

Bird Scooters launches Hermiston fleet

By JADE MCDOWELL
NEWS EDITOR

Hermiston residents have a new transportation option with the arrival of Bird Scooters.

The company provides electric scooters, which people can locate around town using a mobile app and rent for a per-minute fee. According to Jasmine Wallsmith, a marketing and communications director for the company, the company is launching with 75 scooters in Hermiston.

“Shared scooters can be a terrific choice to navigate the fairly short distances between some of the large employment hubs or recreation areas within Hermiston and the commercial district,” she said in an email.

The company touts the scooters as a convenient, socially distanced “micro



A group of four Bird e-scooters sits parked along East Main Street in Hermiston on Wednesday, March 10, 2021.

Ben Lonergan/Hermiston Herald

mobility” option that can reduce traffic and greenhouse emissions compared to automobile use. Some cities have created ordinances to bar them from operating locally, however, citing concerns about safety and scooters being left in unwanted places.

To access the scooters, people must download the Bird Scooters mobile app, sign up for the service and enter their payment information. After that is complete, they can find where scooters are currently located, reserve one and start and end their ride, which the scooter’s rules state must stay off of sidewalks and follow traffic laws.

In order to end their ride time, riders are asked to upload a photo of the scooter properly parked in a safe place. Wallsmith said the company pays “local fleet managers”

to move the scooters around during operating hours so that they can be accessed throughout the city.

She said the scooters have a “warm up mode” with more gentle acceleration for new riders. The company also offers a 50% discount to certain groups, including low-income riders, senior citizens, Pell grant recipients, veterans and some nonprofits.

During the pandemic, health care workers and emergency responders can ride up to an hour per day for free if they sign up by emailing their credentials to together@bird.co.

For questions or concerns, call 1-866-205-2442, email hello@bird.co or visit www.bird.co. More information about the company can be found on their website (www.bird.co) and on their blog (bird.co/blog).

Hermiston business group announces new CEO

By JADE MCDOWELL
NEWS EDITOR

Kristina Olivas has been chosen as the Hermiston Chamber of Commerce’s new chief executive officer.

The chamber’s board of directors announced the hire in an email to members on Friday, March 19. Olivas will start work on March 30.

According to the news release, Olivas comes to

the chamber from the Walmart Distribution Center in Hermiston, where she spent the past five years as human resources office and training manager, providing, “counseling, coaching and leadership to nearly 1,000 employees.” Before that, she worked for Oregon Potato Company and Wilcox Furniture.

She was born and raised



Olivas

in Hermiston, is fluent in English and Spanish and is a mother to three children.

Annette Kirkpatrick, chamber board president, said in a statement that the board felt Olivas brought the skills, experience and personality needed to connect with a diverse and growing community.

“We are impressed with Kristina’s energy, work

history and love of community,” she said. “She has a natural ability to listen and connect with others. We expect Kristina to not only continue our successful programs, but to work with members, partners and community stakeholders to bring our Chamber to a new level of service.”

Olivas said her career goals have always been to develop personal and professional relationships, while building up the com-

munity she loves.

“I feel excitement and pride,” she said of her new job. “I’m so proud to be on the front lines in representing the businesses of Hermiston.”

Olivas takes the helm at the chamber after the departure of Kimberly Rill, who was hired in April 2019 and resigned on Feb. 12, 2021, to take a new job as the education and workforce training coordinator for the Port of Morrow.

In her new position, Olivas will be tasked with building relationships with chamber members, planning events and programs, coordinating the chamber’s committees and managing other parts of the chamber’s day to day operations. She will also help lead efforts toward building the chamber’s new offices planned for the intersection of South Highway 395 and East Evelyn Avenue.

Columbia Basin Bioscience gains certification

HERMISTON HERALD

Columbia Basin Bioscience, a CBD extraction company based in Hermiston, announced on Wednesday, March 17, that it has received a Current Good Manufacturing Practice certification.

The CGMP is in “manufacturing, packaging, labeling, or holding operations for dietary supplements” standards, awarded

by AIB International.

According to a news release from Columbia Basin Bioscience, the certification “is a key indicator that a company adheres to stringent protocols to ensure a safe, consistent and quality product.”

