight churches and 12 locations on Saturday.

"I think we got a lot done," he said.

On Sunday those congregations met for a joint worship service at the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center. Haight said the service raised more than \$6,000 toward the rebuilding of Funland Park, and participating churches pledged to continue collecting offerings.

Residents who wish to participate in future I Love My City events can keep an eye on the website www.ilovehermiston.com for announcements.

Proceeds from every sale go to the Pioneer Relief Nursery.

ALL WITH STANDARD TOYOTA SAFETY SENSE!

SELECT NEW 2019 TACOMAS UP TO \$3,000 OFF MSRP

Stk. #19H537. New 2019 Toyota Tacoma TRD Pro Double Cab 5' Bed V6 AT. MSRP \$47,905. No security deposit required. On approved credit. Does not include military or college rebates. Plus tax, title and \$75 dealer doc fee. See dealer for details. Expires 05/31/19.

SELECT NEW 2019 TUNDRAS UP TO \$5,500 OFF MSRP

Stk. #19H557. New 2019 Toyota Tundra Platinum CrewMax 5.5' Bed 5.7L. MSRP \$64,170. No security deposit required. On approved credit. Does not include military or college rebates. Plus tax, title and \$75 dealer doc fee. See dealer for details. Expires 05/31/19.

GET UP TO \$6,000 OFF MSRP ON SELECT NEW 2019 AVALONS

*\$4500 off MSRP on new 2019 Toyota Highlander models in stock includes \$2000 TFS rebate and \$2500 Rogers discount. On approved credit. See dealer for details. Does not include military or college rebates. Plus tax, title and \$75 dealer doc fee. Offer expires 5/31/19.

GET UP TO \$4,500 OFF MSRP ON SELECT NEW 2019 HIGHLANDERS

*\$4500 off MSRP on new 2019 Toyota Highlander models in stock includes \$2000 TFS rebate and \$2500 Rogers discount. On approved credit. See dealer for details. Does not include military or college rebates. Plus tax, title and \$75 dealer doc fee. Offer expires 5/31/19.

ROGERS TOYOTA OF HERMISTON

We Care About What You're Driving!

541.567.6461 • 1.800.522.2308

1550 N. 1st St
Hermiston, OR

SALES HOURS
MON-SAT: 8:30 am - 7 pm
SUN: 10 am - 5 pm

SERVICE HOURS
MON-FRI: 7 am - 5:30 pm
SAT: 8 am - 5 pm

toyotaofhermiston.com