



# Hermiston Herald

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**INSIDE**

**NEW PAPERS**

EO Media Group is expanding its reach in Eastern Oregon with the purchase of the La Grande Observer and Baker City Herald. **PAGE A12**

**NEW REPORTER**

The Hermiston Herald has a new face in its newsroom. **PAGE A3**

**SUMMER CAMP**

Hermiston High School announced its schedules for summer sports and band camps. **PAGE A11**

**BY THE WAY**

Oregonians will officially be paying sales tax in Washington starting July 1 after Gov. Jay Inslee signed the bill ending the practice of retailers waiving sales tax for Oregon residents who show identification.

Instead, Oregonians who paid more than \$25 in state sales tax for the year will be able to submit tax forms and receipts to the state once a year requesting reimbursement. The forms have not yet been created and made available.

...  
The Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit 11 will conduct a demolition disposal at Naval Weapons System Training Facility in Boardman on Thursday and Friday.

The Navy postponed a previously scheduled attempt due to unfavorable weather.

Activities on those days may cause dust clouds, smoke, audible detonations and ground vibration.

...  
Cancer survivors and supporters from throughout the region are preparing to take steps to raise awareness and money to fight the disease. The Relay for Life of Umatilla & Morrow Counties is Saturday, June 15

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## friendly faces



Staff photo by Jade McDowell

Members of the Good Shepherd Hospital Auxiliary present a check for \$23,000 to the Good Shepherd Community Health Foundation during a volunteer luncheon.

**Good Shepherd volunteers recognized for their contributions**

By JADE MCDOWELL  
NEWS EDITOR

When people walk through the doors at Good Shepherd Medical Center they are often worried or scared about what they might find — a life-changing diagnosis, perhaps, or a family member in pain.

Good Shepherd's volunteers can help provide a friendly, comforting presence in those moments.

Ken Freeman sits in the medical campus's new building on the north side, greeting patients and providing directions for those who are lost.

"I enjoy being around people," he said. "Any time I can help someone, that's where my heart is."

He donates his time for about four hours a day, five days a week, and gets to know the familiar faces.

"I've gotten to be friends with a lot of them who go down to the heart rehab," he said. "I kid around with them."

Freeman is one of the few male volunteers who were present at Good Shepherd Health Care System's volunteer appreciation luncheon last Thursday. Most of the hospital auxiliary's volunteers are women.

Joyce Dye, 90, is one of several volunteers who are still going strong in their ninth decade. She volunteers in the day surgery area for about 10 hours a week.

"It's mostly reception work," she said. "I help get charts out for the nurses, I make sure the families know where their patient



Staff photo by Jade McDowell

Cindy Schaan, director of volunteer services for Good Shepherd Health Care System, and Tim Glass, president of the Good Shepherd Hospital Auxiliary, speak to volunteers at an appreciation luncheon.

is, I get them coffee."

She said she enjoys being able to do things to help the families out as they're worried about their loved ones.

She used to be chair of the hospital's

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**TO VOLUNTEER**

Anyone interested in volunteering for one of Good Shepherd Health Care System's volunteer programs can pick up and application and background check form at the hospital gift shop.

## PERS continues to eat into city budget

By JADE MCDOWELL  
NEWS EDITOR

As Hermiston city officials budget for the coming fiscal year, the costs of the Public Employee Retirement System continue to grow.

City manager Byron Smith wrote in the forward to the proposed 2019-20 budget that the city's general fund was seeing a 25% increase in PERS costs, on top of steep increases over the past few years.

"This will not be sustainable for many more years," he said. "This increase is eating up most if not all of our revenue growth."

In the police department, for example, PERS expenses are increasing by \$210,000. Police Chief Jason Edmiston said the continued increases restrict his ability to add new personnel.

The city council will vote on the 2019-20 budget during their June 10 meeting. The budget includes a 2.75% cost of living increase for employees, and maintains current staffing levels at the equivalent of 120 full-time employees.

**Capital projects**

While Hermiston will continue its investment into new capital improvement projects over the next year, many of the projects slated for 2019-20 will be less visible than recent undertakings such as the new senior center. The city plans to upgrade the computer system that runs its water and sewer system, improve a well and a lift station, replace underground storage tanks and expand the Geer Road water line.



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

A 1 million-gallon water tower is one of the City of Hermiston's biggest capital improvement projects for the 2019-20 fiscal year.

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