

Find a Thanksgiving meal near you

By TAMMY MALGESINI
East Oregonian

A number of community organizations want to make sure people have an opportunity to share a holiday meal with others.

The Thanksgiving meals are free of charge to anyone who wants to attend. In addition, there are still some volunteer opportunities available for those who want to help in serving others or giving back to the community.

Cathy Stolz, a longtime volunteer at the Community Fellowship Dinner in Hermiston, said it's exciting to see multi-generational families helping at the meal. The volunteers include mothers, fathers, siblings and grandparents in the kitchen or hot line and youngsters serving a piece of pie or greeting people as they arrive for the meal.

"It's fun to work with so many different people and to see their enthusiasm," Stolz said about volunteers. "They are taking the Thanksgiving spirit to another level of giving back."

Free Thanksgiving Day meals include:

PENDLETON

The Salvation Army Pendleton Corps will serve its annual Thanksgiving Day meal from noon to 2 p.m. at 150 S.E. Emigrant Ave.

The free holiday meal is open to the public. In addition, food delivery service is available for homebound seniors or citizens with disabilities.

For more information, to volunteer or have a meal delivered, call 541-276-3369.

HERMISTON

The first of two holiday season Community Fellowship Dinners is Thanksgiving Day from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Hermiston Senior Center, 435 W. Orchard Ave., located on the Umatilla County Fairgrounds. In



Sam Johnson and his wife, Karina, serve a Thanksgiving Day meal to another volunteer during the 2015 Community Fellowship Dinner at the Hermiston Senior Center.

addition to the on-site meal, delivery service and to-go meals can be packaged for pick-up for those unable to attend the dinner.

Everyone is invited to help with the set-up party Wednesday from 1-4 p.m. Volunteer shifts during the meal run between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.

While the meals are free, financial donations to help with the Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners can be given to local churches, dropped in a donation basket at the meal or mailed to CFD, P.O. Box 1551, Hermiston, OR 97838.

For meal delivery service or a ride, call 541-567-3013 through Wednesday. On Thanksgiving Day, call the senior center at 541-567-3582. For questions, call the Community Fellowship Dinner board at 541-303-5886.

BOARDMAN

The Community Thanksgiving Celebration, in its eighth year, invites everyone to enjoy a free holiday meal.

The event begins with a short praise service at 1:30 p.m. at the Boardman Senior Center, 100 Tatone St. The free dinner is served from

2-4 p.m.

After volunteering at the Hermiston meal, Boardman resident Jane Akers dreamed about the possibility of a similar meal in her hometown. Teaming up with Penny Jurney, the duo gathered support and got the green light to organize the first one less than two months before Thanksgiving in 2009. Several churches, the Boardman Chamber of Commerce, the city of Boardman, area businesses and many individuals have all supported the meal since its inception.

For more information, call Akers at 541-481-5511, Teresa Parsons at 503-724-8823 or the chamber at 541-481-3014. On Thanksgiving, call 541-481-3257.

HEPPNER

Area churches are offering their annual community Thanksgiving dinner Thursday at 1 p.m. at All Saints Episcopal Church, 460 N. Gale St.

Everyone is invited to enjoy the free meal in the fellowship of others. Those attending are invited to begin a favorite dish to share, but it's not required.

For more information, call Rev. Tony Long-Drew at 541-676-5581.

MILTON-FREEWATER

A community Thanksgiving dinner will be served Thursday from 4-6 p.m. at the First Christian Church, 518 S. Main St.

Open to everyone, the free meal features turkey and all the fixings. For more information, call 541-938-3854.

PILOT ROCK

Archie's Restaurant will again host a free Thanksgiving Day meal Thursday from noon to 3 p.m. at 194 W. Main St.

The gathering serves as a fundraiser for the Pilot Rock Food Pantry. People are encouraged to donate non-perishable food items or money to help provide food for needy people in the community.

For more information or to make a donation for the food pantry, call 541-443-1205.

