



# Hermiston Herald

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## BONUS CLUE

Find an exclusive bonus clue to the location of the National Night Out medallion, inside.

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## SCHOOL CLINIC

Dr. Daniel Buck, a Hermiston native, will provide medical services for students at a clinic on Hermiston High School campus.

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## SPEED DEMON

Hermiston resident Mitch Myers gets back in the racing game.

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# READY TO REBUILD



Staff photo by Ben Lonergan

Dylan Duke (left) and Kayla Sandlyn search for a wooden fence board carved with the name of Dylan's father, Scott Duke, who passed away several years ago.

## Funland committee begins answering questions about rebuilding the playground

By JADE MCDOWELL  
NEWS EDITOR

As the city of Hermiston and a citizen committee prepare to launch a rebuild of Funland playground, they're starting to piece together answers to the questions that have surrounded the project.

The beloved, castle-like wooden structure in the shadow of the Hermiston Butte burned down in May in a suspected case of arson. This will be the third time the community builds a playground there — the original structure built in 1996 was burned down in 2001 and replaced in 2002.

The committee leading the charge this time around held its first meeting last week to discuss design, budget, and fundraising. Below are some of the details they discussed:



Staff photo by Ben Lonergan

The charred remains of the main Funland play structure are seen through a warped railing at the park. The structures at Funland burned this last spring in an apparent arson.

### When will the new playground open?

Parks and recreation director Larry Fetter told the Funland citizens committee that under an aggressive design and fundraising timeline, his goal is to have

construction of the new Funland begin in February 2020 and wrap up in June.

### Will it be more fire-resistant this time around?

The Funland committee has issued a request for proposals

from playground designers, stating that the materials used must be "durable, safe and noncombustible." Many newer playgrounds are using a compressed plastic product that can mimic the look of old wooden playgrounds but is much more durable and fireproof.

During last Wednesday's meeting the committee also discussed using a more flame-retardant rubberized surface under the play structure designed to break falls while also being more handicapped-accessible than bark chips or gravel.

### Will there be added security measures to prevent future vandalism and arson?

Hermiston Police Chief Jason Edmiston said there were security upgrades that could be added to the new park, including a design that would reduce places for people to hide, and a good-quality camera feed beamed live to the police station (the quality of the old cameras was not effective in identifying

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## Highland Avenue lane closures planned for next week

Contractors will be shutting down one lane of traffic at a time on Hermiston Avenue between Southwest Third Street and Southwest 10th Street throughout next week as they overlay new pavement on the street.

The lane closures will start Monday, and will not affect the Umatilla County Fair Parade scheduled for Saturday. The schedule was changed from the original plan to complete the work ahead of the fair parade.

After paving between Third and 10th streets is complete, Highland Avenue will be closed between First and Third streets for a more extensive rebuild of that portion of road. Businesses inside the closure

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## Downtown district wrangles in pre-parade fun

By TAMMY MALGESINI  
COMMUNITY EDITOR

The Hermiston Downtown District invites people to join the fun while waiting for the Umatilla County Fair Parade to get rolling.

The Umatilla County Fair Parade Kick-off event is Saturday from 4-6 p.m. on Hermiston's festival street. It's located in front of Hermiston City Hall, 180 N.E. Second St.

The pre-parade function features food vendors and live music by Dallin Puzey. Brandi Howard, Hermiston Downtown District vice president, called Puzey "a crowd favorite in our area."

A Hermiston native, Puzey writes and performs his own music. In addition, he plays a variety of famil-

iar folk, country, rock and pop songs.

Area residents, Howard said, often start staking out places to view the parade early in the day. The downtown area is always packed with people.

"Main Street is a very popular place to watch the parade," Howard said. "We thought it was a great idea to preoccupy people and provide a little entertainment."

The downtown district has been actively promoting the city's festival street by sponsoring a number of events. This is the second year in a row that they have organized pre-parade activities. The 2018 event, Howard said, was very well-received.

"People loved it," she said. "You bring your kids down, they get some



HH file photo

Dallin Puzey is the featured entertainer during the Umatilla County Fair Parade Kick-off event Saturday from 4-6 p.m. on Hermiston's festival street.

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