



# Hermiston Herald

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## GREG SMITH COMING UNDER FIRE

### District 57 representative responds to scrutiny of perceived conflicts of interest

By JADE MCDOWELL  
NEWS EDITOR

As the 2019 legislative session winds down, Rep. Greg Smith, R-Heppner, is busy casting votes and fulfilling committee assignments as he represents District 57.

It's his other role, however — private economic development consultant — that is getting all the attention lately.

Smith has always been very careful to try and separate his

private roles from his public service as a state legislator. He can often be seen at public meetings around the state letting people know which “hat” he is appearing before them with today. But for some people, the perception is that the hat is a red herring for the fact that they are all worn on the same head.

Public agencies often receive investments from the state legislature while employing Smith.

Eastern Oregon University, which serves residents

of Smith's district but is not located inside it, received a \$9 million commitment from the legislature last year to build a new field house. EOU employs Smith's company, Gregory Smith & Company LLC, to run its Small Business Development Center.

The Columbia Development Authority, which employs Smith directly as its executive director, received about \$6.5 million in the 2017 transportation package to reconfigure an interchange leading to property Smith is tasked with marketing.

Last year, the legislature

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Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Rep. Greg Smith, R-Heppner, does carry more influence in Salem than many legislators. He has the most seniority of any state representative after voters in District 57 sent him to the legislature 10 terms in a row, and the connections around Salem that go with that longevity.

### BY THE WAY

#### Blood drive rescheduled

Due to a scheduling conflict, the upcoming American Red Cross community blood drive will be held Monday, June 17 from noon to 6 p.m. at Our Lady of Angels Catholic Church, 565 W. Hermiston Ave.

The April 15 drive, held at Good Shepherd Medical Center, collected 18 units from 24 donors. Volunteer Patti Perkins expressed gratitude to the Hermiston Emblem Club for supplying homemade treats for the donors. The May 20 drive at New Hope Community Church collected 26 units from 40 donors. The canteen was provided by Eastern Star.

Perkins encourages people to double-check their appointment schedule for the time and place. A community drive is held the third Monday of each month in Hermiston.

While walk-ins are welcome, Perkins said it's helpful for scheduling volunteers if people make an appointment by calling 1-800-448-3543. For more information, visit www.redcross.org.

The Harkenrider Senior Activity Center will be having a special Father's Day lunch on Thursday, with cubed steaks, vegetables, potatoes and gravy and dessert. Friday is tacos and dessert; Monday is salad bar, garlic bread and dessert and Tuesday is tater tot casserole, salad, fruit and dessert.

### HERMISTON GRADUATION

## READY FOR THE FUTURE



Staff photos by E.J. Harris

Hermiston Schools superintendent Tricia Mooney straightens the shirt collar of Joshua Brown backstage before the Hermiston High School commencement ceremony on Thursday in Kennewick.

### Class of 2019 bids Hermiston High School farewell

By JESSICA POLLARD  
STAFF WRITER

Three hundred and forty six Hermiston High School students became graduates in a sea of purple caps and robes last Thursday at the Toyota Center.

The ceremony celebrated how far students had come while looking forward to what their future might hold.

The evening of celebration commenced with a rendition of “The Star Spangled Banner” by the HHS Chamber Choir. The soprano voices of Sophomore Anna Guerrero and Senior Alyssa Perkins rang out across the gym, carrying the piece to the end.

Student Body President Isel Tijeda Urenda delivered a welcome speech, and Alexandria Varela Lepe gave a Spanish welcome.

“Tonight is one of the last times we stand together as the Hermiston High School Class of 2019,” Urenda said.



A Hermiston High graduate points toward the audience during the commencement ceremony in Kennewick. More photos of graduation on Page A11.

“We will see where the crow flies, but until then, let's enjoy the celebration.”

Parking lots overflowing with cars stood testament to large crowds of families and friends who enjoyed congratulations and cheered on their graduates as each one entered onto the stage through a pair of white columns shrouded in

ferns to pose with their diplomas before the audience.

Principal Tom Spoo led a round of thanks to Hermiston School District staff, families, alumni, and HSD board members.

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