

MLK:

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moved to the United States from Mexico in the 1980s and became friends with a black man, people would assume that the only reason the two of them would hang out together was because they were in a gang. A white man talked about how as a child he always looked up to his black neighbors in Pendleton, who he considered “high class” compared to his family, and was confused about why other white people felt differently.

Despite examples of racism that were shared, many people also stated they feel that the country has made progress since Martin Luther King Jr.’s death. Nicole Thompson said she had recently moved to the area from Portland it meant a lot to her to see so many people “who don’t look like me” showing up to support a march in King’s honor.

Jazmin Avalos was one of several people who encouraged the group to take action so that the country could improve even more in the next 61 years.

“Always start with yourself, and never believe you are small,” she said.

During his address at city hall, city manager Byron Smith said he had been inspired by reading some of King’s lesser-known speeches, including one titled “Unfinished Dreams.”

“So many of us in life start out building temples: temples of character, temples of justice, temples of peace,” King wrote in that speech. “And so often we don’t finish them. Because life is like Schubert’s ‘Unfinished Symphony.’ At so many points we start, we try, we set out to build our various temples. And I guess one of the great agonies of life is that we are constantly trying to finish that which is unfinished.”

Smith said he agreed that imperfect human beings will



Staff photo by Ben Lonergan
Nicole Thompson, who recently moved to the area from Portland, speaks during an open mic session at the Hermiston First United Methodist Church as a part of the annual Martin Luther King Jr. March Monday morning.



Staff photo by Ben Lonergan
Hermiston Mayor David Drotzmann, right, and Hispanic Advisory Committee chair Jose Garcia, left, march as a part of the annual Martin Luther King Jr. March in Hermiston Monday.

never “finish” the work of ending prejudice, but “we can move toward that goal.”

Keynote speaker Roy Barron, a city councilor and local organizer, shared several of King’s quotes on justice and morality, and said his philosophies still hold true today.

“Whether it’s injustice

based on race, or injustice based on gender, or injustice based on sexual orientation, injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere,” Barron said.

People fear what they don’t know, he said, so it’s “incumbent on us to be informed and to speak truth to false narratives.”

He said it would have been easy for the men and women who fought for civil rights to feel overwhelmed by the size and power of the institutions they were up against. Instead, they soldiered on.

“They give me hope we will rise to the occasion,” Barron said.

Police:

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people in the house that myself and my supervisors believe can fill the position,” he said.

This summer, all three officers and their supervisor, administrative Cpt. Travis Eynon, will attend the National Association of School Resource Officers conference in Dallas.

The association describes the role of a school resource officer as a “triad” — an educator, an informal counselor and a law enforcement officer.

Stanfield and Echo school districts share a community resource officer, Milton-Freewater School District gained a resource officer at the beginning of this school year, and Pendleton currently has one as well.

“I think career growth within our department is important. We do have

BTW:

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Life of the Forest” series on the Blue Mountains, which aired on **Blue Mountain Television** in 2019. He will speak about the early naturalists and collectors who explored and documented the Walla Walla region in the 19th century, including Lewis and Clark, Thomas Nuttall, John Kirk Townsend, David Douglas, John C. Fremont, Charles E. Bendire, and Dr. Lee Raymond Dice.

The museum’s regular hours are daily from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is free to members and kids under 6, \$4 for children ages 6-12, \$8 for seniors/students and \$9 for general admission. For more information, call 509-525-7703 or visit www.fwmm.org.

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Governor Kate Brown signed House Bill 2896 into law last week, authorizing loans to nonprofits to create programs to help people be able to afford to replace their outdated

manufactured homes with something much more energy efficient.

The law, which was sponsored by **Rep. Greg Smith**, R-Heppner, and supported by **Umatilla Electric Cooperative**, passed in the 2019 session.

“Keeping Oregonians in affordable homes is crucial to ensure our communities continue to thrive,” Smith said in a news release.

UEC general manager **Robert Echenrode** also called the bill a “big win” for rural Oregon.

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The menu at the **Harker Senior Activity Center** for Thursday is chicken enchiladas, Spanish rice, salad and birthday cake. Friday is clam chowder, coleslaw, garlic bread and dessert. Monday is pizza, green salad, fruit and dessert. Tuesday is tuna noodle casserole, peas, carrot salad and dessert. Next Wednesday is BBQ beef sandwich, potato salad, fruit and dessert.

— You can submit items for our weekly *By The Way* column by emailing your tips to editor@hermiston-herald.com.

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