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

More students are homeless than last year, state says

Umatilla, Morrow counties below the state average

"Our children should be thinking about their homework and playtime, and not worrying about where they will sleep at night."

— Bill Hall, Lincoln County commissioner

SALEM (AP) — More students in Oregon are homeless than the number tallied last year, a disturbing trend that has now gone on for three years, state education officials said Tuesday.

The Department of Education said 21,340 students, or 3.7 percent of the K-12 population in public schools, don't have a fixed and adequate nighttime residence.

Reacting to the report, the Stable Homes for Oregon Families Coalition urged the Legislature to protect tenants at risk of losing their homes because of eviction and severe rent increases.

The number of homeless students increased by more than 1,100 from the previous year, the new report said.

In some districts, 20 percent or more of their students count as homeless by the federal definition, the education department said. Unemployment and a lack of family-wage jobs and affordable housing in rural areas have contributed to the rise, it said.

Those trends are felt in rural areas along with urban ones, although Umatilla and Morrow county schools have generally stayed below the state average.

Only 1.95 percent of Pendleton students are considered homeless while Hermiston's student population is 0.85 percent homeless, although both are slight increases from the year before.

Several school districts — Lone, Helix and Pilot Rock — had no homeless students.

On the flip side, the Ukiah School District has

the highest share of the homeless population in Umatilla County at 6.45 percent.

Lincoln County Commissioner Bill Hall said rural communities have been hit hard, with nearly one in seven students experiencing homelessness for part of the 2015-16 school year in his county.

"Our children should be thinking about their homework and playtime, and not worrying about where they will sleep at night," Hall said on Facebook. "We can do more to protect kids and families from experiencing homelessness in Oregon."

State law allows landlords to evict families at any time without stating a reason and prohibits local governments from enacting rent stabilization measures, the Stable Homes for Oregon Families Coalition said. The United States Conference of Mayors has identified eviction as a leading cause of homelessness, especially for families with children, the coalition said.

The instability that homelessness causes often leads to school absences and falling behind, Marti Heard, homeless program liaison for Portland Public Schools, was quoted as saying by the coalition. That can jeopardize future college or career success, Heard said.

Christmas tree permits available on Umatilla National Forest

East Oregonian

Christmas tree permits are now available on the Umatilla National Forest, and fourth-graders are once again eligible for a free permit through the national Every Kid in a Park initiative.

Permits cost \$5, limit one per household, and are only valid on national forest land. They can be purchased

at any of the four Umatilla Ranger District offices in Heppner, Ukiah, Walla Walla or Pomeroy, Washington, or at the supervisor's office in Pendleton.

Participating local businesses will also be selling tree permits, including: Bi-Mart in Pendleton and Hermiston; Southgate Mini-Mart, Pendleton; Ace Hardware, Hermiston; Zip Zone,

Milton-Freewater; Athena Grocery; Heppner Shell; Mentzer and Elliott and J&D Food Mart, Pilot Rock; and Rhode's Supply, Ukiah.

Fourth-graders can receive a free permit by printing a paper voucher from www.everykidinapark.gov, and presenting the voucher at any national forest office. Free permits will not be issued by local vendors.

Christmas trees must be cut at least 50 feet away from any road, and the maximum height for trees is 14 feet. Trees cannot be cut on private land, in wilderness areas, designated campgrounds, active timber sales or existing tree plantations.

For more information on permits and regulations, call the Forest Service office in Pendleton at 541-278-3716.

BRIEFLY

Library closes Thanksgiving weekend

HERMISTON — In observance of the Thanksgiving holiday, the Hermiston Public Library will be closed Thursday through Sunday.

The library, located at 235 E. Gladys Ave., will resume its regular hours next week. It's open Monday through Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Friday and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For more information, call 541-567-2882 or visit www.hermistonlibrary.us.

Santa cruises in for annual breakfast

PENDLETON — St. Nick is coming to town for the annual Breakfast With Santa.

