

HERMISTON



File photo
Volunteers Dick Hensley, second from left, and Astrid Hensley give plates of food to Chloe and Micah Madore on the serving line during the 2016 Community Fellowship Dinner. The free meal will be held on Thanksgiving at Hermiston High School.

Community Thanksgiving dinner carves out new venue

By TAMMY MALGESINI
East Oregonian

The Community Fellowship Dinner in Hermiston is gearing up for the 2017 season at a new venue.

Due to the construction of a new senior center, the free community Thanksgiving and Christmas meals will be held in the main commons at Hermiston High School, 600 S. First St. The first of the twice-yearly holiday meals will be served Thanksgiving Day from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The traditional meal features turkey and all the trimmings, side dishes and desserts.

Chairman Gary Humphreys wants to make sure people know the dinners are still available to everyone in the community. Signs will be posted in town and on the school's grounds to help guide people to the meal.

The event's committee is excited about the change in venue. The high school offers a far superior kitchen as well as additional space for guests to eat, said Humphreys and kitchen manager Jan Cassens.

Also the committee's vice chairwoman, Cassens called the kitchen facilities "magnificent." She said it will substantially cut back on preparation time.

"We think we can grow here," Cassens said. "At the senior center, we could only seat 200 at a time. If we had more come in they would have to wait for a seat. We won't have that problem now."

The idea behind the meal began in 1988 when a Hermiston man, who has requested to remain anonymous, opened his home to 30 people on Thanksgiving. After experiencing many holidays by himself, he wanted to offer food and fellowship to others who might be alone. The meal expanded and moved to the Hermiston Senior Center.

In 1990, Laurie Ball (who later married Joe Kiser after his wife died) volunteered at the Thanksgiving meal and then took the reins coordinating the Christmas dinner. A board of directors was created in the early 1990s to help guide the holiday meal ministry. By the beginning of the new millennium, more than 500 dinners were served each Thanksgiving, which increased to 700-800. The Christmas event historically provides fewer meals, although 600-700 ate at the

Other free Thanksgiving meals

PENDLETON

- Thursday, Nov. 23; 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at
- The Salvation Army, 150 S.E. Emigrant Ave.

Volunteers are still needed for meal preparation, kitchen duties, clean-up and meal deliveries. In addition, food donations, including turkeys, side dishes and desserts are needed. For more information or to volunteer, contact Darcy Coleman at 541-276-3369 or darcy.coleman@usw.salvationarmy.org.

- Thursday, Nov. 23; 1-5 p.m.
- Episcopal Church of the Redeemer, 241 S.E. Second St.

The Fall Harvest Celebration features a free turkey dinner with all the fixings and dessert. Those attending are invited to bring a side dish or dessert to share, but it's not required. For more information, contact redeemerchurch1897@gmail.com or 541-276-3809.

ADAMS

- Sunday, Nov. 19; 5 p.m.
- Adams Friendship Center.

The Adams Ladies Club will provide turkey, dressing, rolls, mashed potatoes and drinks. Those attending are asked to bring a salad, casserole or dessert to share. For more information, visit www.cityofadamsoregon.com.

BOARDMAN

- Thursday, Nov. 23; 1:30-4 p.m.
- Boardman Senior Center, 100 Tatone St.

In its ninth year, the Community Thanksgiving Dinner invites everyone to enjoy the meal. Praise service at 1:30 p.m. and food will be served

2011 and 2012 meals.

Humphreys, Cassens and other longtime volunteers Tom Marks and Cathy Stolz said Ball-Kiser possessed strong leadership skills needed for the meal's growth. The Hermiston woman, in declining health the past few years, suffered several strokes that eventually led to her death June 19 at the age of 64.

"She genuinely cared about every person on her team, every volunteer and, most of all, every recipient of a Community Fellowship Dinner," Stolz said.

In addition, Marks said Ball-Kiser was instrumental in mentoring a group in Boardman in developing a community meal in their city.

