

HERMISTON

Choir students to travel to Disneyland during spring break

Students raised nearly \$20,000 for the trip

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN
East Oregonian

Some of Hermiston High School’s choral students will be taking a trip to Disneyland this spring, but they won’t just be enjoying the rides and sunshine. The group of 31 students will be working with Disney production teams and vocal coaches, as well as touring a major university and getting some choir lessons.

The students will head south the last week of March, during their spring break.

Choir director Jordan Bemrose-Rust said she has done this specific trip five times, either as a student or instructor.

She said the trip will be a formative experience for many students.

“We’ll have fun, but the purpose of the trip is educational,” she said. “It gives them some performance opportunities beyond Hermiston.”

While in California, the students will perform onstage at Disneyland, and participate in a recording



Hermiston Choir students and their instructor, Jordan Bemrose-Rust, accept a check from Tom Denchel Ford. Back row, from left: Cody Henderson, Denchel, Kennedy, Bemrose-Rust, Marco Lopez. Front row: Destiny Van Fossen, Hailey Roberts, Crystal Alvarez, William Kern, Madison Fricke.

session in a studio. “They will get the music, and they’ve never seen it before,” she said. “They’ll sight read it, and then the person there will rehearse it with them. Then they’ll

record it, good, bad or ugly.” Then, she said, the students will get to hear their music played back, over an animated film. They will visit University of Southern California, where they will receive a clinic from the head of the choral department. She said some other musicians who live in the area will also come and speak to the students.

folk. The performance will be on March 28, and Bemrose-Rust said they hope to live-stream it on their Facebook page. The students have spent the last several months fundraising for the trip, selling items like Krispy Kreme donuts, Yankee Candles and flower bulbs, as well as hosting events like a car wash and a 50/50 raffle at football games. Bemrose-Rust said the students have done a total of 22 fundraisers since June 2017. “We’ve been busy,” said freshman William Kern. Their largest fundraiser, which netted more than \$5,000, was the DRIVE 4 UR School event, in which they partnered with Tom Denchel Ford. Students were asked to go out and find people to test-drive various cars. For each test-drive, Denchel Ford donated \$20 to the choir program. Denchel and Nick Kennedy from the dealership stopped by Hermiston High School to present the check to the choir students on Monday. In total, students raised nearly \$20,000 for the trip. Contact Jayati Ramakrishnan at jramakrishnan@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4534

Ballots due Tuesday, Umatilla County voter turnout below 25 percent

PENDLETON — Umatilla County Elections Division reported only 23.2 percent of around 42,000 voters have returned ballots for Tuesday’s special election. Voters are deciding on Ballot Measure 101, a tax on health care insurance premiums to fund Medicaid expansion. Ballots must be in a drop box by the time polls close at 8 p.m. Tuesday. Umatilla County elections stated it is too late to mail ballots and postmarks do not count in Oregon. “Remind your friends, family and neighbors of the upcoming deadline to cast your vote,” the division urged in a written statement Monday morning. “Let’s give a voice to Umatilla County in Eastern Oregon.” Morrow County mailed 5,904 ballots, county clerk Bobbi Childers said, and her department has accepted 1,656. That 28 percent turnout is near the statewide average, according to data from the Oregon Secretary of State. “I would have thought that our numbers across the state would be stronger,” Childers said.

