

OUR VIEW

## City's new town hall, a positive investment

The new Hermiston City Hall is projected to be open to the public by October and that should be good news to area residents.

What is even better news is the fact city leaders made the decision — more than five years ago — to move ahead on the project.

There is no doubt Hermiston is growing and it will continue to grow. That means there will be a need for newer and better infrastructure — such as the new city hall — going forward.

Choosing to invest millions in new infrastructure is not an easy decision and city leaders — past and present — should be lauded for having the courage to do so.

Other than police and fire services, city spending should always be reviewed by city voters. Yet they must always find a balance between what is necessary and what is not. It is their hard-earned tax dollars that often pay for new infrastructure or infrastructure improvements.

However, the new city hall building was the right choice at the right time and should be looked at as a long-term investment for taxpayers.

That investment will pay off in a number of different ways down the road but chiefly the new building helps push the city into the future. Growth is a good thing if managed well and as the city continues to expand, new structures like city hall are not only going to be nice but necessary.

Spending a lot of money on a city government infrastructure project can seem to be daunting at first yet without the courage and determination to find cost-effective ways to do upgrades — as city officials have done — the size of the growth in the city would quickly outpace its infrastructure.

We're confident the decision for the new city hall was the right one and we believe such new facilities not only enhance city government but help the city as a whole. Hermiston has a bright future ahead and it is a future that will include the need for more investment. That investment will pay off over time and ensure our city stays on the cutting edge of technology and remains a vibrant place open for business.

We look forward to the opening of city hall and commend city leaders for their foresight and courage on the project.



"I'M SORRY, DEAR, YOU'LL HAVE TO COME BACK LATER. IT'S FOOTBALL SEASON AND THE GAME IS ON."

COLUMN

## An encouraging thought for the future of our region



**ANDREW CUTLER**  
FROM THE PUBLISHER

I am always amazed by how the people of our region respond when a natural disaster strikes.

The most recent example — the work of so many in Wallowa County after an epic hailstorm delivered havoc — is just one of a number of cases when people have jumped in to offer assistance in the wake of a disaster.

Yet that kind of resiliency isn't out of the ordinary. When the Umatilla River flooded in 2020, the area residents displayed the same kind of vigor to help their neighbors.

We often spend a great deal of time focusing on what divides us as a nation, state or region. From the 50,000-foot level it

might appear as if we are so bitterly divided that helping each other out in a time of crisis would be a nonstarter.

True, there is a lot that divides us politically. Just a cursory glance at the TV news every night — no matter what network you view — shows that firm battle lines are drawn over a host of issues. And there is a whole lot of shouting going on.

I still, though, believe in the basic good nature of the people who live in our great nation. I agree it is difficult to see through the smoke of our current political discourse to be able to realize we have far more in common than not.

We seem to be eager to stand on the other side of a particular political fence and do a lot of yelling, but when a serious crisis appears, we jump to help. We step up and converge on places of crisis and do all we can to help others.

Often, I am inclined to believe that kind of performance is simply unique to our part of the state. Those who live in Eastern Ore-

gon are a hardy and resilient bunch. We are used to challenge and familiar with overcoming obstacles.

When I really ponder it, though, I see that Americans in general are resilient. We flock to help out when a hurricane or tornado hits. We give up our time to lend a hand to neighbors affected by fires, floods and storms.

So just about the time I think we are so polarized we can barely function, a natural disaster strikes — such as the hailstorm in Wallowa County — and people run to help. They do it without payment and without the goal of praise. They do it because it's right.

We have a diverse and beautiful region and it is populated for the most part by good people who are willing to help when they are needed.

That's not only refreshing to see but also encouraging for the future.

■ Andrew Cutler is the publisher of the *Hermiston Herald*.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### B2H will make Eastern Oregon vulnerable to fires

The Oregon Department of Energy Facility Siting Council will hold so-called hearings on whether to recommend the issuing of permits to build the Boardman to Hemingway 500 kilovolt power line. In my opinion this is just another waste of taxpayer money as the hearings I have attended I left with the opinion that the results were predetermined by big money versus the landowners. Oregon power brokers have made numerous exceptions to the law to accommodate Idaho Power, one being the taking of private property.

The Oregon Public Utility Commission appointed a commission to study the fire prevention plan presented by Idaho Power, and it was the findings of the commission that Idaho Power's plan "does not meet the requirements required by the state of Oregon." As is normal the big money Idaho Power won as the OPUC rejected the findings of their own commission and approved Idaho Powers plan.

The U.S. Department of Justice on Thursday, Aug. 25, 2022, released the findings of an investigation by the Bureau of Land Management. It was found a power line owned by Idaho Power caused

two fires, which Idaho Power has agreed to pay \$1.5 million to settle allegations by the U.S. relating to the May 2014 Powerline and August 2015 Lime Hill Fires in Baker County. Idaho Power denies it's at fault but paid the money anyway? Makes me wonder why would one pay for something they say was not their fault?