The business has more than 2,000 acres of USDA organic farmland for growing hemp and a processing facility that extracts CBD from the hemp, to be

used in a variety of products. According to the news release, the company employs 50 people and currently extracts thousands of CBD isolate per month.

CEO Alan Cleaver said in a statement that the company believes the hemp industry is lacking consistent, high-quality biomass like that produced by Columbia Basin Bioscience.

“GMP certification isn’t easy or even required in the hemp industry, but it’s something we believe in. We are very proud of our company’s processes and dedication to quality,” he said.

Columbia Basin Bioscience co-founder Sean Groer said in the news release that so far humans have “only begun to scratch the surface” of what is possible with hemp.

Commercial Tire now employee owned

HERMISTON HERALD

Commercial Tire announced last week that the company is now 100% employee owned.

The tire company has 45 locations across the Pacific Northwest, including a Hermiston store. It has moved to an employee stock ownership plan business model, which allows employees to accrue stock over time from an employee retirement trust. According to a news

release, research has shown the business model is associated with improved employee performance and job stability.

“Selling the company could create unwanted change and instability for the people we care about,” Bob Schwenkfelder, founder and CEO of Commercial Tire, said in a news release. “This transition is about leaving a legacy for our employees and in our communities that will have a lasting, positive impact.”

Sen. Hansell appointed to State Fair Council

HERMISTON HERALD

Oregon Sen. Bill Hansell has an additional job.

The Republican from Athena was recently appointed to serve on the Oregon State Fair Council by Senate President Pete Courtney, according to a press release.

“I am excited and honored to have been appointed to the State Fair Council, formerly called the State Fair Board,” Hansell said. “I look forward to ensuring state and county fairs will be enjoyed by countless more Oregonians in the future.”

The Oregon State Fair Council is a state of Oregon public corporation, with 11 council members



State Sen. Bill Hansell, R-Athena, has been appointed to serve on the Oregon State Fair Council.

appointed by the governor. Two additional positions are reserved for a state senator and a state representative, and are appointed by the

Senate president and House speaker, respectively.

“I want to thank Senate President Peter Courtney for the appointment. I look forward to serving on the council,” Hansell said. “The Oregon State Fair has been held since the early days of statehood, and along with county fairs, are critical sources of economic vitality and cultural celebration.”

Hansell’s appointment to the fair council was met with excitement in Umatilla County.

“Hansell’s background, wisdom and dedication will make him a great advocate for our state and county fairs,” said Umatilla County Commissioner Dan Dorran. “I believe he is the first

elected official from Umatilla County to serve on the State Fair Council, and I know he will do a great job and serve us well.”



The most valuable and respected source of local news, advertising and information for our communities.

Media Sales Professional

You may not read a printed newspaper every day, but if you live in Eastern Oregon, the East Oregonian impacts your life. Inserts for shopping, stories on Facebook, a digital version for on the go. A print copy for those who love information and want in-depth coverage of big issues. Ads and stories that keep you informed about events, sales and concerns in the community.

Our employees see the big picture and know that a community without a strong, local newspaper is missing something important. Our hard-working employees are here to make sure the East Oregonian remains a cornerstone of your community.

Recent findings by Pulse Research say 93.2% of Pendleton residents use the East Oregonian or eastoregonian.com for their local news, plus more people refer to the East Oregonian and eastoregonian.com before making a buying decision than any other local media.

Would you like to join us?

East Oregonian is seeking an outside salesperson who is passionate about helping local businesses succeed and grow. Applicants must demonstrate excellence in person-to-person sales and customer service, work well with a support team and be proficient with technology while managing time and required paperwork efficiently. Skills working with digital advertising, real estate and/or automotive clients would be an added bonus.

This is a full-time position, working Monday through Friday with evenings and weekends off, plus paid holidays! Guaranteed wage plus commission and mileage reimbursement make this a great opportunity for an aggressive sales professional looking for a fulfilling career.



eomediagroup.com/careers

Are you awesome?

we're hiring.

UEC is looking for exceptional people to join our team!

Visit our website: ABOUT/CAREERS for full job descriptions and open positions.

www.UmatillaElectric.com

UEC UMATILLA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Hermiston Office
750 W. Elm Ave.
Hermiston, OR 97838
(541) 567-6414

Boardman Office
400 N.E. Eldridge Drive
Boardman, OR 97818
(541) 481-2220