



‘Worse than any flu I’ve had’
Umatilla man experiences breakthrough case of COVID-19

By ERICK PETERSON
Editor/Senior Reporter

Two weeks after contracting COVID-19, Umatilla resident Andrew Morris is sick and feeling more than a little frustrated. He said he did everything right, including getting vaccinated, and he still became ill.

Morris is one of the unlucky few breakthrough cases, people who were vaccinated but came down with COVID-19 anyway.

“This is worse than any flu I’ve had,” Morris said.

He had trouble recalling a comparable illness. After some thought, he compared it to Epstein-Barr virus infection, which also was painful.

With COVID-19, Morris’ body aches. He cannot taste his food, he cannot smell and his throat is sore. He spends most of his days and nights in bed, as even walking to the bathroom is difficult.

Bedridden, he continuously questions himself: “What did I do wrong?”

Joe Fiumara, Umatilla County Public Health director, said roughly 1 out of every 50 people hospitalized with COVID-19 since January in the county were vaccinated against COVID-19, or approximately 49 of 50 hospitalizations in the county this year were unvaccinated.

Morris received his first shot of the Moderna vaccine in March, when it was first available to him, then followed up with his second jab in April. Even after the final shot, he continued to wear masks most of the

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EXPANDED EMPLOYMENT SECTION SEEKS TO LINK EMPLOYERS WITH JOB SEEKERS

Area libraries, bookstores celebrate Banned Book Week



Kellie Lamoreaux, library aide, Susie Sotelo, library director, and Arianna Strong, library aide of the Umatilla Public Library, stroll Thursday, Sept. 16, 2021, along StoryWalk at Hash Park in Umatilla. The StoryWalk features the banned book “The Story of Ferdinand.”

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Activities and displays around the area are promoting “Banned Book Week,” Sept. 26 to Oct. 2. The path at Umatilla’s Hash Park is just one example of the celebration. The path is lined with frames which contain pages from one banned book, “The Story of Ferdinand” by Monroe Leaf, this month’s StoryWalk selection.

Banned books

When many people think of a banned book, they think of books that are forbidden or removed by an institution, or maybe even burned. Though this can be the case, Mark Rose, Hermiston Public Library director says a “banned” book has a different meaning for his library and other libraries.

People may “challenge” a book, asking for it to be removed, Rose said. Once the book is challenged, the book is “banned” regardless of whether it was removed



Arianna Strong and Kellie Lamoreaux, library aides, and Susie Sotelo, library director of the Umatilla Public Library, on Thursday, Sept. 16, 2021, read pages from “The Story of Ferdinand,” a banned book. It is on display at Hash Park in Umatilla.

from the library or not. It is then added to a banned book list, cautioning other libraries “that they might also experience a challenge or concern from their local citizens.”

Though people are responding negatively when they initiate a ban, the ban can end up having the

opposite intended effect. A ban, then, can be a badge of honor for a book as subversive or even important.

The American Library Association released a list of the most challenged books in 2020. This list included “George” by Alex Gino; “Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You” by

Ibram X. Kendi and Jason Reynolds; and “Something Happened in Our Town: A Child’s Story about Racial Injustice” by Marianne Celano, Marietta Collins and Ann Hazzard. Classics, such as “To Kill a Mockingbird” by Harper Lee, were also on the top-10 list.

Some reasons for ban-

ning the books on the ALA list include sensitive topics, profanity and even an author’s behavior.

During Banned Books Week, book lovers celebrate “the freedom to read,” as well as the “value of free and open access to information. According to the ALA, this year’s theme is “Books Unite Us. Censorship Divides Us.”

Hermiston Public Library

“This can be a divisive topic that I have seen create incredible problems for libraries in the past,” Rose said. Still, the Hermiston Public Library will move forward with Banned Book Week. Staff at that library will select materials and items to highlight. Rose said the library has been creating banned book displays since he arrived, just over five years ago.

“It’s often a tradition in libraries to create these displays at this time of year,” he said.

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Hermiston farmers market continues past closure



Kraig Mueller, of 3rd Gen Farms, plays with his son, Kolton Mueller, on Thursday, Sept. 16, 2021, at a market in Hermiston.

By ERICK PETERSON
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Two farms on Thursday, Sept. 16, tried to make up for a farmers market that did not happen in Hermiston. They intend to attract others for a bigger market in following weeks.

The Maxwell Market in Hermiston is a weekly farmers market in Hermiston at the Maxwell Event Center & Pavilion. The Thursday afternoon market, which can attract a dozen to 20 farm booths, sells local produce.

The event, though, was canceled, as organizers cited staffing problems. This market, and the remaining two markets of the 2021 season, would be cancelled because it could not find workers for it. The COVID-19 pandemic has created this lack of staff.

A Facebook post for the Maxwell Market states, “Hope to see you for the 2022 season!” So organizers intend to return next year.

Still, a couple of local farms were undeterred by the market’s closure. They got together and set up their own market in McKenzie Park, outside and across the street from the event center. With only two vendors, it was not as large as the planned Maxwell Market, but the participants were glad to have a place to sell their produce, honey and baked goods.

Kraig Mueller, 3rd Gen Farms owner, grows cucumbers, lettuce, melons, carrots and other row crops. A Hermiston resident, he has four fields in Hermiston, nine acres spread out “in all corners of Hermiston.” He wanted to see the market continue.

After all, markets are how he makes his income. With the money he earns at markets, he buys seeds and equipment.

“We’re farmer gardeners,” he said. “We’re farmers, this is our income.”

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