



UPDATES

Umatilla County reports 3 recent COVID-19 deaths

HERMISTON HERALD

During the week of May 16, Umatilla County Public Health officials reported three new deaths of patients with COVID-19 from Umatilla County.

The first was an 80-year-old man who tested positive on March 26 and died on April 3 at Trios Health Southridge Hospital in Kennewick. He had underlying conditions.

The second was an 82-year-old man who tested positive on May 4 and died on May 10 at Pacific Health and Rehabilitation in Tigard. He had underlying conditions.

The third was an 82-year-old man who tested positive on May 3 and died on May 19 at his residence. He had underlying conditions.

The three deaths bring Umatilla County up to 87 deaths of people with COVID-19 since the pandemic started. The vaccination status of the individuals who died was not stated in the news releases. According to Oregon Health Authority, 34.1% of Umatilla County residents over the age of 16 have had at least one dose of the vaccine so far, compared to 64.3% statewide.

Morrow County stands at 39.4% and Union County stands at 41.4%. The highest vaccination rate in Oregon so far is Benton County, at 68.7% of individuals over the age of 16 at least partially vaccinated.

More data on COVID-19 in Oregon, including cases by ZIP code, hospitalizations and more, can be found at <https://public.tableau.com/profile/oregon.health.authority.covid.19>.



Ben Lonergan/Hermiston Herald

Kaylie Cook examines the cost of transportation options during a FAB Life exercise at Hermiston High School on Wednesday, May 19, 2021.

A wake-up call

FAB Life returns to teach students how expensive it is to be an adult

By JADE MCDOWELL
NEWS EDITOR

Joshua Farias needed a roommate.

The single father of two, making \$36,480 per year as a restaurant manager, was almost out of money for the month but still needed to pay for utilities, a car and clothing for himself and his children. So he asked around until he found someone willing to pay half the mortgage for a room in his three-bedroom home.

Fortunately for Farias, he isn't actually a father of two, just a Hermiston High School senior participating in a budgeting simulation meant to teach students about the cost of living. And he learned, to his surprise, just how expensive adult life can be.

"Housing is the most expensive," he said.

The budgeting exercise, known as FAB Life, took place on May 19-20 at the high school. Seniors were each given a scenario sheet detailing aspects of their "life," including their profession, annual salary, monthly take-home pay, married status and number of children. They had to then visit booths



Ben Lonergan/Hermiston Herald

Giselle Gutierrez, left, and Jose Cortez examine their scenario sheets while waiting in line at the housing booth during a FAB Life exercise at Hermiston High School on Wednesday, May 19, 2021. The exercise showed students the true cost of adulthood through simulated life scenarios.

around the gym, staffed by volunteers who explained their spending options to them.

At the child care booth, students were given options ranging from public child care centers to a nanny, with price tags based on the number and age of their children. Kory Terry and Miranda Cranston, who were running the booth, said stu-

dents were often surprised at the cost.

"They're giving us 'wow' eyes, like, 'Are you serious?'" Terry said.

Important choices

Cranston said a few students said it was important to them that their child got the best care possible and hired a nanny, but

most students chose the cheapest option.

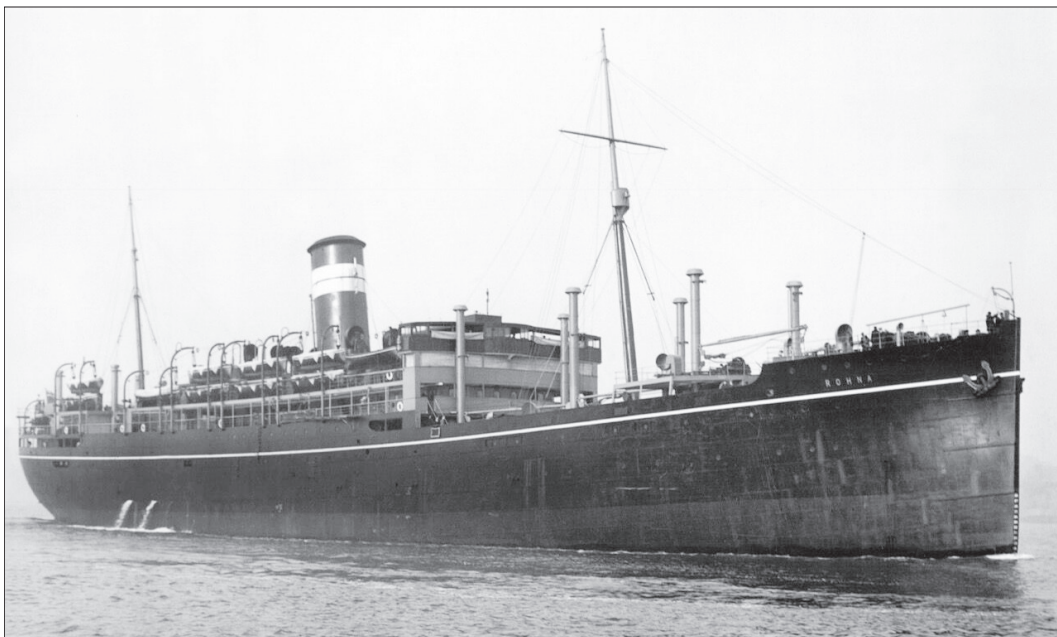
A few booths down, Candelario Rodriguez was giving students a price for their car insurance, based on the vehicle they had chosen at the transportation booth. He said he was surprised how many students had chosen to drive a used car, even if they were single and making a high salary.

When a girl visited his booth and shared the type of car she had purchased, he talked to her about the importance of purchasing car insurance before letting her know it would be \$85 a month.

While most of the booths caused students to add a new expense to their budget, those who were running out of money could visit the supplemental income booth to find out ways they could increase their revenue.

Lori Spencer went over options with students that ranged from picking up a second job in the evenings to holding a yard sale for a one-time infusion of cash. Some students who visited the booth learned that as a single parent they were entitled to child support.

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Jack Ballo/Contributed Photo

The sinking of the HMS Rohna, pictured here, is the subject of the "Rohna: Classified" documentary. A Hermiston man, Kermit Belles, was one of the more than 1,000 American troops who lost their lives on the ship on November 26, 1943.

Hermiston man died a classified death in WWII

By JADE MCDOWELL
NEWS EDITOR

Kermit Belles' parents never knew how he died.

The Hermiston man, serving his country during World War II, died in one of the worst naval calamities in United States history. But the sinking of the HMS Rohna was classified, and so details of its demise didn't become public knowledge until the 1990s.

Instead, the *Hermiston Herald* reported on Jan. 6, 1944, that Mr. and Mrs. Claude Belles had received the following telegram:

"The Secretary of War desires me to express his deep regret that your son,

Pvt. Kermit A. Belles, has been reported missing in action since November 26 in the North African area. If further details or other information are received you will be promptly notified."

Further details were not forthcoming. Robert Sutton said over time, the family decided he must have been killed in the sinking of the *USS Liscome Bay*, which a Japanese submarine torpedoed in the Pacific the same week. Sutton's mother, Gloria Belles, was Kermit Belles' younger sister. She died in April 2000 — just six months before Congress officially acknowledged the sinking of the *Rohna* for the first time.

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