A volunteer set-up party for the Community Fellowship Dinner is 7 a.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 22. If that's too early for some folks, volunteers may come later as there will be plenty to do in preparation for the

meal. Also, volunteers are needed Thanksgiving Day, with tasks including greeters, servers, parking attendants and delivery drivers. Whether volunteering for a short shift or all day, any help is greatly appreciated. To assist with planning, organizers encourage volunteers to call or send an email.

ECHO

- Saturday, Nov. 18; noon-2 p.m.
- Echo Community Methodist Church, 21 N. Bonanza St.

Everyone is invited to enjoy good food and good company at the community Thanksgiving dinner. For more information, visit www.facebook.com/echochurch.

IRRIGON

- Monday, Nov. 20; 5-7 p.m.
- Sub Zero Restaurant & Lounge, 100 W. Highway 730.

The free meal is for Irrigon residents in need. Food will be served while supplies last. For more information, call 541-922-4374.

MILTON-FREEWATER

- Thursday Nov. 23; 4-6 p.m.
- First Christian Church, 518 S. Main St.

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

PILOT ROCK

- Thursday Nov. 23; noon
- Archie's Restaurant, 194 W. Main St.

In its seventh year, the restaurant offers a free meal to anyone who needs a place to go. As a fundraiser for the Pilot Rock Food Pantry, people are invited to donate cash or non-perishable food items to help those in need. For more information, visit www.facebook.com/Archie's-Restaurant-119673764744507.

HERMISTON

City council denies \$10,000 sewer credit for EOTEC

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

The city may co-own the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center, but councilors weren't showing any favoritism Monday when they denied the EOTEC board's request for a \$10,000 credit on its sewer bill.

In September the center switched to irrigating with water from Stanfield Irrigation District, but prior to that EOTEC used city of Hermiston water for construction, irrigation and dust control. EOTEC has paid \$14,000 in sewer charges for Hermiston water used at the facility this year.

City Manager Byron Smith, who represents the city on the EOTEC board, said the city charges sewer rates in conjunction with how much water a customer uses, assuming that most of it drains into Hermiston's wastewater system to be recycled by the city. However, most of the EOTEC water did not return to the city's sewer system.

"It didn't need (to be) treated (at the city's recycled water facility), it just went into the ground," Smith said.

In light of that, EOTEC asked that \$10,000 of its paid bill be turned into a credit for \$10,000 in future sewer payments.

Councilor Doug Primmer disagreed.

"We don't charge people less in the summertime when they're watering their lawns," he said. "That water doesn't go to the sewer."

Smith said water customers can pay to install a separate water meter on their irrigation systems if they do not want sewer charges attached to that portion of their water usage.

In the end Primmer, Lori

Davis and Manuel Gutierrez outvoted Rod Hardin and Clara Beas Fitzgerald and denied the credit.

In another water-related issue, the council approved a \$746,798 construction bid by C&E Construction to extend the regional water system to new data centers planned by VaData (a subsidiary of Amazon) on Westland Road and near Lind Road. VaData is paying the cost of the improvements to the system. Smith said the bid — the only one the city received — is more than \$200,000 higher than engineers had estimated, but VaData was willing to pay the higher price to keep construction on schedule, and C&E had done good work on the system before.

On Monday the city also approved a resolution allowing businesses to count city parking lots on Orchard Avenue toward their off-street parking requirements.

City planner Clint Spencer said the two lots, comprised of 60 parking spaces on either side of Southwest Third Street, seem to have been built mostly for the Umatilla County Fair, which has moved. Several homes and offices along Third Street are zoned for commercial use and up for lease or for sale, and Spencer said it made sense to allow business opening within 500 feet of the city lots to count five spaces of those lots to meet their minimum off-street parking requirements.