Kicking off the holiday season, the event features a pancake breakfast, crafts, a helium balloon and Santa's mailbox. In addition, kids can tell Santa their wish list and pose for photos with the jolly ol' elf. The event is Saturday from 8-10:30 a.m. at the Pendleton Recreation Center, 510 S.W. Dorion Ave. Sponsored by

Pendleton Parks & Recreation, the cost is \$3 per person.

For more information, call 541-276-8100.

Holiday season shines in Boardman

BOARDMAN — A musical Christmas light show, living Nativity and a visit by Santa Claus are featured in the Boardman Christmas Lighting.

The holiday event is Wednesday, Nov. 30 at 6 p.m. at the SAGE Center, 101 Olson Road, Boardman. In addition, cookies and hot chocolate will be served. (NOTE: Due to a change in venue, the wrong location is listed in the "Home for the Holidays" calendar.)

Celebrate the start of the holiday season by watching a holiday skit by area church groups and listening to local preschoolers sing some favorite Christmas songs. Also, carolers from Riverside Jr./Sr. High School will roam the exhibit hall while guests enjoy refreshments and the opportunity to visit with Santa. Be sure to stop and watch the musical light

show outside near the SAGE Center entrance.

For more information, call 541-481-3014 or go to www.visitsage.com/event/153.

AAUW meeting features wine tasting

PENDLETON — An opportunity for wine tasting is available during the AAUW December general meeting.

Everyone is invited to the gathering, which is Thursday, Dec. 1 at 7 p.m. in Great Pacific Wine & Coffee Co., 403 S. Main St., Pendleton. The wine tasting fee is \$10.

The mission of AAUW (formerly known as the American Association of University Women) is to assist in bettering the lives

of women and girls. For more information, contact karenallen1965@gmail.com or visit www.aauw.org.

Heppner lights up holiday season

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

The event is Thursday, Dec. 1 beginning at 5:30 p.m. It will run down Main Street between Center and May streets. The parade will line up at 5 p.m. at Green Feed & Seed, 242 W. Linden Way, Heppner.

Also, before and following the parade, a Merchant Open House is planned in downtown businesses.

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

School board evaluates superintendent early

East Oregonian

In an unusual move, the Pendleton School Board evaluated superintendent Andy Kovach less than five months into his tenure.

The board met with Kovach for almost two hours in a closed-door session Monday night before re-opening the meeting and taking no action.

According to board chairwoman Debbie McBee, the board called for an early evaluation to give the first-time superintendent extra input.

"Every year, there is a predictable process that the school board follows when evaluating the superintendent," she said in a statement Tuesday. "With a brand new superintendent, like we have this year, we include extra steps to provide feedback and support for him in his

growth in his new role. Last night's meeting was part of that process of feedback. We had a productive conversation between the board members and our superintendent, and the feedback was well received by Andy. His mid-year evaluation will be conducted on schedule in January."

Kovach was hired in March and started working for the Pendleton School District in July, replacing retired superintendent Jon Peterson.

Before accepting the position in Pendleton, Kovach's most recent stop in a long career as a teacher and administrator in Harney and Malheur counties was at Ontario High School, where he served as principal.

As superintendent, Kovach earns \$127,500 per year.



Kovach

SUBMIT COMMUNITY NEWS

Submit information to: community@eastoregonian.com or drop off to the attention of Tammy Malgesini at 333 E. Main St., Hermiston or Renee Struthers at 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton. Call 541-564-4539 or 541-966-0818 with questions.

PENDLETON CENTER for the ARTS



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2016 Christmas Spirit Award

Do you know someone who exemplifies the spirit of Christmas by giving of themselves to others all year?

The Good Shepherd Community Health Foundation invites you to nominate that person for our twenty-first annual "Christmas Spirit Award."

Nominations may be made by calling the Foundation at 667-3419 to receive a nomination form, or online at gshealth.org/foundation. Please send completed nomination forms by December 9, 2016 to Good Shepherd Community Health Foundation, 610 NW 11th St, Hermiston, OR 97838. Nominations may also be submitted via email to ccoazad@gshealth.org.



GOOD SHEPHERD COMMUNITY HEALTH FOUNDATION