



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Stylist Tricia Marquez chats with client Jennifer McDonough about the plan for her hair on May 23 at Trim'Er's salon in Hermiston.

## Salons:

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sion to reopen on May 15 in counties, such as Umatilla, that have declining cases of COVID-19 and meet other criteria. The Hermiston stylist and co-owner of Trim'Er's feels elated to be back at the styling chair. There's no way for a stylist to self-distance while coloring and cutting hair, but Marquez said that she respects the virus, but doesn't fear it. The long list of state requirements — the longer break between clients, having them wait in their cars, the extra sanitizing — add complexity to her day, but help mitigate the risk.

"I'm thrilled to be up and running," said the Hermiston stylist. "If I had to wear a garbage bag, I'd do it just to be able to come back and work."

Clients are clamoring for appointments. The salon is booked up for two-and-a-

half months out. Marquez feels bad having to turn people away.

"Eighty-five percent of people calling are from Washington," she said. "They're just desperate."

A short way up Highway 395, stylist Heather Smith has experienced much the same at Elli'gance by Cherice.

"I'm overlooked," Smith said. "The phone's been ringing off the hook. There are people from Washington calling who we've had to refuse except for the ones who are already clients."

Brenda Cooper sat in Smith's chair, masked up and ready to say farewell to her pandemic hair. This is the highlight of the month, Cooper said. However, not everyone is ready to return.

"For clients scared of coming in, we've urged them to stay home until they're comfortable," Smith said. "Everyone's got to do it on their own time. We'll be happy to see them when they come back."

Washington hair salons and barbershops could resume as soon as June 1, part of phase two in the state's four-phase gradual opening. California, however, considers salons as higher risk businesses, along with movie theaters and sporting events.

Not every Oregon county has moved into phase one. In Marion County, which has the state's highest rate of coronavirus infections, one salon owner defied the state order and opened her salon on May 5. According to the *Oregonian*, Lindsey Graham, owner of the Glamour Salon in Salem, said she made the decision to provide for her family. The Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Administration hit her with a \$14,000 fine.

Neither Marquez nor Smith love wearing a mask while they work. The masks slip and are itchy. But both women say they are committed to wearing them for the foreseeable future.

Marquez said she is torn

about whether to pass on some of the increased costs to her customers. She sanitized a lot before, but now she uses even more cleaning solution and lets it sit on the surfaces for at least 10 minutes. Appointments don't bump up against each other anymore to give time for sanitizing and to keep clients away from each other. Masks for customers cost money, too. Still, she hesitates to bump prices.

"Everyone has been really, really supportive," Marquez said.

Her phone rang and Marquez fished out her cellphone. Her next customer, Jennifer McDonough, said she was swinging through the drive-thru at Starbucks. Could she bring her a coffee? Marquez grinned, said no thanks, she had water. She hung up and looked happily around her light-drenched salon.

"I feel like I have a passion for this," she said. "I love what I do. I'm thrilled to be back."

## Budgets:

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"Seventh Street bottleneck." He said some smaller lines around Seventh Street would present a capacity problem if a new industrial project at the South Hermiston Industrial Park were to increase the amount of wastewater flowing from the south side of town to the recycled water treatment plant.

He said the city may be able to get some funding from the Economic Development Administration for the project through the CARES Act stimulus package recently passed by Congress.

The parks and recreation department is working to rebuild Funland Playground with about \$700,000 from the insurance money the city received when the old playground burned down, and another \$700,000 raised

through private and corporate donations. The city department is also using Federal Emergency Management Administration dollars to repair Riverfront Park after it flooded in February.

After approving the recommended budget, the budget committee donned a second hat as the Hermiston Urban Renewal Agency budget committee. The urban renewal district collects a portion of property tax revenues generated within the district, which covers downtown.

They are starting the year with approximately \$372,000 on hand, which by law must be spent on improvements to increase property values within the district.

City Planner Clint Spencer told the group that the urban renewal agency has the money to resurface and improve two of its municipal parking lots downtown.

