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INSIDE

BOILING POINT

Hermiston residents showed up en masse to a city council meeting Monday to voice complaints about increased water rates.

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GET ACTIVE

Schools are coming up with creative ways to meet new requirements for physical education.

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FORE!

Check out our special golf page.

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BY THE WAY

Umatilla to celebrate improvements to park

The City of Umatilla is hosting a ribbon cutting at Kiwanis Park on Sept. 6, 2019 at 1 p.m. to celebrate improvements made to the park.

The ceremony will include remarks from mayor Mary Dedrick, city manager David Stockdale and others, followed by refreshments.

The improvements to Kiwanis Park were spurred by a survey that the Umatilla High School Youth Advisory Council undertook on behalf of the city's parks and recreation committee. The survey found residents most wanted to see improvements to Kiwanis Park.

Good Shepherd Community Health Foundation contributed an \$18,000 grant for new playground equipment and Hermiston Kiwanis donated \$7,000 for lights at the basketball court. The city of Umatilla paid for the addition of a second basketball court.

On page A11 of today's Hermiston Herald you will notice a column by EO Media Group's new regional sports editor, Ronald Bond.

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First day of school

Monday was a busy day for students, bus drivers and board members in Hermiston



A school bus stops to pick up students on the first day of school in Hermiston on Monday morning.

Staff photo by Ben Lonergan



Neely Foster, 8, right, follows her friend onto the school bus for her first day of third grade in Hermiston on Monday morning.

Staff photo by Ben Lonergan

By JESSICA POLLARD
STAFF WRITER

For thousands of Hermiston students, Monday morning marked the end of summertime fun. For superintendent Tricia Mooney, it was the best day of the year.

"It's my favorite holiday," Mooney said.

Mooney, along with members of the Hermiston School Board, shared their first day of school experiences at a board work session on Monday evening.

Board chair Karen Sherman — a retired middle school teacher herself — headed to Sandstone Middle School on Monday morning to pass out schedules and take part in one of her favorite first day traditions: the opening of the lockers.

She pointed out that for incoming sixth graders, nailing the three number locker combination can be quite trying, particularly on the first day of school.

"The teachers keep getting younger and younger as I get older and older," Sherman joked.

The district hired almost 50 new teachers this year, some of whom are Hermiston High School graduates returning from college.

On the last weekend before school, while some students were catching up on sleep or relaxing pool-side, kids and staff from Desert View Elementary were out and about, participating in the Hermiston Education Foundation "Fun Run".

The school took home the "Fleet of Feet" award Saturday

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Boyhood friends reconnect in FOX Sports broadcast booth

By KATHY ANEY
STAFF WRITER

FOX Sports soccer broadcaster John Strong has a secret weapon and his name is Erick Olson.

During the men's FIFA World Cup final last summer in Russia, Strong broadcast to millions of soccer fans as Olson fed him stats and other research using a white board, hand signals and quick exchanges with Strong's microphone muted. The boyhood buddies have mind-reading capability that developed over years of friendship. Strong draws comfort from Olson's presence in the booth.

"It's having a second brain, a second set of eyes, a second version of me sitting there next to me," Strong said.

Olson parachutes into the weird world of international soccer broadcasting for a few weeks every summer. The rest of the year, he teaches language arts and communication at Umatilla High School, coaches UHS softball and does news and sports commentary for KOHU KQFM radio and the Oregon Student Athletic Association. Olson, the Voice of the Bulldogs, has his nickname — "Windbag" — inscribed on a special chair at Hermiston High School's Kennison Field.

This summer, Olson again joined Strong's team to cover the CONCACAF Gold Cup, which determines the men's champion of North America, Central America and the Caribbean.



Contributed photo

Erick Olson takes a moment for a selfie in the booth as he assists FOX Sports broadcaster John Strong during a MLS game with statistics and research.

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