



Vendors line the roadway at a "Show and Shine" event in downtown Stanfield on Saturday, April 17, 2021.

Bryce Dole/Hermiston Herald

Classic cars and hundreds of residents gather in Stanfield for street fair

By BRYCE DOLE
STAFF WRITER

Jeff Bemrose still owns the car he built with his dad back in high school. Over their four years working together on the 1941 Ford Coupe, he found his passion for the classics. Today, however, he's still fixing the mistakes he made as a teenager.

"I'm still paying for my father's sins, I guess," said Bemrose, a member of the Hermiston Classics Car Club.

Standing beside rows of 87 classic cars at the Stanfield Street Fair on Saturday, April 17, Bemrose echoed a sentiment held among many locals.

"People have been itching to get out," he said.

Recently, Cecili Longhorn, director of the Stanfield Public Library, contacted Bemrose and the car club to help put on the first-of-its-kind street fair, which saw hundreds of people gather in downtown Stanfield for the community's first major public event for over a year, organizers said.

Owners brought their



Bryce Dole/Hermiston Herald

Classic cars line the downtown streets in Stanfield for a "Show and Shine" event on Saturday, April 17, 2021.

vehicles from across Eastern Oregon and Southeast Washington for display at the "Show and Shine" event. Bemrose said it was clear that people were eager to get out, with some showing up in the early hours of the morning.

"I think it's been helping a lot of people," he said of the event. "People love taking their cars out, and they've been really cooped up, so this has been really helpful to a lot of people."

Vendors at the event served hot dogs, hamburgers, kettle corn and other treats while live bands

on the front steps of the library played classic rock, blues and bebop, giving the sunny spring day a feeling of normalcy — which for many had been missing.

"I'm impressed," said Longhorn, who helped organize the event with Stanfield Parks and Recreation. "I'm super excited about the turnout. It confirms in my mind how much people are ready to have a little sunshine and happiness, and see the good things we're missing out on."

Looking out on the groups of people meandering into shops along Main

Street, Longhorn spoke about her hopes for the community of small businesses rebounding after months of hardship.

"That's the goal is to help our local community see what we have," she said. "Just because we're small doesn't mean we can't offer fun things."

Kathy Baker, a life-long Stanfield resident and owner of Fun Fashions Boutique, said many customers from out of town came through the store throughout the day, as well as some local residents who hadn't even known the store was there.

"It's huge," she said of the event. "It helps us as a small community. It brings people into our community."

Baker added that she hopes events like the fair bring notoriety to local businesses after the closures brought by COVID-19.

"Stanfield just doesn't get recognized for some reason," she said. "I don't know why. We have, like, 10,000 cars come through here on (Highway 395). It's crazy."

Hermiston School District opts out of state testing this spring

By JADE MCDOWELL
NEWS EDITOR

Hermiston School District has announced it will opt out of state testing for the current school year.

School districts usually have students participate in state assessments in reading, math and science each spring. But Superintendent Tricia Mooney said this year the district will forgo those assessments in order to maximize the in-person instructional time students have left instead.

"This is really about supporting our kids and supporting our teachers," she said.

Usually, state testing takes from one to two weeks for students to complete. Even with much shorter tests this year, it would still mean time not in front of a teacher for students who just returned to in-person classes. Mooney said testing often creates anxiety for students, as well, and the district doesn't want to add to what has already been an anxious time.

"We need to focus on making connections and building relationships and instructing students," she said.

Mooney said that doesn't mean teachers aren't still assessing their students' learning in the classroom. Educators are still monitoring individual students' growth and understanding. But state assessments have in the past been a way for districts to compare groups of students — checking whether one elementary school in the district is lagging behind the others, for example, or spotting trends between grade levels.

"We already know this year's fifth graders didn't

have the same opportunities as last year's fifth graders," Mooney said.

The assessments also provide a way for the Oregon Department of Education to compare school districts across the state. But Mooney said the department has already said it will be suspending the usual accountability measures tied to test scores. The department is also suspending the "essential skills requirement" for both this year and next year for graduating seniors. The requirement has, in the past, required that seniors either pass their state tests or submit a sufficient work sample in those subjects before graduating.

She said the district fully intends to start participating in state assessments again next year.

For Umatilla School District, the district has always gone its own way on assessments. It relies on the MAPS test, rather than the Smarter Balanced test used for state report cards, to gather data about student progress. Superintendent Heidi Sipe said the district has continued with online MAPS tests this year, with the final round of tests in May. Students will only take the Smarter Balanced test if their parents specifically request it.

In Stanfield School District, Superintendent Beth Burton said Stanfield students will be given the opportunity to take the state assessment tests this spring if their parents request it, but the district will not be making it a priority to promote higher participation rates.

"Instead, we are continuing to focus on student connections, teaching, and learning," she wrote in an email.



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