Montana teen in jail on drug charges

HERMISTON — Umatilla County sheriff’s deputies made an arrest and seized cash, cocaine and marijuana when they found a Montana man on a drug run. The sheriff’s office in a written statement reported that reserve deputies Jerry Trujillo and Hector Ortiz were patrolling late Saturday in the area of Powerline Road and Country Lane near Hermiston when they spotted two vehicles on the side of the road, a 2005 Chevrolet Equinox and a 2007 Subaru Impreza, both with Montana plates. “When the deputies stopped to check on the vehicles and occupants, they saw a clear plastic bag of white powder inside the Equinox,” according to the statement. Trujillo spoke to the driver, Eric Dunbar, 18, from Helena, Montana, who said the powder was cocaine, according to the sheriff’s office. The deputies detained Dunbar and three occupants from the two vehicles: Koby Martin, 19, Faith Scow, 20, and Shayne Scow, 18. The deputies found the following: 5.3 ounces of cocaine, 13.1 ounces of hash/butane honey oil, 7 grams of crack/rock cocaine, and almost 5.9 pounds of marijuana, along with \$2,400 cash. Deputies booked Dunbar into the county jail, Pendleton, for delivery of marijuana, a misdemeanor, and possession and delivery of cocaine, felonies. Undersheriff Jim Littlefield said deputies released the others, but they could face charges after the case goes to grand jury.

Stolen vehicle chase ends in parking lot

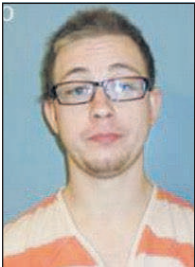
HERMISTON — Umatilla Police arrested a 26 year-old woman early Sunday morning, after a chase starting in Hermiston led officers through both towns. Hope Morasch, of Hermiston, was lodged in the Umatilla County Jail on charges of Unauthorized Use of a Vehicle, Reckless Driving, Attempting to Elude a Police Officer and Unlawful Possession of a Firearm. On Sunday around 2 a.m., Hermiston Police were informed that a Kia sedan had been stolen from a residence on Southwest 11th Street. The vehicle owner said he started the car to warm it, then briefly went inside. He said when he came back out, the car had been stolen. While a Hermiston officer was on the way to make a report, Umatilla Police found the vehicle. They tried to make a traffic stop, but the driver did not comply, and Umatilla Police and the Umatilla County Sheriff’s Office chased the car back into Hermiston. Morasch stopped in the Hermiston Police Department parking lot and was arrested. She also had a handgun inside her purse. The stolen vehicle was returned to the owner.

BRIEFLY

Hermiston officers were not directly involved with the pursuit. There were no injuries or property damage from the chase. Lt. Randy Studebaker reminded vehicle owners to lock up their cars, take keys and hide valuables when leaving a car unattended. “The majority of the vehicles reported stolen in Hermiston were left unlocked, with the keys in the ignition or available nearby,” he said.

Dayton pleads guilty to manslaughter, abuse of a corpse

PENDLETON — Conor Michael Dayton is heading to prison for the 2017 killing of Marcos Gutierrez Rodriguez of Milton-Freewater. Dayton, 23, pleaded guilty Thursday in Umatilla County Circuit Court, Pendleton, to first-degree manslaughter and first-degree abuse of a corpse. The state charged Dayton with murder and corpse abuse for killing Rodriguez under a Milton-Freewater bridge in May 2017 and then burning the body to cover up the crime. Dayton pleaded not guilty to those charges. The plea deal Dayton made means he avoids the murder rap, which carries a minimum sentence of 25 years, for the less severe manslaughter charge. But the deal comes with a sentencing recommendation from the Umatilla County District Attorney’s Office for 20 years in prison, according to the plea petition, twice the mandatory minimum for manslaughter. The petition states the stiffer sentence is partly because Dayton committed the corpse abuse to hide the killing. Court records also show Dayton’s sentencing for the crimes is in April. He remains in the county jail in Pendleton on a \$10 million bond.



Dayton

Hermiston police seek help to find culprits in Masonic Lodge burglary

HERMISTON — Hermiston Police are requesting the help of locals to find the culprits in the burglary of items from the local Masonic Lodge late last year. Officers don’t know how many people were involved, but in November of 2017, the suspect(s) entered the lodge and stole electronics, as well as some items specific to masonry. Hermiston Police Chief Jason Edmiston said some of the items have been recovered, but officers are still searching for the culprits. Edmiston said the department deliberately waited to inform people about the theft, and that they couldn’t comment further on the active investigation. Anyone with information is asked to call Lt. Randy Studebaker at 541-667-5095.

