

Umatilla County tax boss warns of tax scam

By **BRYCE DOLE**
STAFF WRITER

Umatilla County's tax collector is warning of a potential tax scam to get money from residents by posing as the county's tax processing unit.

The fraudulent notice from issuer "J.S. Brown,"

poses as a "final notice" that says the state of Oregon can seize assets and garnish wages and bank accounts due to unpaid tax liability. It says the state can "permanently revoke benefits, suspend licenses, and levy any federal tax refund gained this year" if action isn't taken.

But the notice, according

to Rachael Reynolds, Umatilla County's assessment and taxation director, did not come from the assessor's office and lacks the county's insignia.

"It's definitely not ours," she said.

Also, Reynolds said, the state of Oregon does not garnish wages or bank accounts.

Officials in San Bernardino, California, and Bedford, Indiana, have raised warnings over the potential scheme from J.S. Brown.

Reynolds said people with questions should call her office at 541-278-6234.

People who receive the scam should not call the phone number on the document or

send any money.

Sondra Sundquist, a bookkeeper in Walla Walla, brought the notice to the attention of the county. The notice from J.S. Brown warns a Milton-Freewater business it needs to pay \$10,000 in penalties for tax liability. But to her, it felt off.

"It looks, front and back,

all nice and formal and official," she said. "But when people send me notices and say, 'Hey, you have a couple days to send me \$10,000,' I kind of pay attention."

She added that, because it is near the end of the quarter, "this is the time of year that those notices are being sent out."

NEW COACHES TAKE THE HELMS

Ashby brings breath of fresh air to Riverside football



Ben Lonergan/Hermiston Herald

Riverside High School head football coach Cole Ashby leads a weight room workout for the team Aug. 11, 2021, at the high school in Boardman.

By **ANNIE FOWLER**
STAFF WRITER

It's time for a change.

David Boor, who has coached football at Riverside High School and at the middle school, stepped down after last season, saying it's time for someone else to try and change the culture at the high school.

"They need a change," said Boor, who has spent the past 20 years between the high school and middle school. "It was hard for me to stay positive. They need a fresh approach. I had a hard time being positive with COVID and all. If you can't be positive, you shouldn't be coaching."

During his tenure the past few years, the wins have been few, and the number of athletes turning out also has dipped.

"You have to get the community, the coaches, parents and administration on the same page, and I couldn't make that happen," Boor said. "Bottom line, you want to win games. There are enough kids to field

a quality team, it's a matter of getting them on the same page. Hopefully Cole can get that done."

That would be Cole Ashby, 28, who was an assistant under Boor the past two years.

"I'm excited to take the job," Ashby said. "The kids are great, they want to come out and work. I did two years as the offensive coordinator. Boor gave the program everything he had. He did a great job."

Ashby grew up in Pocatello, Idaho, and played basketball at Eastern Oregon.

"I got my masters in teaching there," Ashby said of EOU. "I met Boor at a job fair, and here I am. I teach weights and I love it. It's a great job. We got a new weight room two years ago."

After Boor stepped down, Ashby threw his hat in the ring for the job.

"When I found out I had the job at the end of the year, I had about 30 kids tell me they were going to come out. About half of our kids, maybe 10-15, have been showing up and working out. They seem pretty excited to play. A lot of them work and they put in long hours at their jobs. They are hard workers."

Ashby will get help from Florida native Tyler Volpi, who will coach the offensive line and will be the defensive coordinator.

"He played college ball and is pretty knowledgeable," Ashby said. "He's great."

Ashby will have a handful of returning players with experience.

"I know for sure we will have two seniors, Nate Graham (running back/wide receiver/outside linebacker) and Nathan Ellis (safety/running back)," he said. "They are a big part of what we do. I have young quarterbacks in Riley Lantis and Anthony Lopez, and Tyrese Boyd at wide receiver. Once they are there, they work hard. The problem is getting them here."

Smith takes over Umatilla football program

By **ANNIE FOWLER**
STAFF WRITER

Dan Durfey has put in his time.

From the moment his son, Trent, began Grid Kids football, through this past season at Umatilla High School, Durfey has been calling plays on the sidelines.

Now that Trent will be a sophomore at Carroll College, Durfey wants to see his son play college football.

