

THREE MINUTES WITH ...



ANDREW BROOKS

Hermiston

How long have you lived in Hermiston?

Off and on pretty much for my entire life.

What do you like about this town?

There's quite a bit that I like about Hermiston. First of all, there's the community. It's close knit. We have festivals, and the city seems to care about its people.

What hobbies do you have?

I don't have too many. I do play video games. I enjoy roleplaying games and shooters. You name it, I've played it. That's why I work here at GameStop. I've been here about six months.

Can you tell me about your customers?

I love my customers. You can't get better customers than GameStop customers. Everybody coming in here is absolutely happy quite a bit, all the time, because they're looking at video games, they're looking at toys, they're looking at game boards and they're looking for presents they want to get. You just can't get a frown in here.

What's the newest hot thing in gaming right now?

That's a difficult question. We have consoles coming out constantly. There's the Xbox Series X and Series S. Then there's the Playstation 5, the Nintendo Switch. There's not a bad choice. It just depends on your interests. We have video games, hot sellers coming out constantly. There's a new Harry Potter game that's coming out that I can't wait for. Pokemon is always a big one with the kids. There's collectibles. Pops are one of the biggest things we have here, and statues. There are statues from Todd McFarlane. We're proud to carry his work.

Is this stuff only for kids?

No, not at all. Well, maybe it's for kids of all ages. You can say that.

Are you a kid at heart?

Absolutely. You have to be young on the inside to stay young on the outside.

Do you have plans for the summer?

My friend wants to take a trip across the country, and I'd like to go with him. He wants to see the Atlantic Ocean, and that's something I've seen before when I was homeless for many years. From 16 to 22, I traveled across the country back and forth.

That's a very dangerous thing, isn't it?

It can be, a little bit. I don't advocate it. I've been in dangerous situations in my life, but I made it out. I'm still here. You just got to have faith in life.

HERMISTON HISTORY

Abbie Ditton named 1997 'Mom of the Year'

25 YEARS AGO
May 20, 1997

"My mother is truly the most amazing person that I know. No matter what is going on in her life, she is always thinking of things that she can do for others," was how Ellen Ditton's winning essay began, which rendered her mother, Abbie Ditton, the 1997 Oregon State University "Mom of the Year."

Ellen Ditton, 20, was a junior at OSU as a business administration student. Her brother, Mark Ditton, 22, was also attending OSU as a second-year law student — following in the footsteps of their father, Tom.

Abbie was a stay-at-home mom until both of her children attended college, savoring every moment with them. She would also help their friends as the need arose, stating, "All you have to do is care — and praise them once in a while."

An automobile accident which almost took Abbie Ditton's life 10 years prior put a whole new perspective on Ellen Ditton's relationship with her mom.

"I was given a second chance at realizing her importance in my life (...) It made me realize just how much she means to me," Ellen Ditton said.

Although Ellen Ditton was miles away from home, she still sought Abbie Ditton's help from time to time. And as all children will reluctantly agree, she said, "I call her all the time for advice, and even though I don't always follow the advice she gives, she always seems to be right in the end."

50 YEARS AGO
May 18, 1972

When Rodney Tash finished work at the Umatilla Army Depot, he returned home, grabbed a brush and pallet and began creating beautiful paintings.

Tash was born in Heppner in 1919 and graduated from Arlington High School in 1936. He served in the Navy during World War II and the Korean War, and continued military and civilian government service for a total of 29 years.

Having never touched a canvas, Tash bought some instructional books and taught himself the tips and tricks of oil painting. He soon became a renowned local artist, winning numerous blue ribbons in pastels and oils at the Umatilla County Fair. His strokes were described as "free of coarseness, even those he does with a knife, ... which results in perfection of detail enjoyable from any distance."

After much practice, Tash's paintings expanded from barns and old buildings to include practically everything — with his pets and the valley their house overlooks serving as inspiration.

75 YEARS AGO
May 22, 1947

Well, we have crickets. And lots of them.

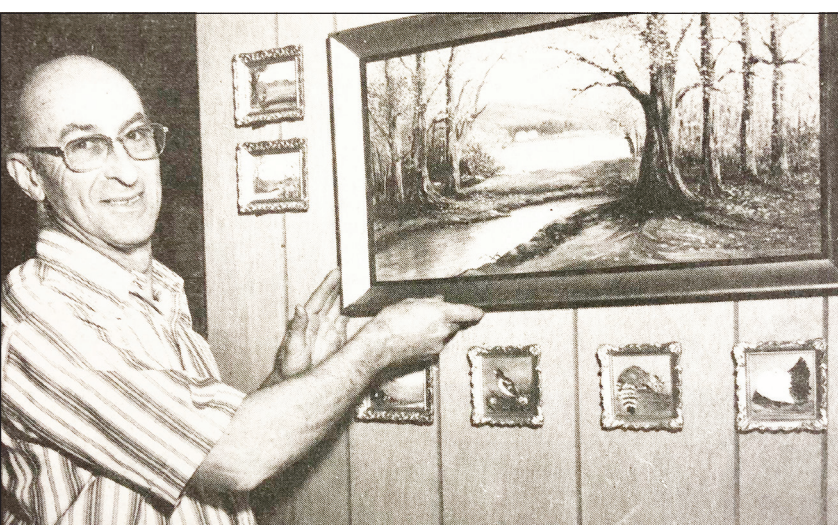
That was the message conveyed to the public in search of volunteers to help stop the infestation of Mormon crickets throughout Eastern Oregon. These pests pose a major threat to crops and were estimated to have occupied 500 square miles of land within Morrow, Umatilla, Gilliam and Grant counties.

