

DHS helps students in need of supplies

Judy Hoyle

IVN Contributing Writer

Once again the Illinois Valley has stood up for students in need.

The Cave Junction office staff of the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) organized and sponsored the third annual Backpack Project just before the beginning of the school year.

The DHS team distributed 176 backpacks and school supplies to Illinois Valley students on Aug. 22 and 31 more were delivered to the three public schools before the Labor Day weekend.

In total 208 backpacks were distributed, 100 more than last year.

The DHS team worked with local school resource coordinators to assure that backpacks were accessible for homeless youth attending school in the Valley.

During 2015-2016, Three Rivers School District ended the school year with 364 students who were identified as either homeless or living

in substandard housing.

There were 93 homeless students in Cave Junction schools or 26 percent of the total identified homeless students in the district.

The distribution event took place at the I.V. Family Coalition building where DHS offices are located.

DHS project coordinators Erica Baker and Colleen Kiser, financial coordinator Stephanie Hernandez and operations manager Gena Grizzard collected over \$3,700 in cash donations and supplies from I.V. businesses and individuals.

They were able to stretch those dollars by arranging with the North Medford Fred Meyer store for additional discounts on sale backpacks.

In an interview, Baker said, "This type of volunteer effort helps my own kids to be more compassionate."

The backpack project had its roots in a similar program created by United Community Action Network (UCAN) 4 years ago.

Partner agencies were no longer

able to serve the I.V. community in Cave Junction, so DHS staff and community members came together to keep the project alive.

Grizzard said, "It's a hardship for our families to drive to Grants Pass, so we started our own backpack drive for local students. The first year we were able to provide 25 backpacks and it has grown each year. This has been the best year yet. We're very grateful to our community who donated so generously to this great cause."

Kiser researched supply lists for each grade level. Grade specific collections were organized for kindergarten through grade 12. The event required that each student be present in order to receive a backpack and that they live in the Illinois Valley.

Baker and her daughter, Roxy; Hernandez and her daughters, Destiny and Gabriela; and Heather Denham and her son, Case worked together to fill grocery bags with supplies.

Kiser's two sons, James and Kenny, volunteered the day of the event. They helped each student select

their own backpack and made sure they received the correct grade level supply bag.

Over the past year, several businesses, including Washington Federal, displayed collection barrels for the project. The I.V. Family Coalition staff also had a yard sale to raise funds.

Beginning in late February, the DHS project team started soliciting donations and speaking to groups about how important having these materials were for students' learning opportunities as well as self esteem.

"This project is super well worthwhile, but not exactly a typical service that we offer," Grizzard said. "We saw a gap and worked to fill it with help from the community. We couldn't have done it without the community's help and support."

Individuals who contributed to the project included Jay Aguilera, Barbara "Bo" Alderton, Loralie Butcher, Pat and Rick Dees, Colleen Kiser, Chris Mallette, Bertha and Jerry Miller, Michelle O'Brien and Celia

Siemer.

Business donors included Backstreet Salon, Blalock Insurance, Carlos Restaurante, Cave Junction Chevron, Clear Creek Family Practice, Coffee Heaven, Crystal Kaleidoscope, Dr. Joe's Pet Hospital, Dutch Bros., Good Earth Organics, Hiler's Iron Works, Performant, R Hog Farm, Riverside Physical Therapy, Rogue Truck Body, Smokin' Tees, Taylor's Sausage, Treasured Ladies, Umpqua Bank, Washington Federal, Wheels A Turnin', Wild River Brewing & Pizza Co. and You Dirty Dog.

Those who want to donate toward the 2017-18 school year Backpack Project are asked to contact the DHS office at 541-592-4149, x240 for details on how to help.

In describing the entire experience, Kiser stated, "It has been very gratifying, and we are hoping to double the number of backpacks again for next year."

Baker added, "It definitely takes a village. We have a wonderful community here."

Oregon Grand Master visits Masonic Kerby

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A very special event took place at the Masonic Kerby Belt Lodge #18 meeting Sept. 1.

The fraternal organization hosted Oregon Grand Master Arthur L. Borland and Worshipful Master Greg Gilbert from the Grants Pass lodge.

As is the custom, the evening began with a banquet provided by the Western Star Club, Order of the Eastern Star members, led by Hazel Griffith, Donna Thompson, Linda Oncay and Jean Shubert.

Because the Oregon Grand Master's year in office is extremely busy, it's very seldom that the Kerby Belt Lodge receives a visit.

During his recent visit, Borland shared that since June 4, he has already traveled around the state and across the continent to visit other jurisdictions, including Tampa, Florida; Vancouver, BC, Canada; Omaha, Nebraska; Boise, Idaho; and Casper, Wyoming.

Although Grand Master R. Michael Wick visited the Belt Lodge in 2014, no other Grand Master had visited the lodge since 1994.

