

Family hopes T-shirts will aid in finding missing Hermiston woman

HERMISTON HERALD

Family members of Graciela Garcia, who went missing from Hermiston in November 2019, are ramping up their efforts to help locate her.

Gabriela Bautista, Garcia's daughter, said the family has created T-shirts and bumper stickers that have Garcia's photo and details, such as her height, in hopes that the items will help keep Garcia's case fresh in community members' minds and possibly spur a tip that will finally lead to new information. People can also purchase a bracelet with the letter G on it in her memory.

Bautista said her family is desperate for information about her mother, but have not received any new information from Hermiston Police Department in months. She said proceeds from the sale of the item will be used to aid in the family's search.

"We're looking to hire a lawyer, an investigator, whatever we need to figure out and do," she said.

The items are for sale until Oct. 31 and will be shipped immediately after. Bautista said the family plans to hold a candlelight vigil for Garcia sometime after that and hope people who purchased shirts and bracelets will wear them to the event.

The last confirmed sighting of Garcia, a hair stylist, was on Nov. 8, 2019. She was reported missing on Nov. 11, and the Hermiston Police Department has stated her possessions were left behind. According to a news release, the department "considered her disappearance suspicious from the time of the initial report, and immediately opened an investigation" aided by Oregon State Police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Bautista asked anyone with information about Garcia's disappearance to call the Hermiston Police Department at 541-567-5519. Items sold by the family can be found online at [etsy.com/shop/JusticeForGraciela](https://www.etsy.com/shop/JusticeForGraciela).



Graciela Garcia, 49, of Hermiston, was last seen on Nov. 8, 2019.

Contributed photo

OLCC makes liquor delivery rules permanent

By JADE MCDOWELL
NEWS EDITOR

Oregonians will be able to get hard liquor delivered directly to their home even after the pandemic is over.

Earlier this month, the Oregon Liquor Control Commission voted to make rules allowing delivery and curbside pick-up of distilled spirits permanent, after voting in March to temporarily allow those options during the state's pandemic shutdown. The OLCC did adjust the time frame for those deliveries, however, requiring they stop at 10 p.m. instead of 2:30 a.m.

Those delivering the alcohol must be at least 18 years old and must check the identification of the customer receiving the delivery or curbside pick-up to make sure they are at least 21 years of age and not visibly intoxicated.

Brad Irwin owns Oregon Spirit Distillers in Bend and is president of the Oregon Distillers Guild, which includes Oregon distilleries, such as Oregon Grain Growers in Pendleton. He said allowing curbside pick-up makes a lot of sense even after concerns about COVID-19 aren't prevalent.

"That's kind of where retail is going anyway," he said, referencing grocery stores' grocery pick-up options that were put in place before the pandemic.

He said delivery makes sense too as an option for people who might have a disability that makes it difficult to get in and out of a car, or lack transportation.

Addiction advocates in the state have criticized the delivery options. After

the OLCC first allowed delivery of hard alcohol in March, Oregon Recovery Executive Director Mike Marshal released a statement saying the pandemic had already created an atmosphere difficult for those recovering from addiction, as social distancing disrupted recovery meetings and isolated people from their support networks.

"Recent efforts by the Oregon Liquor Control Commission to increase alcohol sales during the crisis have potentially added fuel to the fire, which will have dire implications for our emergency departments and hospitals at the worst possible time," he said.

Irwin said he understood the concerns, but pointed out that people had already been able to order other alcoholic beverages, such as beer. He said members of the Oregon Distillers Guild were reporting deliveries made up an average of 1-2% of sales, with higher percentages in large metro areas and lower delivery sales in rural areas.

He said although alcohol sales overall went up during the early months of the pandemic, people have mostly stocked up on "value brands" and distillers have been struggling financially as the restaurants and bars they stock have been closed or had limited operations, and people have avoided tasting rooms.

"Yes, people bought a lot of liquor, but they bought a lot of Absolut and Jack Daniels," he said. "They didn't buy a lot of Oregon brands."

Boardman Senior Center to start offering meal delivery

By JADE MCDOWELL
NEWS EDITOR

Boardman Senior Center will start delivering meals to Boardman seniors on Tuesdays and Thursdays starting Oct. 6.

Seniors age 55 and older can call the senior center at 541-481-3257 to have their name and address put on the delivery list. Meals are \$4 apiece and payment is on delivery (those older than 90

eat free).

Barbara Hug, operations manager for the senior center, said they are working on putting a menu together now, which will be published in the *Hermiston Herald* and *North Morrow Times*.

"We're going to have a cook and a helper prepare the meals, and they will be fully masked," she said.

The senior center used to offer meals at the center

on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but stopped that practice when everything shut down for the pandemic. Hug said the Red Cross did pay them to make and deliver some meals to families displaced by the heavy wind storm that damaged homes in May.

She said seniors she has spoken to have really missed the meals and are excited to at least have the option of delivery, even if they can't sit down together.

"I think they miss the visiting and the camaraderie" she said.

Hug said now that Morrow County is in Phase 2, she hopes that the senior center will be able to start serving some meals at the center again at some point in the future, in a group of 20 people spaced 6 feet apart.

For now, however, meals will only be available for delivery to those who have called and placed an order.

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