

The East County Journal Circulation Group II

**NEWS DIVISION
333 Front Page Design**

Nov. 3, 2021, page 1

Homecoming Week at Morton features games and costumes Page 7



Daylight Savings Time ends Sunday. Be sure to set clocks back one hour.



Mossyrock Volleyball wins second league tournament title Page 12

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Morton Hospital reports COVID cases down from recent surge

BY BUDDY ROSE
East County Journal

Lewis County Hospital District 1 commissioners reviewed the current status of COVID-19 in the area during their regular meeting Wednesday, Oct. 27. The recent surge of the Delta Variant of the virus seems to be lessening considerably from what it was a few weeks ago.

Chief of Nursing Sara Williamson reported the current 7-day average number of confirmed and probable cases in Lewis County is now 32. That compares with an average of 95 cases at the peak of the Delta Variant outbreak experienced in the area in early September, she said. The same plateauing of cases is occurring at the facility, she added. However, she noted, the baseline level is still much higher in the community than it was back in July.

"Vaccination is the theme of what we want to encourage to protect ourselves, our families and our patients," Williamson said.

She announced COVID boosters for Moderna are now available at area clinics for those age 65 and older, or those with underlying conditions or working in at-risk settings or occupations. The clinics will begin a kick-off for community boosters as well as the regular vaccine starting this week, she added, with a

big event at Morton on Nov. 6.

Both Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines and boosters should be available at the event, she said, and added that it is OK to mix and match any COVID booster after receiving any initial COVID vaccine. Williamson also reported a drive-up flu vaccine event a couple of weeks ago was a huge success.

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Vaccination is the theme of what we want to encourage to protect ourselves, our families and our patients.

— Sara Williamson
chief of nursing

According to the State Department of Health as of Oct. 30, there have been 40,298 people in Lewis County that have received at least one dose of COVID vaccine. That is 50.2 percent of the total county population of 80,250.

In other business at the meeting, Commissioner Wes McMahan reported the recent Arbor Health Foundation auction was a success with gross proceeds of \$22,273 from 82 bidders on 102 auctioned items.

Commissioner Craig Coppock provided a review of the Finance Committee meeting that took place Oct. 20. He said they discussed healthcare claims for district employees, which, through the third quarter of 2021, have exceeded last year's claims by 12 percent. Regarding the

See **Hospital** Page 3



Ric Hallock | East County Journal

S'more the merrier

Fiona Latkiewicz, 2, of Mineral, enjoys a freshly made s'more while at the Pleasant Valley Christian Camp Trunk or Treat Halloween display on Front Street in Mineral Sunday. For more Halloween photos from across East Lewis County, see pages 6 and 11 of today's Journal.

Fall colors are outstanding in region this year

BY BUDDY ROSE
East County Journal

In case one hasn't taken notice, fall colors this year are spectacular in most places in East Lewis County compared to the average year. The hillsides and roadsides are ablaze with intense yellows, oranges and reds. Sunny, fall days and cool, but not freezing, nights

are a major contributor to these vivid fall colors.

Fall colors occur when chlorophyll production within the leaves of plants and trees begins to diminish. Chlorophylls are green and usually overwhelm other colors that may be in leaves during the growing season. They break down during the food manufacturing process, but are

constantly being replaced in leaves. Hence, summertime leaves are mostly green.

As fall approaches and the days get shorter and nights get cooler, chlorophyll production slows down and a layer of cork begins to form at the base of each leaf where it will eventually break off. The amount of green chlorophyll pigment within the leaf

diminishes and other colors that have been there all along begin to dominate.

The most common fall colors are yellows, oranges and browns and all shades in between. They come from substances called carotenoids that are in leaves throughout the growing season. As the

See **Colors** Page 4

Election results out past press deadline

Unofficial election results from the General Election were posted by the County Auditor's office after press time on Tuesday night. The East County Journal will post election results on its Facebook page today and will also run the results in the Nov. 10 edition. Results can also be seen online at elections.lewiscountywa.gov. Certification of the election results will take place 10 a.m., Nov. 23.

Boyer, Roper walk to make Morton a little bit cleaner

BY CATHY KANE
East County Journal

You have to get up pretty early – usually between 4:30 and 5 a.m. – to see Bob Boyer, better known by his nick name, Goat, as he and his trusty canine companion, Roper, begin their daily trek through the streets of Morton, picking up trash and treasures along the way.

Wearing his safety vest and carrying his handy garbage picker, Boyer and Roper begin their weekday loop at Third Avenue and Main, proceeding south to Westlake Avenue.

"Then, I pick whichever street looks like it has the most trash and try to make it look a little better," Boyer said. "I always pick up trash around Gas Plus and a lot of times, I take the little sidewalk that goes by the market. I usually get one bag full of trash – sometimes two. Every day it's that way."

On weekends, Boyer and Roper walk down Westlake to Knittles Way and Jubilee Park before heading home.

"Sometimes I find good stuff, but mostly trash that gets thrown out the car window or people walking who just don't care and just throw things down," he added.

Some of the good stuff has included a neatly folded \$100 bill, two wrenches and a bar stool. Some of the trash these days includes lots of discarded face masks.

Boyer's said his clean-up efforts have not gone entirely unnoticed.

"I get a lot of compliments. People will do the two-horn honk, which at least used to mean thank you," he commented.

Two of the most appreciative local

residents are Bob Mogan and Myrna Norris, who serve as Jubilee Park volunteer caretakers throughout the year. "Bob's a heck of a guy. I just admire the heck out of Bob and Myrna. They are very complimentary."

Boyer also recalled the laudation of Mountain Transit Director Doug Hayden. "He pulled up alongside me one day and said, 'I want to say thank you for what you are doing.' He said he really appreciated it. It's always nice to get a compliment."

"I wish people were brought up like I was when I hunted and fished with my dad. Dad always had a policy that we packed (our garbage) out and if we saw (trash) in the woods, we packed it out, too – an old beer can, pop can or candy wrapper, whatever. And we hiked into some pretty rugged places in those days and still we would find trash," he said, emphasizing the importance of building good habits, including not littering, in children. "Good habits start in childhood."

Other ways Boyer volunteers in the community after his regular job as support vehicle driver for Morton Elementary School includes playing Santa for Lewis County Fire District 4 and the Morton Moose Lodge. He also facilitates Karaoke at the Moose on Friday nights.

Boyer said he has no plans to stop his clean-up efforts any time soon, come rain or shine.

"I like to make things a little better for people. It makes me feel good to do it and it gives Roper a break. It's good for his legs," he said, with a smile.



Ric Hallock | East County Journal

Morton resident Bob "Goat" Boyer walks the streets of Morton, picking up litter, while accompanied by his best friend, Roper, an Australian shepherd-Corgi mix.