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CAREER CAMP

Hermiston students preparing for a career in health care were chosen for this year's MedQuest Health Career Exploration Camp.

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POWER PRO

Local electrical contractors are having a hard time competing with Amazon for electricians.

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GOLDEN GIRL

Jazlyn Romero takes home Hermiston's first individual state title in the WIAA.

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BY THE WAY

Turnout for last week's elections was only 14% in **Umatilla County**, falling below the state's turnout of 21%.

Voters may have felt uninspired by the lack of contested races. The Hermiston ballot had a single contested race — **Umatilla County Fire District** board member **Spike Piersol** beat challenger **Sebastian Sanchez** by 74%.

Hermiston School District's board all kept their seats after running unopposed.

Stanfield School District also passed their new bond (for more information see A7).

... This week wraps up our spotlight of **Hermiston High School** for the month of May. For information about what HHS students have been up to lately, see A4, A8 and A9.

Next week will be a busy one for the high school as they prepare to celebrate graduation with a commencement ceremony on Thursday, June 6 at 7 p.m. at the **Toyota Center** in the Tri-Cities.

June's spotlight school will be **Rocky Heights Elementary School**, so watch for information and stories about the school and its staff.

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--A pattern of love--



Staff photo by Jade McDowell

ABOVE: Shawn Lockwood, left, and Erin Chowning, center, made a quilt for Chowning's grandson Cole Smith, right, for graduation using his old basketball T-shirts. BELOW: Hermiston's Cole Smith drives to the hoop during a 2019 District 8 3A playoff game against Shadle Park in Kennewick.

Graduation quilt pieces together memories of basketball career

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
NEWS EDITOR

Cole Smith's graduation present tells a story.

Each square of the king-sized quilt made by his grandmother is made of a different T-shirt or jersey from a different basketball tournament or team.

A black square with the Las Vegas logo represents a trip in fourth grade to a tournament in Sin City. Purple squares show off dif-

ferent Bulldogs mottos throughout the years. A blue square reads "Best of the West" — a hometown tournament, and one of Smith's favorites.

Now instead of a box of old, too-small T-shirts he has an easy way to take those memories with him wherever he heads off to next.

"I liked the idea," he said. "I thought it would be good to look back on."

The quilt was his mom Cheri Smith's idea. She got his grandmother Erin Chowning to do the sewing, and Chowning enlisted the help of longtime friend Shawn Lockwood to

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Flag illustration by Vecteezy.com

Families feel the impact after Union Pacific layoffs

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
NEWS EDITOR

Saturday was a tough day for the Hinkle Rail Yard.

It was the last day for many of the 195 employees laid off last week as Union Pacific Railroad slashed jobs down to a skeleton crew at the rail yard.

Stories flooded social media of how the layoffs were hitting home — employees of 10, 15, 20 years who planned to retire with Union Pacific were now facing an uncertain future.

On Thursday, Guy Haight was finding out his last day. He said he found out about the layoffs online last week on his day off before he was notified by the company. He had hung on through scores of previous layoffs over the past six months, but

thought he would be safe with 19 years of seniority.

"We didn't think it would go this far," he said. "We didn't think they would actually shut down the shop."

His wife Susan Haight said there wasn't much work for a 56-year-old machinist in the area, and they were worried about what would come next.

"We have a mortgage and kids at home," she said.

Guy said he joined UP 19 years ago because it seemed like a great place to earn a steady paycheck and good retirement. It was a great place to work, he said, until recently, when increasingly steep layoffs depressed morale at the yard and made work "chaotic."

Oregon's two senators in Con-

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Staff photo by Kathy Aney

A string of rail cars sits on a rail line west of the Hinkle Rail Yard on Tuesday. Union Pacific filed notice with the state that it will lay off up to 195 employees at the rail yard near Hermiston.

