

GIVING: Dinner kicking off the Red Kettle Campaign doubled in attendance

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row Counties reported total revenue of \$200,821 in 2013 but a net loss of \$26,370, according to its tax filings, which are public records because it is a nonprofit organization. The most recent filing available from Guidestar.org, which specializes in gathering and providing data on nonprofits, shows the local United Way had total revenue in 2015 of \$241,270 and cleared \$23,333.

Nicholson said donations are returning to better levels but the days of United Way of Umatilla and Morrow Counties seeing \$500,000 in revenue are done.

"There's just too much competition, so many causes," she said.

The Salvation Army in Pendleton is feeling that pinch. Capt. Ricky Scruggs said revenue is down \$60,000 from last year. But the dinner kicking off the Red Kettle Campaign doubled in attendance from 2017 and sold out. Scruggs attributed that to the board stepping up to fight the decline in revenue with a better push for the big fundraiser.

While that is good, he said, the charity has plenty of rungs to climb to get back to better funding totals.

To help that, The Salvation Army got a jump on the giving season. Scruggs said the bell ringers and kettles usually go out following Thanksgiving and conclude Dec. 24, Christmas Eve. The end date remains the same, he said, but the campaign began Friday. The

Salvation Army will have up to five kettles in Pendleton and five in Hermiston. He said the funds they bring in cover about 25 percent of organization's cost.

Nicholson said nonprofits are the same as other organizations and must adapt and seek new ways to gain revenue to keep providing services. That's why the United Way of Umatilla and Morrow Counties followed the United Way of Walla Walla County and joined the "100 Docs Campaign," she said, in which a handful of local doctors ask 100 more doctors to give \$1,000.

"If you can get 100 docs to give \$1,000 each, you just made \$100,000," she said. "I haven't gotten any \$1,000 checks yet, but I'm hopeful. And even if we got one, that would \$1,000 more than we had before."

Her organization also is encouraging banks and other professional establishments to allow employees to wear jeans for a day if they give \$5 to the United Way. That move resulted in \$265 last year with nary any publicity, she said, so maybe this year that could jump to \$1,000.

"That's a lot of hot meals," Nicholson said.

She also made a pitch for Giving Tuesday, which refers to the Tuesday after Thanksgiving Thursday, Black Friday and Cyber Monday. She said the savings from those events could help local nonprofits.

"If you're a person who doesn't need a food bank or a domestic violence shelter," she said, "it's easy to just say we have these won-



Staff photos by E.J. Harris

Jack Hodgdon of Pendleton drops a donation into a Salvation Army bell ringer's donation bucket outside of the Bi-Mart on Tuesday in Pendleton.

derful services and forget they won't be here if we don't support them."

But money is not the only way locals can give.

Scruggs said The Salvation Army needs volunteers, even on the kettles. The volunteers bring in more donations, he said. And while volunteers proliferate for The Salvation Army's Thanksgiving dinner, the charity can use volunteers all year.

Combating homelessness and helping people meet basic needs, he said, does not go away with the holidays.



Bell ringer Kevin Jemstrom of Pendleton wishes customers to try and keep warm while volunteering for the Salvation Army outside of Bi-Mart on Tuesday in Pendleton. This was Jemstrom's first time volunteering as a bell ringer.

VOLUNTEERS: With enough help warming station could be open 24 hours a day

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as soon as she's done.

Richter said she continues to come back to the warming station year after year because of the people she serves.

She described the homeless who patronize the warming station as consistently grateful for the services the nonprofit Neighbor 2 Neighbor Pendleton provides, eager to help out with chores around the facility and enforcing the rules when a resident starts acting erratically.

Richter said a lodger has never complained about any of the meals the warming station has served, even the year when volunteer staff had to figure out creative ways to re-serve Top Ramen on multiple nights.

Although she isn't always sure of their validity, Richter finds value in the stories from the people who stay at the warming station.

One time, a man passed through who claimed he had navigated the world by boat. She was skeptical until he produced a magazine article that profiled his journeys.

