

## THREE MINUTES WITH ...



## JAKOB THOMAS STEFANI

Nutrition Services Supervisor  
at Good Shepherd

### When and why did you move to Hermiston?

*I moved to Hermiston after living in Seattle for about a year in 2010. I grew up and went to high school in Umatilla, so once I came back I decided to move over to Hermiston.*

### Where is your favorite place to eat in Hermiston?

*El Ranchero. The staff are good people and the food is consistently good. Get the adobada tacos!*

### What do you like to do in your spare time?

*I've been making an effort to stay active, so I do a lot of running, but I usually spend my spare time being creative in some way. I like to make music, DJ, and I'm currently learning Photoshop so I can try out designing graphics for T-shirts.*

### What surprises you about Hermiston?

*How easily people around here will choose to believe a debunked YouTube video or conspiracy theory over actual professionals.*

### What was the last book you read?

*"The Bell Jar" by Sylvia Plath*

### What website or app do you use the most?

*It's a tie between Twitter and Instagram. I'm hopelessly addicted to both. Follow me? It's @t0mmydreamer on both*

### If you could travel anywhere, where would you go?

*Definitely Japan.*

### What's the funniest thing that's ever happened to you?

*Once at a music festival in Seattle, one of my favorite bands was playing and everyone was going absolutely crazy for them. I went to dive off the stage to crowd surf but everyone dispersed, and I crashed into the floor. Luckily, my back broke my fall so it wasn't only the funniest thing to happen to me but also the most painful!*

### What is one of your goals in the next 12 years?

*To make some money off of one of my creative endeavors*

### What is your proudest accomplishment?

*I seem to be most proud of the events my friends and I put on together. We've done some livestream DJ sets and before COVID-19 we put on an Emo Night at Union Club, and years before that we used to put on hardcore and metal shows in my friend's garage.*

## HERMISTON HISTORY



HH file photo

Marselino Mateo, left, tosses a Walchli watermelon to Zenon Magaña during harvest in 1995.

## Hermiston man injured in Vietnam

25 YEARS AGO

Aug. 1, 1995

Efforts to build a skateboarding arena in McKenzie Park will resume in earnest next month.

"We kind of put it on hold for the summer," said Michelle McKimmy, because the 10 boys involved in the project, including her son, Brandon Reed, had other commitments.

Reed approached city building official Hank McDonald with the idea last spring. At McDonald's urging, Reed brought to the idea to the Hermiston Parks and Recreation Committee, which approved the arena and pledged \$5,000 in city funds for the project.

McKimmy said materials alone will run about \$10,000. The boys will be asking local businesses for donations to build the arena, she said.

50 YEARS AGO

July 30, 1970

The mother of a Hermiston youth in Vietnam received the first word this week from her son that he was injured in action, nearly 20 days after the accident occurred.

Mrs. R.B. Blahm told the *Hermiston Herald* Tuesday that her son, Private First Class Danny Aiken, was hospitalized at Cam Rahn Bay on July 8 with severe burns on his hands and face. She said neither the war department nor the Red Cross had informed her of her son's condition.

The burns seared Aiken's eyes shut for about 10 days and he will have to be taught how to use his hands again, said Mrs. Blahm. She said he has regained partial sight.

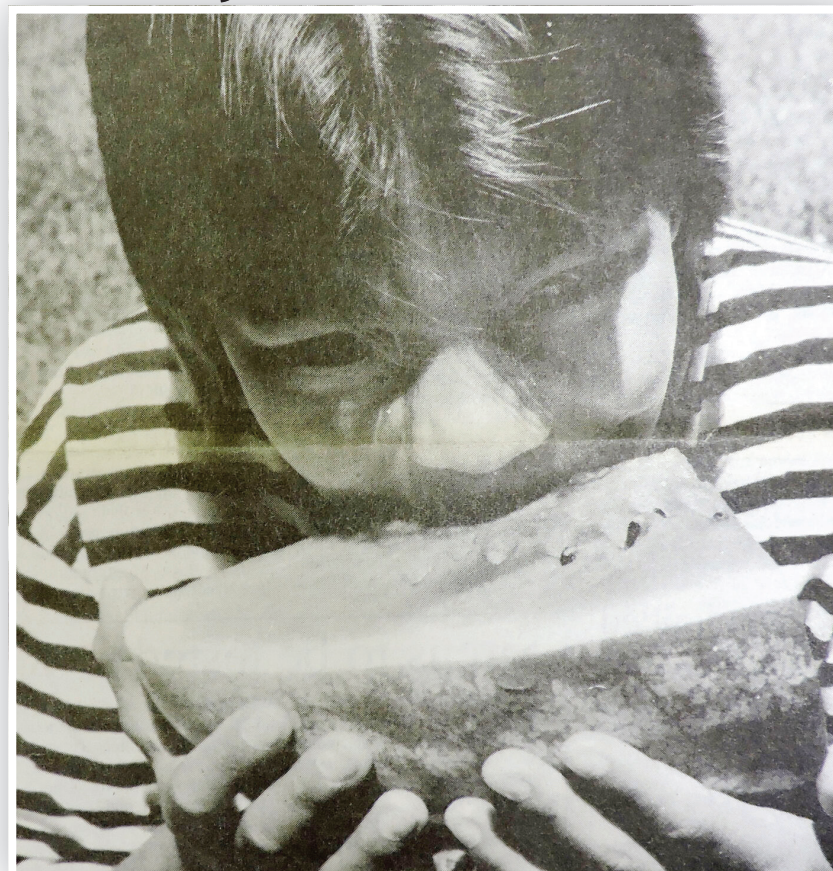
The incident, as related to Mrs. Blahm by her son, was that he and two other men were aboard a helicopter on a mission with another helicopter escort. The ship Aiken was in landed in a village called Duc Pho, where a booby trap was thrown aboard the helicopter, exploding on impact. Her son said a captain riding in the copter was killed and the pilot received minor facial burns.