The council also approved an updated agreement with the city of Umatilla to continue providing building inspector services, accepted a portion of Highland Avenue from Umatilla County and adjusted its Transient Room Tax formula to appropriate 3 percent of the tax toward

a visitor center run by the Hermiston Chamber of Commerce. Mayor David Drotzmann said the chamber has not yet found a new home for its offices and the visitor center in light of the city's decision to take over management of the Hermiston Conference Center on Jan. 1.

The council's regular meeting was preceded by a work session with Hermiston Police Department Chief Jason Edmiston and District Attorney Dan Primus about changes in drug laws. Possession of a "usable amount" of methamphetamine, cocaine, heroin and other hard drugs under two grams is now a misdemeanor in certain situations. The offense is still a felony, however, if the suspect has a previous felony conviction, other drug convictions or the circumstances upgrade it to a "commercial offense."

Primus said those details seem to have escaped many people, including offenders who have told the officer arresting them: "What's the big deal? It's just a misdemeanor." Some of them were surprised to discover they were still facing felony charges based on their criminal history.

Edmiston and Primus both said the law was creating extra work for law enforcement and the district attorney's office as they had to look up the defendant's criminal history and take other extra steps. Instead of being tested in the field, confiscated drugs are now being sent to the Oregon State Police crime lab to be tested and weighed, a process that takes 10 to 11 months because of backlogs.

"It is quite a few more steps or hoops to jump through," Primus said.

ATHENA

Undersheriff says mother poisoned daughter

East Oregonian

Umatilla County Undersheriff Jim Littlefield reported Roxy Brook Pridgen of Athena tried to poison and kill her daughter.

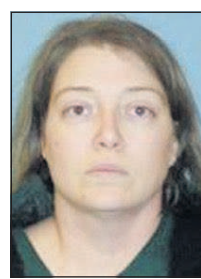
Littlefield in a written statement said Pridgen, 36, reportedly has a mental illness and takes prescription medications.

"Pridgen admittedly placed a quantity of a prescribed drug into a beverage and gave it to her juvenile daughter, intending to cause her death because they were arguing and fighting," according to a written statement from

Littlefield. "The juvenile became ill after consuming the beverage."

He also reported the case remains under investigation.

According to circuit court records, Pridgen tried to kill her daughter on Oct. 29. The district attorney's office charged Pridgen with attempted murder during an arraignment Monday in Pendleton. Circuit Judge Jon Lieuallen set bail in the case at \$250,000. Her next hearing is Monday in



Pridgen

Pendleton.

Oregon State Police arrested Pridgen on Sunday evening for driving under the influence of intoxicants and released her to the sheriff's office. Deputy Trevor Limburg

then arrested Pridgen for the attempted murder. She remains in the jail.

State police listed Pridgen's home as Weston, which the East Oregonian reported. The sheriff's office and court records show she lives in Athena.

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.

CONCEALED CARRY PERMIT CLASSES

NOVEMBER 17TH • 1:00 & 6:00 PM

Best Western
2255 S Hwy 395, Hermiston
Multi-state: \$80 or Oregon only: \$45.00

Required class to get an Oregon or multi-State permit. Class includes:

- Fingerprinting & photo
- Oregon gun laws
- Washington gun laws
- Interstate travel laws
- Interaction with law enforcement
- Use of deadly force
- Firearm / ammunition / holster selection

360.921.2071

FirearmTrainingNW.com : FirearmTrainingNW@gmail.com

The East Oregonian will not publish on

Thanksgiving Day

due to the postal holiday.

Look for your Holiday Edition on Wednesday, Nov. 22

- Home for the Holidays special section
- A guide to the upcoming Farm Fair
- Wednesday and Thursday comics, features, puzzles and TV listings
- **BLACK FRIDAY INSERTS:**
 - Big 5 Sporting Goods
 - Big Lots
 - Bi-Mart
 - D&B Supply
 - Harbor Freight Tools
 - Home Depot
 - Rite Aid
 - Sears
 - U.S. Cellular
 - Walgreens
 - Walmart