"We can do a com-

plete rebuild of at least one where we completely excavate it out and build it to a street standard, beautify it, relocate the curb cuts, rebuild the sidewalks and overall increase the efficiency, which will result in a net increase in 12 parking spots," he said.

The urban renewal agency's other project for the year will be adding way-finding signage for destinations, such as the library. It will include signs to clearly point the public to the city's six different municipal lots downtown. Spencer said people often don't realize they are allowed to park in those lots, which downtown businesses have identified as an impediment to their sales.

"Everybody just sees the street parking and says, 'Oh that's full,' but there are well over 200 spaces that are available just behind the buildings, so we're trying to help direct people to those," Spencer said.

## IN BRIEF

### Bank of Eastern Oregon awards scholarships

BEO Bancorp and its subsidiary, Bank of Eastern Oregon, have selected the 2020 high school senior scholarship winners.

This scholarship is awarded to students planning to enroll in agriculture or business and judging is based on scholarship, leadership and citizenship. Applications are accepted from graduating seniors in all areas where Bank of Eastern Oregon and Bank of Eastern Washington branches are located.

Scholarships for \$500 were awarded to local seniors Sierra Villegas (Riverside High School), Kimberly Renteria (Irrigon High School), Garrett Walchli and Jazlyn Romero (Hermiston High School), Catherine Rhodes (Sherman County High School), Gage Tatum (Fossil High School), Cooper Johnson (Condon High School), Nicole Prophet, Casey Fletcher, Kellen Grant, Jason Rea and Matthew Orem (Heppner High School), Calvin Bennett (Mitchell High School), and Cloe Davis (Weston-McEwen High School).

"We know this has been an unprecedented time for our high school seniors. We wish them the best of luck as they move on to college and look forward to hearing of their continuing success," BEO President and CEO Jeff Bailey said in a press release.

### Farm bureau awards scholarships to local students

The Umatilla-Morrow County Farm Bureau Scholarship Committee recently awarded scholarships totaling \$2,750 to seven 2020 high school graduates. The seven award winners were selected from a field of 27 candidates.

The award winners are:

**Matthew Orem** (\$500), a graduate of Heppner High School, is the son of Eric and Brandi Orem of Heppner. He will attend Blue Mountain Community College where he will study crop production and animal production.

**Ashley Jones** (\$500), a graduate of McLoughlin High School, is the daughter of Ben and Lisa Jones of Milton-Freewater. She will attend Eastern Oregon University where she will major in ag education.

**Eric Rencken** (\$500), a graduate of McLoughlin High School, is the son of Bruce and Theresa Rencken of Milton-Freewater. He will be attending the University of Idaho where he will study agribusiness.

**Alexis Leake** (\$500), a graduate of Griswold High School, is the daughter of Janell Scaplehorn of Helix and Brett Leake of Pendleton. She will attend Blue Mountain Community College where she will pursue a Master of Education degree in mathematics.

**Logan Weinke** (\$250), a graduate of Pilot Rock High School, is the son of Tim and Joan Weinke of Pilot Rock. He will be attending Eastern Oregon University studying agriculture science.

**Maria Alatorre Ledezma** (\$250), a graduate of Hermiston High School, is the daughter of Tomas Alatorre and Adelaida Ledezma of Hermiston. She will be attending either Columbia Basin College or Eastern Oregon University pursuing a degree in dental hygiene.

**Kimberly Renteria** (\$250), a graduate of Irrigon Senior High School, is the daughter of Jose and Hilda Renteria of Irrigon. She will be attending Blue Mountain Community College where she will major in accounting.

For more information contact Julia Spratling, secretary/treasurer of Umatilla-Morrow County Farm Bureau, at 541-457-6045.

# PET OF THE WEEK!



**Fuzzball Rescue animals have all been adopted!**

**We are still taking applications for future adoptions and foster homes!**

Donations are also needed and can be made to Oregon Trail Veterinary Clinic or through Fuzzball Animal Rescue via PayPal by going to [fuzzballrescue.com](http://fuzzballrescue.com) or mail donations to Fuzz Ball Animal Rescue: PO Box 580, Hermiston, OR 97838. All donations go to the care of the animals.

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