Richter thanks the businesses that donate food to the station, including Big John's Hometown Pizza, Roosters Country Kitchen, and Elizabethan Manor, an assisted living facility.

While Richter is a dedicated volunteer, she echoed Neighbor 2 Neighbor's concern over the lack of volunteers at the warming station. If there were more people willing to volunteer their time, Richter said, the warming station could be open 24 hours per day. — Antonio Sierra

Tina Fox | CASA

Tina Fox is a big believer in the power one person has to make a difference.

That's why she became a CASA — a court-appointed special advocate — in April 2016.

"We're a caring, stable person a child can count on during the upheaval they experience as they go into foster care," she said.

CASAs get to know each child assigned to them, and their parents, and study the ins and outs of their case. They act as advocates for the children, share their opinion with judges on what's best for the child and encourage parents to take care of what they need to in their life to become the best option for their child. Without a third-party adult advocating for a child in the system, she said, they can quickly become "pawns in somebody else's game."

Fox said so far all of the children for whom she has been a CASA have ultimately been reunited with their parents. She finds it rewarding when she runs into them in the grocery store and sees a loving interaction between the parent and child, or when she sees the child doing well in school.

Often the problems that caused a child to be taken from a home in the first place stem from the parent not ever being taught basic skills they need, she said, which creates a "breeding ground for failure."

"I feel like people just need a little bit of encouragement and to believe in themselves, and if they get a little encouragement, it's amazing what they can do," she said.

Fox said she has always

enjoyed spending time with children. When a health challenge stopped her from being able to work full-time, she chose being a CASA as a way to continue contributing.

"I was able to work around my own schedule and slowly build up over time," she said.

In July, after a grant allowed Umatilla-Morrow County Head Start to hire a part-time volunteer coordinator in Pendleton, Fox stepped into that position. She continues to volunteer as a CASA outside her paid hours as a coordinator.

Fox said she often gets calls from foster parents, asking that a CASA be assigned to the child they are fostering. Fox said she doesn't like putting children on a waiting list, but that's what she has to do. Even with some CASAs taking multiple cases at once, in October there were 73 children with a CASA in Umatilla and Morrow counties, and 106 on the waiting list.

"It's sad there's so much need and we can't meet it," she said. — Jade McDowell

Susan Badger Doyle | Heritage Station Museum

Digging through history is Susan Badger Doyle's thing.

Doyle, 77, volunteers at the Umatilla County Historical Society's Heritage Station Museum, Pendleton, helping to document and catalog the vast collection, including the 14,000 old photos that captured something specific to Pendleton or the rest of Umatilla County. The museum has thousands more of general images, such as period agricultural equipment.

"I really love history, and historical items," she said. "They have stories. They just bring the past alive to me."

Take the museum's acquisition of a tin container that resembles a small coffee pot. The cylinder has a handle and a lid and spout. The underside of the spout has a spike.

Doyle said it was for drinking beer. Beer cans at the time lacked pull tabs, thus the spike to puncture the can.

Doyle studied anthropology and afterward earned a Ph.D. in American studies in 1991 from the University of New Mexico. She is an author and was director of the California Trail Interpretive Center, Elko, Nevada. Doyle is a document editor and handled original diaries for the Montana Historical Society's 2000 publication of "Journeys to the Land of Gold: Emigrant Diaries from the Bozeman Trail, 1863-1866."

Document editors work with primary sources, such as original manuscripts, she explained, but they don't change any words. Rather, they add footnotes and the like to provide context and valuable information to the reader. Modern museums are the same, she said, with the focus on interpretation to help people understand history.

She and her husband, radiologist Roger Blair, moved to Pendleton in 1997, and right off they became members of the Umatilla County Historical Society. She served on its board and was president, but she did not start volunteering until 2011. She said that came at the

nudging from the Historical Society's Executive Director Barbara Lund-Jones.

"They just needed someone to work on the collection," Doyle said. "I volunteered and started right in."

The museum receives all kinds of items, she said, from embroidered pillow cases to the old printing press from *The Weston Leader*, which ceased operations in the mid-1940s. Items that have a story are real treasures.

