

Hot dogs!

Locals line up to adopt new pets in Hermiston



Erick Peterson/Hermiston Herald
Angela Bradshaw, Rowan Winterton, Huxyn Winterton and Katie Bradshaw spend time with a shelter dog Saturday, Oct. 16, 2021, at the Loves Pets Adoption Event in Hermiston.



Erick Peterson/Hermiston Herald
Donna Lutz walks with her new dog, Ogano, at a Hermiston pet adoption event Saturday, Oct. 16, 2021.

By ERICK PETERSON
Hermiston Herald

HERMISTON — Shannon White and her 11-year-old step-daughter, Emnelly Escobedo, were the first people in line Saturday morning, Oct. 15, to adopt a pet at Hermiston's Pet Rescue Humane Society of Eastern Oregon.

Pet Rescue and Harley Swain Subaru teamed up for the Loves Pets Adoption Event, which began at 11 a.m., but the mother-daughter duo said they were waiting since before 10 a.m. for the doors to open.

Within minutes of entering the shelter at 1844 N.W. Geer Road, Hermiston, they walked out with a new family member — a dog named Brownie. This new pet, a pit bull, would join a family that already included a bird and a Chihuahua.

Emnelly said she was excited about Brownie, and she knew the most important things to do to take care of a dog.

"You have to give them food, water, a bed and shelter," she said. "You have to potty-train."

More than 30 people in all stood in line before the start time, all hoping to add a new dog or cat to their families.

Pet Rescue on its Facebook page on Oct. 16 announced there were 17 dog and 10 cat adoptions by the time the event ended at 3 p.m.



Erick Peterson/Hermiston Herald
Katherine Lopez holds Shatner, a dog she intended to adopt Saturday, Oct. 16, 2021, at the Loves Pets Adoption Event in Hermiston.

Four dogs, however, were left "looking for their forever families," but the "shelter was emptied on cats," according to the post.

Harley Swain Subaru paid all adoption fees, the Hermiston pet supply store Petsense distributed coupon books. Pet Rescue on its Facebook page stated the adoption day "went great."

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Vaccine mandate goes into effect throughout Umatilla, Morrow counties

By BRYCE DOLE
and ANTONIO SIERRA
EO Media Group

UMATILLA COUNTY — More than 2 out of every 5 workers in Umatilla and Morrow counties are subject to the state's vaccine mandate.

For many of them, the clock struck midnight on Monday, Oct. 18.

Large regional employers such as CHI St. Anthony Hospital, the Pendleton School District and the Hermiston School District reported high vaccination rates among their staff, with most unvaccinated staff granted a medical or religious exemption to stay on or with their employer.

For state workers at one of the region's largest employers, the Oregon Department

of Corrections, the hard deadline to get the shot was pushed out to the end of November.

Both prisons in the county reported more than 89% of their security officers, ranked from correctional officers through captains, are vaccinated against COVID-19. That means 60 of the 615 officers between the two prisons are facing joblessness, according to a spokesperson with the Oregon Department of Corrections.

County-wide data

Roughly 13,000 of the 30,300 jobs that comprise Umatilla County's workforce are under the vaccine mandate, according to Dallas Fridley, a regional economist for the Oregon Employment Department.

And in Morrow County, roughly 2,700 out of the 5,900 workers there are mandated, or nearly 46%, Fridley said.

Many of those jobs are in large firms, including the Amazon data center in Boardman or the many Walmart facilities around Umatilla County, Fridley said.

Statewide, roughly 57% of all jobs fall under the mandate, Fridley said, or less than 3 out of every 5 employees.

In an effort to curb the spread of COVID-19, Gov. Kate Brown announced the mandate in August as the delta variant rocked the state's health care system and inundated hospitals across Eastern Oregon with unvaccinated patients.

Since May, more than 90% of patients hospitalized

with COVID-19 in Umatilla County have been unvaccinated, according to data from Umatilla County Public Health. In that same time frame, 52 county residents who contracted the virus have died.

Hospitals

Emily Smith, a spokesperson for CHI St. Anthony in Pendleton, said in an email that 88% of the hospitals' staff are vaccinated. She said approximately 60% of employees who requested an exemption got one, and some requests are pending.

Those who are not vaccinated and who have not received an exemption "will be placed on unpaid administrative leave for 90 days, during which time they can recon-

sider vaccination," Smith said. Unvaccinated employees who get the shot later "will be eligible for rehire at a later date," Smith added.

Smith said in an email the mandate prompted an 18% increase in the hospital's vaccination rate. She added the hospital is "adjusting staff so that operations will be minimally impacted."

EO Media Group sought that information from Good Shepherd Medical Center, Hermiston.

Caitlin Cozad, a spokesperson for Good Shepherd, said in response to questions, "Good Shepherd is compliant with the state mandate and fully operational."

The Oregon Health Authority has not updated its public dashboard showing vac-

cine uptake among health care workers in individual counties since Oct. 4. But the two-week-old data shows that roughly 30% of all health care workers in Umatilla County, and 24% of health care workers in Morrow County, were unvaccinated at that time.

In all, 18% of Oregon's health care workers are unvaccinated, according to state data.

More than 1.1 million Oregonians work in jobs that are under the mandate, or 3 out of every 5 working residents, Oregon Public Broadcasting reported.

The website guidestar.org specializes in collecting public information about nonprofits. A 2020 tax return

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