The Powerline Fire burnt 5 acres of federal land. The Lime Hill burnt 2,592 acres of federal land and 9,337 acres of private land. These fires were attributed to lines carrying 138kV. The new line Idaho Power they want to build through the Eastern Oregon counties will carry a minimum of 500kV, with towers up to 180-foot-tall.

The people of Eastern Oregon don't need their lands burnt by this bad plan to build. Call your so-called political leaders and stop it before Oregon suffers more unneeded exposure to big fires.

**John Harvey Stanfield**

### Poverty reduction is easier than you think

Reducing global poverty seems like an impossible task. Every day we read articles about those affected by conflict, star-

vation and disease that only seem to get worse. As we see the needs of our own community, it is difficult to find motivation to help internationally.

But these feelings are often based on misinformation and sensational news articles. According to Our World in Data, a website that provides data about world issues, global poverty and its effects, such as malnutrition and child mortality, have been reduced significantly in the past 50 years. The U.S. plays an important part in these changes, despite spending less than 1% of the federal budget on foreign aid. As countries require less aid and enter international trade, the U.S. benefits.

Our jobs as citizens have become easier as well. Minor donations and 30-second calls to representatives can have remarkable outcomes. The internet allows us access to resources and organizations like the Borgen Project, that provide information and email forms.

I believe we should be emailing and calling our representatives, like U.S. Reps. Cathy McMorris Rodgers and Cliff Bentz, advocating for the International Affairs Budget. Our leaders do listen, and even personally respond.

**Emily Fry Milton-Freewater**

CONTACT YOUR PUBLIC OFFICIALS

**U.S. Rep. Cliff Bentz**  
1239 Longworth  
House Office Building  
Washington, DC, 20515  
202-225-6730

**State Rep. Greg Smith, District 57**  
900 Court St. NE, H-482  
Salem, OR 97301  
503-986-1457  
Email: Rep.GregSmith@state.or.us

**State Sen. Bill Hansell, District 29**  
900 Court St. NE, S-423  
Salem, OR 97301  
503-986-1729  
Email: Sen.BillHansell@state.or.us

## HERMISTON HERALD

Volume 115 • Number 35

Andrew Cutler | Publisher • acutler@hermistonherald.com • 541-278-2673  
Erick Peterson | Editor • epeterson@hermistonherald.com • 541-564-4536  
Angel Aguilan | Multi-Media consultant • aguilan@hermistonherald.com 541-564-4531  
Audra Workman | Office Manager • aworkman@eastoregonian.com • 541-564-4538  
Tammy Malgesini | Community Editor • community@eastoregonian.com • 541-564-4532

To contact the Hermiston Herald for news, advertising or subscription information:  
• call 541-567-6457  
• email info@hermistonherald.com  
• stop by our offices at 333 E. Main St.  
• visit us online at: hermistonherald.com

Periodical postage paid at Hermiston, OR. Postmaster, send address changes to Hermiston Herald, 333 E. Main St., Hermiston, OR 97838.

Member of EO Media Group Copyright ©2022

The Hermiston Herald (USPS 242220, ISSN 8750-4782) is published weekly at Hermiston Herald, 333 E. Main St., Hermiston, OR 97838, 541-567-6457.



Corrections

It is the policy of the Hermiston Herald to correct errors as soon as they are discovered. Incorrect information will be corrected on Page A2. Errors committed on the Opinion page will be corrected on that page. Corrections also are noted in the online versions of our stories. Please contact the editor at editor@hermistonherald.com or call 541-278-2673 with issues about this policy or to report errors.

**SUBMIT A LETTER TO THE EDITOR**  
Letters Policy: Letters to the Editor is a forum for the Hermiston Herald readers to express themselves on local, state, national or world issues. Brevity is good, but longer letters should be kept to 250 words. No personal attacks; challenge the opinion, not the person. The Hermiston Herald reserves the right

to edit letters for length and for content. Letters must be original and signed by the writer or writers. Anonymous letters will not be printed. Writers should include a telephone number so they can be reached for questions. Only the letter writer's name and city of residence will be published.

OBITUARY POLICY

The Hermiston Herald publishes paid obituaries; death notices and information about services are published at no charge. Obituaries can include small photos and, for veterans, a flag symbol at no charge. Obituaries and notices may be submitted online at hermistonherald.com/obituaryform, by email to obits@hermistonherald.com, placed via the funeral home or in person at the Hermiston Herald or East Oregonian offices. For more information, call 541-966-0818 or 800-522-0255, x2211.