

## Work under way on Oregon migrant clinic

By SUE TAYLOR

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HERMISTON — Officials in Walla Walla expect that a medical clinic for migrant and farm workers will be completed in time to open for business April 1.

Construction of the new clinic began Wednesday, said Frank Herrera of the Walla Walla Community Health Center, which obtained \$250,000 in federal grants to set up the clinic.

The building is on Northwest 11th Street across from the future site of Good Shepherd Community Hospital. It will be leased from O'Brien-Hale Development. The clinic will lease the \$285,000 structure for 10 years with an option to buy after the first year, Herrera said.

The clinic will be staffed with a general practitioner and a physician's assistant, in addition to nurses aids, outreach workers and office support staff, he said. The doctor's assistant will be Spanish-speaking, since the majority of migrant and farm laborers are Hispanic, Herrera said.

The clinic will offer medical care for families in addition to prenatal and obstetrics, Herrera said. The primary reason the center decided to open the facility in Hermiston is because so many pregnant women from the Hermiston area were coming to Walla Walla for medical attention, he said.

"We were concerned that they would have to deliver at Wallula Junction," he said.

The clinic will serve farm workers in Morrow and Umatilla counties, primarily from the Hermiston and Boardman areas, Herrera said. Patients from the two areas numbered around 1,000 in the Walla Walla clinic last year, he said.

Care will be provided on a sliding scale relative to the patient's ability to pay. The lowest-income families will pay a basic \$6 fee for services, Herrera said.