A 1967 graduate of Hermiston High School, Aiken was a side door gunner and crew chief aboard the helicopter, and entered the Army in November of last year. He has been in Vietnam two months.

75 YEARS AGO

Aug. 2, 1945

L.E. DeBaun escaped with minor burns on his right hand last Thursday



HH file photo

Angel Martinez, 10, bites into a juicy piece of watermelon in 1995.

evening when his car caught fire and burned while he was returning from a business trip to Pendleton.

The blaze started in the wiring on the instrument board and spread very rapidly as he had no means of extinguishing the blaze and neither did the first two cars to arrive on the scene. DeBaun pulled the burning wires from the car which caused the only burns he suffered.

The car is a complete loss with only the two front tires remaining for salvage. DeBaun was alone on the trip and reported it was the hottest, fastest blaze he ever witnessed.

2) For the first time during the 41 years since Echo was incorporated, the special bond election Tuesday resulted in a unanimous vote of the electors. The proposition of issuing \$7,500 in bonds for drilling a deep well for the municipal water system was approved by 118 voters without a negative ballot being cast.

100 YEARS AGO

July 30, 1920

J.B. Beebee, a farmer four miles north of town, saw two tiny boys trudging along the road Monday evening near his home and took them in to question them. He found that they were trying to walk to the Eastern

Oregon State Hospital to find their mother, who is confined there. Mr. Beebee kept the children overnight and delivered them to Mayor F.C. McKenzie, who obtained the following story:

Their names are Owen and Clyde Ellinger, ages nine and six, and their father, a real estate broker in Bend, had given them money to come and see their mother, who was in the hospital in Pendleton, but was shortly to be discharged and they intended to go home with her.

They said that their father had not given them the exact fare and as he was not in the station when the train pulled out, they had purchased a ticket for the distance that their funds would allow and intended to strike out and walk from that point.

Mr. McKenzie took them with him to Pendleton, as he was going there on business, and investigated the case thoroughly with authorities at the hospital.

He found that the boys' mother is in the asylum, but that their father died about four months ago in Bend.

The children had been placed at a home in Beaverton, and how they had obtained money to get away to see their mother has not yet been found out.

## BY THE WAY

## Construction of Funland playground gets underway July 29

Construction of Hermiston's new **Funland Playground** at Butte Park will get underway Wednesday, July 29, with a groundbreaking ceremony at 12:30 p.m.

Due social distancing concerns, only a few people will be allowed in the construction area during the ceremony, but members of the public can watch from outside the fence.

The groundbreaking ceremony team consists of **Mayor David Drotzmann, City Councilor Roy Barron, Charlie Clupny, Larry Fetter, Patricia Alder, Jayda Martinez** (age 9) and **Jaysen Martinez** (age 5).

The city hopes to complete the playground in October and hold an opening celebration then. It is designed with ages 5-12 in mind and will feature Wild West, Adventure and Farming themed zones.

"Rebuilding Funland bigger and better than before is possible because Hermiston is a resilient and can-do community that regularly puts its children first," Drotzmann said in a statement.

"This playground will be a testament to the generosity of our residents and their desire to see our youth have a safe place to play."

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### Podcast looks at historical jailbreak, murder

The **East Oregonian** is hosting a weeklong podcast this week telling the story of the murder of **Umatilla County Sheriff Til Taylor** during a jailbreak, and the manhunt that followed his untimely death.

This week is the 100-year anniversary of his death on July 27, 1920.

The podcast, with new episodes released daily in concert with the anniversaries of the events described, is available on [www.eastoregonian.com/multimedia/podcasts](http://www.eastoregonian.com/multimedia/podcasts) or on Apple podcasts or Stitcher.

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### Fire danger leads to safety restrictions

With hot, dry weather increasing fire danger in Eastern Oregon, the **Wallowa-Whitman National Forest** has implemented Phase A of the public use restrictions to limit the chance of human-caused wildfire ignitions.

These restrictions, which focus on smoking, off-road travel and chain saw use, went into effect Friday, July 24, at 12:01 a.m. and will remain in place until further notice.

Visitors to the forest are asked to restrict activities that could cause a fire, and to be very careful with campfires, which should be confined to a fire pit, attended at all times and completely extinguished when campers leave.

For more information, visit [www.fs.usda.gov/wallowa-whitman](http://www.fs.usda.gov/wallowa-whitman).

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### Senior meals include enchiladas

The **Harkenrider Senior Activity Center** continues to provide takeout and delivery meals to senior citizens in the community. The menu for Thursday, July 30 is chicken enchiladas, rice and beans.

For a **Meals on Wheels** delivery, call 541-567-3582 before 10 a.m. to place an order. To pick up a meal from the center at 255 Northeast Second St., call the same number before 11 a.m. Meals are \$4 and can be picked up between noon and 12:50 p.m.