

Hermiston Assembly prepares for rebrand

Documentary at Nov. 7 service tells the history of 90-year-old church and reveals church's new name

By ERICK PETERSON
Hermiston Herald

When is Hermiston Assembly not Hermiston Assembly? When it is something else, of course.

The church at 730 E. Hurlburt Ave., Hermiston, soon will undergo a name change.

Church leaders are keeping the new name a secret for a big unveiling at an upcoming celebration but want to make one thing clear: Although the name will change, many of the most important parts of the church will remain the same.

The reveal of the new name will come during a service Nov. 7. At that service, a film also will be shown, which describes the history and mission of the church.

"This has been something that has been in the works," Clayton Haight, Hermiston Assembly experience pastor, said.

He, as well as other workers and volunteers, recently upgraded parts of the church building. Now complete with the physical changes to the building, Haight said the church wants to show off a "significant change in the life of our church, which is a name change."

The theology of the church is not changing with the name, Haight said, neither are the message or the church's "heart for Hermiston" becoming different.

Haight expressed his feelings for why a name change was needed, pointing out the "interesting" past two years. The coronavirus pandemic is a historic event, he said, which we are all living through.

As the effects of COVID-19 are monumental, church members felt inclined to contemplate their role in

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Umatilla County celebrates Halloween with big events

By ERICK PETERSON
Hermiston Herald

Halloween 2021 will be a holiday to remember for people of Eastern Oregon. Friday to Sunday, Oct. 29 to 31, 2021, people turned out for local events. Some attended the activities as visitors, others as helpers, but everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves.

It was a big year for many people, as they delighted in experiences that had been canceled the year prior because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Hermiston

Hermiston hosted several events, including Treats on Main & Beyond. Local businesses handed out candy to costumed trick-or-treaters.

"It was pretty cool," Sarah Ramos, Hales' Restaurant hostess, said. There were many visitors with fun costumes, including some decked out as dinosaurs, she said.

Cristal Carman, cook for Veg Out, participated also in the festivities, as she handed out candy with a co-worker.

"It turned out really good," she said. "I really enjoyed seeing all the costumes. Some of them made them themselves. Others had unique themes, like some ballplayers from 'A League of Their Own.' So I really enjoyed it, and I think the kids did, too."

Another impressive costume, she said, was Col. Sanders, the KFC founder and mascot. Someone dressed up like the Colonel and carried a bucket of fried chicken, Carmen said.

Over at the Hermiston Public Library, staff also reported having a good time with their volunteerism. Vivian Cano, library assistant, was one of those volunteers, helping to put "goody bags" together and then handing them out to children.

She said she saw many excellent costumes — a giant banana, unicorns, Fortnite characters and more. She noted the specialness of this holiday, especially as some of the kids were enjoying it for the first time in a couple of years, having had it cancelled last year due to COVID-19 worries.

"They were excited, shy but excited once they got their bags," she said. The bags contained candy, bookmarks and library information.

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Ben Lonergan/Hermiston Herald

A dinosaur trick-or-treats Friday, Oct. 29, 2021, during Treats on Main in downtown Hermiston.



Ben Lonergan/Hermiston Herald

Trick-or-treaters on Friday, Oct. 29, 2021, line the sidewalk along Hermiston's Main Street during Treats on Main.



Ben Lonergan/Hermiston Herald

Darci Giesen, left, hands out candy to trick-or-treaters Friday, Oct. 29, 2021, in downtown Hermiston for Treats on Main.

Cat owners warned to vaccinate cats against a deadly disease



Ben Lonergan/Hermiston Herald

Amanda White fills out intake paperwork for Beetlejuice on Friday, Oct. 29, 2021, at the Pendleton Animal Welfare Shelter in Pendleton. While PAWS has not had a case of feline panleukopenia, it is working to inform cat owners of the dangers of the disease.

By ERICK PETERSON
Hermiston Herald

Veterinarian and other animal welfare professionals have noticed an uptick in feline panleukopenia in Umatilla County. As they warn the public about this disease that kills cats, especially young kittens, they also spreading the word on how they can help prevent it.

"I've never seen it this bad," Carol Boggs said.

Boggs is a volunteer and treasurer for Fuzz Ball Animal Rescue, Hermiston. She also assists Cat Utopia of Pendleton and at the Pendleton Animal Welfare Shelter, Pendleton.

Her work includes trapping, fostering and transporting animals. In a regular week, she traps around 20 cats and dogs, she said, but recent weeks have not been normal. Last week, she was not capturing animals at all, and she has limited all contact with the creatures she would ordinarily be helping, because of her fear of panleukopenia contamination.

Panleukopenia, also called "pan-

leuk," is an infectious disease among cats. Mark Sargent, Oregon Trail Veterinary Clinic veterinarian, explained details of the disease. Its literal translation is "all white low," referring to its effect, lowering a cat's white blood cell count.

Cats pick up the virus in their environment, the veterinarian said, sometimes from other cats, but soil also can be a source of infection. Indoor cats may be less at risk, but even they are susceptible to the disease if someone tracks the virus into their home.

Jessie Frischman, veterinarian with Hermiston Veterinary Clinic, added the disease attacks bone marrow, decreases white blood cells and sets up its victim for other infections. Symptoms include vomiting, loss of appetite and diarrhea. Death often follows, she said.

Kittens are especially at risk, as their immune system is immature and their body fat is low.

Sargent said Umatilla County has "seen a lot" of panleuk, a "flurry of it" in the last two months among strays.

"I don't recall seeing an outbreak like this before," he said.

Cases sometimes pop up "here or there, but nothing like this," he said, adding he suspects it got into the right population, stray cats, and spread like "wildfire."

Boggs, who fosters cats, also used the word "wildfire," when describing panleuk transmission in her home. When she still was trapping animals, she brought home an infected cat and the disease spread within her home.

Having lost seven cats recently to panleuk, she is on the lookout for the disease. In addition to limiting her contact with other cats, she regularly disinfects her home, her car and herself with trifactant spray. The 53-year-old Hermiston resident has been taking care of cats her entire life, and said she is heartbroken by a disease she sees as being on the upswing as she has never seen before.

Cindy Spiess, owner of Pendleton's Cat Utopia, called the situation as "really sad." She also is on the board of directors for PAWS. She added she tends to see outbreaks every five or

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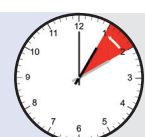
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REMINDER

Set your clocks back an hour, Sunday, Nov. 7.