Grand Masters routinely visit lodges to ascertain the condition of the lodge, how it's being run and to learn what can be done to assist the constituent lodges.

Grand Master Arthur Borland's theme for his term of office is "Traditions: Past, Present and Future."

He stated, "Traditions have brought folks into Masonry over the past 50 years. Americans have different values than in the 1950s. We need to keep up with them."

His goal for the year is to increase literacy in the South District, with special emphasis on scholarship programs and reading programs.

Lodges are encouraged to provide scholarships for students and the Grand Lodge will provide dollar for dollar matching funds up to \$1,000 for monies raised.

The United Grand Lodge also oversees Eastern Star, Job's Daughters, Rainbow Girls and DeMolay.

Borland said, "Life is not a spectator sport. Masonry is an active lifestyle. The problem we see with modern society is that electronic devices stifle social interaction."

Borland's focus will involve a new 501c3, "Oregon Masons' Youth Education and

Literacy Foundation."

Each lodge will continue to encourage literacy through programs like "Bikes for Books" and "Kindle for Books."

The Belt Lodge has long embraced the goals of working to keep Masonry alive and well, and giving as much support as possible to the younger generation coming up.

Belt Lodge programs include "Bikes for Books" for grade school students and scholarships programs for middle school students redeemable upon proof of college enrollment. This helps instill pride in youngsters and encourages long range goal setting.

The Belt Lodge is well-known for awarding scholarships to high school students.

Masonry is the oldest fraternal organization in the world, tracing back to the 1200s. Once restricted to those who built the grand cathedrals in Europe, with moral teachings and stories going back to Solomon's Temple, Masonry became a public organization in 1717.

In addition to his literacy goals, Borland will also strive to strengthen the efforts of the Veterans Committee which offers outreach services.



(Photo by Judy Hoyle, Illinois Valley News)

2016 Grants Pass Master Greg Gilbert (left), 2015 and 2017 Kerby Belt Lodge Master Randy Kent, 2016 Grand Master Arthur L. Borland and 2016 Kerby Belt Lodge Master Larry Stefanick.

"We will see what they need and look for ways to help," he said.

Borland summarized his beliefs, "Through Masonry, we teach citizenship and success in life. We need to look to the new generations, so they carry on this important work."

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1907 Water
\$2.59 ea.
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Bartlett Pears
\$1.29 lb.
Reg. \$1.59 lb.

Meat

Beeler's 1/4 Hams..... \$5.99 lb.
No nitrates or nitrites. Chop it up and toss on a salad. Reg. \$7.79 lb.

Pasture One Beef Hot Dogs... \$5.49 pkg.
Made with 100% grass fed and grass finished beef. Reg. \$6.49 pkg.

Frozen

Amy's Asstd. Pizza Bites..... \$3.89 ea.
Reg. \$5.19 ea.

Cascadian's Hash Browns & Country Potatoes..... \$2.69 ea.
Reg. \$3.79 ea.

Produce

Broccoli..... \$1.59 lb.
Reg. \$1.99 lb.

Honey Crisp Apples..... \$2.49 lb.
Reg. \$3.29 lb.

Valencia Oranges..... 99¢ lb.
Reg. \$1.19 lb.

Black Figs..... \$4.39 ea.
Reg. \$5.09 ea.

Cheese

New Culture Cashew Spread 8 oz. \$6.29 ea.
Reg. \$6.99 ea.

Garden Herbs, Pimento Paprika, Bacony Chipotle \$6.49 ea.
Reg. \$7.29 ea.

Kings Kimchi 14 oz. \$6.49 ea.
Reg. \$7.29 ea.

Spicy, Mild \$6.09 ea.
Reg. \$6.89 ea.

Mount Sterling Goat Cheese 8 oz. \$6.09 ea.
Reg. \$6.89 ea.

Raw Mild Cheddar, Country Jack, Mozzarella \$6.89 ea.

Groceries

Annie's Fruit Snacks
\$3.29 ea.
Reg. \$5.49

Asstd. Flavors POP Chips
\$2.09 ea.
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Asstd. Jovial Pasta Noodles
\$3.39 ea.
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Asstd. Jovial Tomatoes
\$3.39 ea.
Reg. \$4.79

Deli

Grill Menu

Garden Burger
With a side salad.
\$5.49 ea.
Reg. \$6.99

Grab-N-Go

Asstd. Almetta Mousses
\$1.99 ea.
Reg. \$2.49

Salad Case

Macaroni Salad
Mayo, mustard, seasonings, onion, tomato, olive, celery, bellpepper.
\$3.49 lb.
Reg. \$3.99

Breakfast Menu

2 Egg Scramble with toast
Your choice meat, cheese, vegetables and 2 pieces of toast.
\$4.09 ea.
Reg. \$4.69

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