"I decided last fall when we got done," Durfey said of resigning. "I tried to go watch Trent play during the season. I thought, this isn't going to work. We'd leave after a game, get to Coeur d'Alene at 2 a.m., then get up early and just make it to his game. I decided not to do that any more. At least until he's done. It's actually pretty nice right now not worrying about the paperwork."

In his five years leading the Vikings, Durfey had a 19-21 record. During that time, he was able to coach his son and hundreds of other kids.

"I coached Trent in Grid Kids," Durfey said. "In middle school I was going to kick back and be a dad, but they didn't have a coach and they asked me. Then I became the defensive coordinator at the high school, and that turned into the head job. Some of these kids have seen me since Grid Kids."

Durfey will be replaced by Chad Smith, 34, who has a long coaching history despite his age.

"Last year, I sat out with COVID going on, and I was finishing my administrative license," Smith said. "That year off, I missed coaching and I knew I wanted to get back into it."

Smith also will teach at the alternative school in Umatilla.

"I will work with kids who need to make up credits or who are getting their GED," he said. Smith graduated from Sweet Home High



Ben Lonergan/Hermiston Herald

New Umatilla High School head football coach Chad Smith directs running plays Aug. 10, 2021, during a practice at the high school.

School in 2005, and even though he didn't play football in college, he knew he wanted to coach.

"My first head coaching job was at La Grande (2014, 5-4 record)," he said. "I have been at lot of different places. As an assistant, I saw things I liked and things I didn't. The things I liked I tried to put into my team. I want to make this a great program here on the eastern side of Oregon."

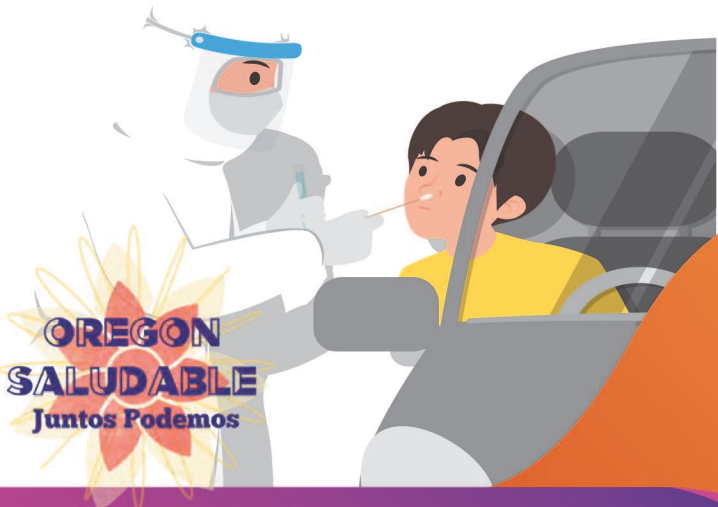
Smith was an assistant at 6A Sheldon from 2005-06. He also assisted at Sprague (2008-10) and Mercer Island, Washington (2017).

Other head coaching jobs on Smith's resume include Seaside (2016, 2-6 record), Siuslaw (2018, 0-8) and Cottage Grove (2019, 0-8).

At Umatilla, Smith said he will have six to eight seniors and a lot of underclassmen.

"I got a survey back from about 30 players," he said. "Whether they come out Monday is another story. We have some talented players. With work schedules, we haven't seen everybody at the same time. We have been lifting weights since the end of June. We get 12 to 15 kids lifting, then we run through some plays. When we start on Monday, it's all about the fundamentals."

Free COVID-19 testing in Umatilla & Morrow counties thanks to the University of Oregon's RADx-Up team.



OREGON
SALUDABLE
Juntos Podemos

FREE
CONFIDENTIAL
COVID-19
TESTING

NO INSURANCE/IMMIGRATION
STATUS NEEDED

- Local drive-through model promotes safety.
- Free and confidential; no insurance or immigration status required.

SCAN TO REGISTER



Pre-Registration Available But Not Required. Results in 2 - 4 Days. <https://blogs.uoregon.edu/osjp/registro/>

UMATILLA ELECTRIC
BOARDMAN OFFICE
Friday's 3 P.M. - 6 P.M.

July 30
August 13
August 27

UMATILLA ELECTRIC
HERMISTON OFFICE
Saturday's 10 A.M. - 1 P.M.

July 31
August 14
August 28