With female Mormon crickets able to lay up to 200 eggs during the spring, state and county aid had been sought by city officials. Prevention efforts had already begun, with crop-dusting and bait mixtures oper-



Hermiston Herald, File

Abbie Ditton, "Mom of the Year," stands with her daughter, Ellen Ditton, in 1997.



Hermiston Herald, File

In 1972, self-taught artist Rodney Tash displayed some of his oil paintings.



Hermiston History, File

Twenty-five years ago, Bill Frost and Bill Mayberry finished painting the Hermiston Pool just in time for summer.

ating on an 8-hour shift.

These little creatures received considerable publicity for their presence and magnitude; they were featured in metropolitan newspapers, on radio news broadcasts and newsreel. Cameramen were rumored to arrive shortly to catch the Mormon crickets in action.

90 YEARS AGO
May 19, 1932

Believe it or not, there was once a time when only 27 seniors graduated from Hermiston High School.

The ceremony took place at the Methodist church where Dean J.R. Jewell, of Corvallis, delivered the address. His speech was received well by the audience, who even claimed him to be one of the best commencement speakers heard there for years. At the ceremony, multiple awards were presented to bring the

school year to an end and celebrate the seniors for all their hard work.

Each year, the Hermiston Commercial Club awarded a watch to one student in the high school, based on a point system involving scholarships received and activities. Enda Ott was the recipient of this coveted prize, with a total of 104 points — 86 for scholastic ability and 18 for activities.

James Neary had the honor of having his name put on the "Loving Cup," which was given to the school by the class of 1928. The main aspects taken into consideration for this award were scholarships, activities and student votes. Neary was a prime candidate, having been involved in activities and organizations such as torch honor society for three years and president of the student body. In addition, he played football, basketball, baseball and joined the tennis team his senior year.

BY THE WAY

Umatilla golf tournament scheduled Saturday, May 21

With good weather in the forecast, many golf lovers should be teeing off this coming weekend. Some of those golfers are planning to participate in the **Conrad Skinner Memorial Veteran's Golf Tournament on Saturday, May 21**. Registration starts at 8 a.m. Shotgun start is at 9 a.m.

The event is a 4-person, 18-hole, modified scramble. It is at **Big River Golf Course**, 709 Willamette Ave., Umatilla. Participants can bring a team, or they will be paired up.

Veterans can golf for free. There is a \$100 fee for non-veterans. Entry fee includes green fees, mulligan, tee prizes, lunch and the prize fund. Carts are not included.

To register and/or pay online, visit conradskinnerveteran.wixsite.com/conradskinnerveteran. One also may register for the tournament by mail at 709 Willamette Ave., Umatilla, OR 97882, or email megan@golffbigriver.com. Call 541-922-3006 for more information.

Honorees are **Chuck Wilcox, Tom Watson, Lyle Brown, Dan Lopez** and **Roger Bounds**.

Hermiston School District announced the selection of new building administrators. Three teachers on special assignment will serve as assistant principals next school year.

Current high school Dean of Students **Melissa Doherty** will be a **Hermiston High School** assistant principal, as will **Andy Hall**, a current secondary school instructional coach.

Doherty was hired by Hermiston School District in 2014 as a second grade teacher. After working at the elementary level for seven years, she moved to the secondary level this year as dean.

Hall is in his sixth year with the district, serving all of those years at the secondary level. A previous math teacher, Hall became an instructional coach in 2019, where he leads teachers to improve their student instruction and classroom management.

Casey Arstein, also a current secondary instructional coach, has been selected as the **Armand Larive Middle School** assistant principal. Arstein is a physical education teacher by trade; a position he held at **Sandstone Middle School** from 2006 until fall 2021. Arstein is a 2001 Hermiston High School graduate.

If you have a few extra dollars burning a hole in your pocket, an upcoming event might be the thing you need. The **Spring Fling Shopping Extravaganza** is at the **Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center**, 1705 E. Airport Road, Hermiston, **Saturday, May 21**, 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Vendors plan to sell furniture, crocheted goods, jewelry and more.

Maybe painting on a canvas just is not your thing? If so, drop on by the **Hermiston Public Library**, 235 E. Gladys Ave., for **Teen Canvas Embroidery Art**. Teens can try embroidery on a canvas. Your friends at the library will

see you **Monday, May 23**, at 5 p.m. Supplies are available, while they last.

There is a lot of buzz about an upcoming presentation at the **Hermiston Public Library**, 235 E. Gladys Ave. Beekeeper **Ron Hendrickson** is planning to speak on his trade **Thursday, May 19**, 6-8 p.m. He intends to bring a live bee display with him.

The **Harkenrider Senior Activity Center** menu for **Thursday, May 19**, is spaghetti, salad, garlic bread and dessert. The menu for **Tuesday, May 24**, is burgers and hot dogs, potato salad, chips and dessert.

In-house meals will be served from noon to 12:30 p.m. People planning to dine in are asked to call by 11 a.m.

For a **Meals on Wheels** delivery in Hermiston, call 541-567-3582 before 10 a.m. to place an order. To pick up a meal from the center at 255 N.E. Second St., call before 11 a.m. Meals are \$5 and can be picked up between 11:30 a.m. and noon.

The **Boardman Senior Center** is open for dine-in lunches on **Tuesdays and Thursdays**, noon at 100 Tatone St. Meals are \$4 for seniors and \$5 for others. Take-out lunches are available by calling 541-481-3257.