"We want the stories that go with them," she said.

Doyle said she has no desire to slow down. She said that is the advantage of retirement. — Phil Wright

Chris Hull | ASPIRE

As high schoolers try to figure out what they want to do after graduation, Chris Hull helps them by asking the right questions.

The retired Hermiston and Stanfield teacher is an ASPIRE mentor, volunteering weekly at Hermiston High School.

Each week she meets with four to five students, seeing a total of about 20 a month. She talks to students about their goals after high school, and helps them understand how to get there.

"The ASPIRE mentoring program is designed to help kids figure out what they want to be," Hull said.

Though she's long worked with kids, both as a special education teacher and as a court-appointed special advocate, this is Hull's first year as an ASPIRE mentor.

The program is optional, and students can join at any grade level. Hull said she tends to see more junior and senior students.

"I get a variety," Hull said. "There are kids that

don't have a clue, and aren't really motivated to be thinking about it. One girl told me she didn't really have a passion — she just wanted to get out of high school, get a job and have a house."

In those situations, Hull said she will encourage students to try and come up with some ideas for their next meeting.

"My assignment to her was, 'I want you to think about something you really like,'" she said.

Hull will also do some of her own research to help students. One boy told her he wanted to be a physician's assistant, and for their next meeting, Hull came with some information about the education requirements for that job.

Hull also helps students figure out how they'll pay for their plans.

"I always ask them, 'Are you independently wealthy? Do you have money buried away?' They always look at me and giggle," Hull said. "We talk about scholarships, letters of recommendation, how it's important to get those done early."

Though she retired in 2003, Hull has continued to regularly attend school events, and almost every school board meeting.

"I don't know if it's from different generations," she said.

"People who stay with jobs for a long time. I've worked in two places, and they were both in Umatilla County. You get a sense of loyalty to the place you worked, and I think that comes from building close relationships with the people you work with." — Jayati Ramakrishnan

ODDS: Keyshawn was one of 250 applicants for the Beat the Odds scholarship

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to settle in Pendleton when he was in third grade, although his family's life was still transitory as he spent much of his fifth grade year moving from motel to motel.

"I've had to grow up a lot faster than other kids," he said.

Keyshawn said his father hasn't been involved with his life since he was 2, and when his mom "didn't do the right things" — he didn't want to go into detail out of respect

for his mother and his mom declined to comment — his living situation became a lot more tenuous.

That's when Stacey and Ken Jacobs stepped in.

Stacey, who was a librarian at Washington Elementary School at the time, remembers Keyshawn came into school one day upset that being separated from his mother meant that he would have to move away and ruin his perfect attendance.

She recalled that Keyshawn as a very bright stu-

dent who always excelled in school, and along with her husband Ken, a teacher at Sunridge Middle School, they agreed to take in Keyshawn, with his brother eventually joining him.

Keyshawn stayed with the Jacobs family on-and-off for a couple of months between fifth and sixth grades. Since then, Keyshawn said his family's situation has grown much more stable and his mom is now his "biggest supporter."

Keyshawn said he was one of 250 applicants for the Beat

the Odds scholarship, a field that was eventually trimmed to 25.

Once he made the cut, he did a video interview with the Stand For Children Oregon board, which helped him secure one of the 13 scholarships.

Lindner, the nonprofit's marketing and communications director, said Stand For Children was able to expand its group of winners from 10 to 13 and the amount it awarded to each recipient from \$10,000 to

\$16,000 each.

Stand for Children Oregon usually has all the winners speak at an event in Portland, but because the winning group had been expanded, the organization needed to select one student to speak on their behalf.

Keyshawn was bestowed that honor, and he was able to share his story for a new audience once again.

Stand for Children also produced a sleek video that summarized his story and recorded scenes of him run-

ning track or singing in the choir.

As the video nears its end, Keyshawn said he wants to attend Oregon State University and pursue a career in human services.

"If you have a lot of hardships, then take those and make them into opportunities," he says in the video as a last piece of advice. "If you're positive, then you'll have a better outlook on life and you'll have a better outlook on education and everything else in your life."