



Robert Davis was sworn in on June 4, 2020, as the new post commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Desert Post 4750 in Hermiston. He is shown with his sister Emma Smith of Chicago, left, who flew in for the ceremony, and his sister Rose Johnson Gale of Umatilla on the right.

Davis sworn in as new VFW post commander

HERMISTON HERALD

Robert Lee Davis of Hermiston was sworn in Thursday, June 4, as the new post commander for Hermiston's VFW Desert Post 4750.

According to a news release:

"The other officers that took their oaths were Rob Lovett, doing double duty as both the quartermaster and chaplain, and Dennis Aiken, who will be both the post adjutant and senior vice commander. The new leadership team conceived of the plan to assume the

duties of leadership just moments before the April 2 elections, causing the predictable uproar that left the longtime outgoing post commander, Ron Jardine, at times having the Devil's own time trying to suppress both frustrations and outright laughter. In the end, the ceremony went on without further ado.

Robert Davis' calm and accepting presenting persona garnered him the top spot as a valuable asset as the new team works to return the post to both its original intent of serving the needs of existing mem-

bers and to begin to solve the problem of recruiting the younger veterans. Also very high on the list of things to be done is community outreach in general, such as inviting the Red Cross to have a blood drive at the post, and all-veteran outreach, such as the All-Vet Swap Meet the last weekend of July. One of the post's younger members also wants to expand the gun and hunting safety program, and the post is looking into supporting young people on other ventures, such as the FFA. Suggestions are certainly welcomed."

Former county commissioner Emile Holeman dies at 89

By NADA SEWIDAN
STAFF WRITER

Former Umatilla County Commissioner Emile Holeman died at the age of 89 on the evening of Sunday, June 7.

Flags on county property will be flown at half staff all week long in honor and memory of former Commissioner Holeman.

Holeman served on the county's board of commissioners from 1991-2007, a total of 16 years and four terms in office. Sen. Bill Hansell, a longtime county commissioner himself, called Holeman his advisor, friend and go-to guy.

"He was a very special friend and individual in my life," Hansell said. "I was very privileged to be able to serve with him. He will be missed."

Born and raised in Pendleton, Holeman dedicated his time to his hometown and county. Prior to his days as county commissioner, he attended the University of Oregon and later owned a Texaco service station. Hansell attributed Holeman's great public service attitude to his time working at the service station, where Holeman connected with people in his community through his customer service skills.

It's this philosophy, Hansell added, that then carried over in Holeman's tenure as commissioner.



Staff photo by Jade McDowell, file

Former Happy Canyon president Emile Holeman, left, prepares to cut the ribbon on a new plaque commemorating the pageant's former location while longtime Happy Canyon actor Fritz Hill makes a toast in 2016.

"He truly was a public servant," Hansell said. "He wanted to do what was best for the people and worked hard at it. He came to work with that attitude of 'what can I do for the people in Umatilla County.'"

Holeman was dedicated to community service and maintained that commitment

beyond his tenure as commissioner. Current Commissioner George Murdock said Holeman was a remarkable role model to his family, who continue to be active in the community.

"The entire county mourns his loss," Murdock said. "Our thoughts are with his family."



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IN BRIEF

Join the virtual race

The 21st Butte Challenge walk/run will take place virtually this year between Friday, June 19 to Sunday, June 21.

Due to COVID-19 gathering restrictions, this year's participants can do a 5K run, 5K walk or a 10K run on their own time and record and upload results via a fitness tracker website called It's Your Race or through the company's IYR Virtual app. Another way to submit a time is through itsyourrace.com. All times must be placed between Friday, June 19 to Sunday, June 21 by midnight.

Those who join the challenge can either do the Butte Challenge loop or participate from anywhere else in the city. There will be no awards this year, unlike previous years where participants were given prizes based on times in each category.

"Since we cannot meet in large groups we are doing it as a virtual race," reads a statement on the Butte Challenge website. "This still allows you to support and join us for this event."

All proceeds from the event benefit Hermiston Cross Country.

Registration information can be found on their website.

HAREC hosts live potato research update

Oregon State University's Hermiston Agricultural Research and Extension Center is hosting their first virtual live potato research update provided by university scientists from 6-8 p.m. on Wednesday, June 17.

HAREC's interim director Clive Kaiser will give an opening update on the station. Scientists Sagar Sathuvali, Silvia Rondon, Ken Frost and Ray Quin will discuss the station's potato breeding program, plant pathology program and agronomy program, with data and information on potato nutrient management and production. Each session is approximately 15 minutes, followed by a question and answer period at the end.

The research center focuses on agricultural and horticultural productions, plant breeding, nutrition and more. The virtual update is in place of field days HAREC usually hosts this time of year.

Participants need to register prior to the meeting by emailing silvia.rondon@oregonstate.edu.



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Amy Puzey races to victory in the Butte Challenge women's 10-kilometer run in May 2017 at Hermiston Butte Park.

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