Man injured in rollover crash near Pasco

PASCO — Drug or alcohol use is suspected in a one-vehicle rollover that resulted in the injury of a Milton-Freewater man late Friday night near Pasco. Alan E. Roblero, 30, who was cited for driving under the influence and negligent driving, was transported to Lourdes Medical Center, Pasco, following the crash. Roblero was booked into Franklin County Jail in Pasco on Saturday and then was released after posting bail. State trooper A. Martinez reported Roblero, who was wearing a seatbelt, was driving westbound in a 2004 Honda Civic Friday at 11:50 p.m. on Interstate 82, just west of Highway 395 when he lost control of the vehicle. After entering the median, the vehicle rolled before coming to rest on its wheels. Police report the vehicle was totaled.

Pendleton City Council to hold constituent outreach meeting

PENDLETON — Members of the Pendleton City Council will meet directly with constituents to discuss city issues, according to a press release. “The purpose of the outreach is to provide updates on progress toward meeting council goals including sustainably funding city assets and infrastructure, economic development, increasing housing opportunities, and to answer constituent questions and hear ideas on how the city and council can best meet the needs of Pendleton residents,” the press release states. Councilors Scott Fairley, McKennon McDonald and Dale Primmer will host the meeting at the Hamley Cafe, 8 S.E. Court Ave., on Feb. 10 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Fairley and McDonald held a similar constituent meeting in November. If a member of the public has a question but can’t make the meeting, they can email McDonald at mckennon.mcdonald@ci.pendleton.or.us, Fairley at scott.fairley@ci.pendleton.or.us, or Primmer at dale.primmer@ci.pendleton.or.us.

Dinner raises money for Gale Gorrord

STANFIELD — A lasagna dinner and dessert auction will help raise money for Gale Gorrord, who was recently injured in an automobile crash. The benefit event is Friday from 5-7 p.m. at the Stanfield Community Center, 225 W. Roosevelt Ave., Stanfield. The cost is by donation. For more information, call 541-449-1332.

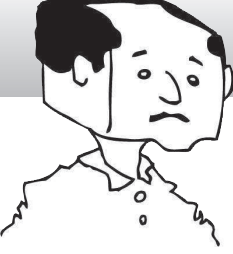

Bazaar benefits Journey of Compassion

PENDLETON — A bazaar featuring crafts, home business products and more will help raise money for a mission trip to Guatemala. Tanna King and her 12-year-old daughter are raising money for the Journey of Compassion. The event is Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Pendleton Convention Center, 1601 Westgate. There is no admission charge. Food will be available for purchase. Also, from 1-2 p.m., Moana and Iron Man will be on hand. For more information, contact King at tannaward6@gmail.com or 541-304-9255

McFundraiser supports Rocky Heights Elementary students

HERMISTON — Rocky Raccoon, principal Jerad Farley, and teachers and staff from Rocky Heights Elementary School will be manning the counter at the Hermiston McDonald’s. The special McTeacher’s Night will help raise money for the Rocky Raccoon Resource Fund. The program provides sports and recreation scholarships as well as necessities to Rocky Heights students in need. The McFundraiser is Tuesday, Jan. 30 from 5-7 p.m. at 1320 N. First St., Hermiston. The crew will greet customers, take orders and run the drive-thru. McDonald’s will donate 15 percent of all sales during the two-hour period to the school’s special fund. In addition tip jars will be available, with 100 percent of the donations going to Rocky Heights. For more information, contact Maria Duron at 541-667-6036 or maria.duron@hermiston.k12.or.us.

Briefs are compiled from staff and wire reports, and press releases. Email press releases to news@eastoregonian.com



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DEQ Public Hearing

DEQ Proposes to Modify a Standard Air Permit for Portland General Electric

When: Thursday, February 22, 2018
Information session 6:00 p.m.,
hearing begins 6:30 p.m.

Where: Port of Morrow, Well Springs Room
2 Marine Dr., Boardman, Oregon

More Information at:
www.oregon.gov/deq/Get-Involved/Pages/Public-Notices.aspx