

From Middle Earth to Eastern Oregon



LEFT: Actor James Luster, of the Traveling Lantern Children’s Theater in Portland, plays the part of Gollum for students at Sam Boardman Elementary School in Boardman on Tuesday. Luster, who played multiple roles, and one other actor presented the 45-minute production of “Bilbo’s Journey.” **RIGHT:** Mishelle Apalategui plays the part of Bilbo. The actors also presented the 45-minute production this week in Athena, Irrigon and at the Hermiston Public Library.

Staff photo by Kathy Aney

HERMISTON

Tree festival a hot ticket

By TAMMY MALGESINI
East Oregonian

With themes such as “Sweet Treat,” “Merry Force Be With You,” “A Home Full of Joy” and “The Antique Sportsman,” a little something for everyone is up for bid during the Hermiston Festival of Trees.

In addition to 11 large trees, which come with a multitude of gifts, the auction includes 13 small trees and 11 themed baskets. Also, the silent auction features 14 wreaths and 12 stockings.

The two-day holiday festival also includes Family Day, which offers a variety of activities for kids of all ages. The beautifully decorated trees will be available for viewing.

The festival’s gala event begins with tree viewing and wine tasting Saturday, Dec. 5 at 6 p.m. at the Hermiston Conference Center, 415 S. Highway 395. The dinner (prime rib or salmon by Simply Catering) is at 7 p.m. and the live auction starts at 8 p.m. Tickets for the 21-and-older event are \$35 each or \$250 for a table of eight.

People planning to attend are encouraged to buy their tickets early. The event has sold out the last few years, said John Spomer, co-chair of the event.

“It has become kind of a tradition to start the holiday season,” Spomer said.

The Hermiston Breakfast Kiwanis Club and the Good Shepherd Community Health Foundation divide proceeds from the gala event. Both organizations disperse the money through donations and scholarships.



EO file photo

A family poses for a photo with Santa Claus during Family Day at a past Festival of Trees at the Hermiston Conference Center.

“It all goes back to the community,” said Cathy Wamsley, who coordinates the large trees.

“The Gift of Giving,” a large tree sponsored by the Kiwanis Club and designed by Wamsley, provides another opportunity to spread the giving. The Kiwanis will match the purchase price by 50 percent, up to \$1,000, which will be given to the nonprofit organization of the buyer’s choice.

Family Day is Sunday, Dec. 6 from noon to 4 p.m. Organized by Soroptimist International of the Greater Hermiston Area, nearly 500 kids attended last year’s festivities. A \$5 per family suggested donation includes all the activities.

People can participate in everything from decorating cookies, making ornaments and other holiday-themed crafts to writing letters to Santa and having photos taken with the jolly ol’ elf. Also, stage entertainment helps set the holiday mood.

Soroptimist International

promotes education and leadership to transform the lives of women and girls. Money raised from Family Day will go towards the group’s Live Your Dream education and training awards.

Also, the winner of a special raffle tree, with a theme from the TV series “Paw Patrol,” will be announced at the close of Family Day. Tickets, which can be purchased throughout the two-day event, are \$10 each. Money raised from it will go to the school-based dental health program through InterMountain Education Service District.

Tickets for the auction/dinner can be purchased at the Hermiston Conference Center or the administrative offices at Good Shepherd Medical Center, 610 N.W. 11th St. People are welcome to come just for the auction to bid on items.

Contact Community Editor Tammy Malgesini at tmalgesini@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4539

BRIEFLY

Hermiston looking for public art consultant

HERMISTON — The city of Hermiston is looking for someone with a background in public art to assist the city in putting together a public art plan.

The city council gave city staff a green light on creating the plan during its Oct. 27 meeting after the Community Enhancement Committee chose public art as its next focus.

In order to create that plan, the city has released a request for qualifications for a consultant to define public art, determine the areas of the city most ripe for an art installation and suggest the type of art (mural, statue, etc.) that could be implemented there.

The consultant would also be expected to help present the plan to the public sometime next spring.

The request for qualifications can be found online at www.hermiston.or.us/public-notice/rfq-citywide-public-art-plan. The city is offering \$9,000 to complete the project. Applications are due Jan. 8, 2016. The anticipated start date for the project is Feb. 1, 2016.

Crossroads offers art as gifts

BAKER CITY — Unique art gifts are available during the Gift of Art at Crossroads Community Art Center.

The exhibit opens with Christmas at the Crossroads Friday at 5:30 p.m. at 2020 Auburn Ave., Baker City. People can visit with the featured artists and browse local artwork for purchase.

In addition, a Make It and Take It Family Craft Day is Saturday, Dec. 5 from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Baker Events Center, 2600 East St., Baker City. Every kid will have the opportunity to select from seven stations to make five different holiday crafts. The cost is \$5. Bring the entire family for holiday craft fun.

Regular hours are Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, visit www.crossroads-arts.org or call 541-523-5369.

Dive into aquatic center savings

PENDLETON — Pendleton Parks & Recreation has just the stocking stuffer for you.



Season passes for the Pendleton Aquatic Center are available for a 10 percent discount Dec. 1-23. In addition, people can purchase punch cards for the Roy Raley Ice Rink.

For more information, call 541-276-8100 or visit www.pendletonparksandrec.com. Buy the passes Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the parks office, 865 Tutuilla Road, Pendleton.

Heppner lights up holidays

HEPPNER — A Parade of Lights will kick off the holiday season in Heppner.

The event is Thursday, Dec. 3 beginning at 5:30 p.m. It will run down Main Street between Center and May streets. Pictures can be taken with Santa Claus from 6-7 p.m. at Heppner Family Foods, 238 N. Main St. Also, following the parade, around 6 p.m., Home Health and Hospice will host a “Lights of Hope” ceremony in memory of loved ones at St. Patrick’s Senior Center, 190 N. Main St., Heppner.

For more information, call the Heppner Chamber of Commerce at 541-676-5536.

Students support relief nursery

PILOT ROCK — The leadership class at Pilot Rock Junior High is hosting a diaper drive for the Pioneer Relief Nursery.

The Pendleton nonprofit organization helps prevent child abuse and neglect by early intervention and to help preserve families by strengthening parents and preserving families by offering support services.

Donations of size large diapers or pull-ups can be dropped off during regular school hours through Tuesday, Dec. 22 at Pilot Rock Jr./Sr. High School, 101 N.E. Cherry St. For pick-up service, call 541-443-2671.

For more info about Pioneer Relief Nursery, visit www.pioneerreliefnursery.net or call 541-215-1017.

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