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Wesley Murack, center, Pendleton Downtown Association executive director, expressed appreciation to the local Pendleton Walmart and store manager Shawna Nulf for a grant to cover expenses for banners to highlight special events, festivals and promotional activities.

# Downtown association revives banner project

East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The Pendleton Downtown Association's Downtown Banner Project has been revived through the support of local members and community partners.

PDA Executive Director Wesley Murack said the Pendleton Walmart and store manager Shawna Nulf awarded the downtown group a \$1,500 grant to cover some of the cost for printing newly designed banners. The banner project, Murack said, will grow to include directions for public parking, visitor facilities, promotion of events and merchant advertising.

"One goal is to have these banners rotating throughout the year to highlight special events, festivals, and promotions coming to our community," he said.

PDA President Angela Thompson shared that the community driven project is largely volunteer based. Design committee chair Carol Hanks, of Great Pacific Wine & Coffee Co., said the idea behind the banners is to present Pendleton's best face for residents and tourists.

"Our community is home to some truly amazing people and we want our downtown to reflect the character of our residents,"

Hanks said. "This is one of the beginning steps to get us there."

Other community partners that have stepped up to support the program are the Pendleton Round-Up Association and the Pendleton Chamber of Commerce. Also, Master Printers created what Murack called, "top notch designs" and he's excited to see the finished products when they are printed by Pendleton's Creative Signs.

For more about the Pendleton Downtown Association, contact Murack at wmurack@pendleton-downtown.org, 541-304-3912 or visit www.Pendletondowntown.org.



Photo contributed by Angela Schneider

Special Olympics coach Jessica Sexton and athletes Misty Larsen, Marsha Ochoa, Jen Williams and JoJo Garcia participated in the Special Olympics Regional Swimming Competition in Baker City.

# Special Olympics swimmers make splash at regional contest

East Oregonian

BAKER CITY — A handful of swimmers from the Hermiston/Pendleton Special Olympics Local Program, along with head coach Jessica Sexton and Local Program Coordinator Angela Schneider, recently traveled to Baker City to compete in the Special Olympics Regional Swimming Competition at the Sam-O-Swim Center.

This is the first year that Hermiston/Pendleton has offered training and competition in swim-

ming in decades. The athletes trained at the Boardman Recreation Center this fall in preparation for regional competition against athletes from the Union and Baker local programs. Results from the competition:

•Jose "JoJo" Angel Garcia, second place silver in 50m freestyle; gold in 25m butterfly

•Jennifer Williams, third in 25m backstroke; second in 25m freestyle

•Misty Larsen, fourth in 25m backstroke; third in 25m freestyle

•Marsha Ochoa, second in 25m freestyle; participation in 25m breaststroke

Coach Sexton was amazed at the dedication and growth that these athletes made in their first endeavor to participate in competitive swimming. Athletes who trained but did not travel to Baker City were: Andrea Eiden, Rian Middleton and Antonio Altamarano.

Winter sports, which begin in January, include basketball and powerlifting. For more information, call Schneider at 541-314-0166.

# Police, Walmart drive toy distribution

East Oregonian

UMATILLA COUNTY — Walmart Transportation Division and local law enforcement teamed up to help brighten the holiday season for kids at area children's hospitals and Ronald McDonald House locations.

As part of the effort, toys were collected Dec. 7-8 at the Hermiston Walmart store. Officer Mike Ellwood of the Hermiston Police Department was active in the project — knowing firsthand the impact of such acts. His daughter, Jasmine, was diagnosed with Ewing sarcoma a couple of years ago and spent lots of time in hospital settings.

A local group hit the road Dec. 13 in Walmart trucks, police vehicles and passenger cars to make toy deliveries in the Portland area, including to Randall Children's Hospital at



Contributed photo

Mike Ellwood, left, of the Hermiston Police Department and Paul Wolverton of the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office were among a local group that delivered toys as part of the Holiday Toy Drive. The effort was held in conjunction with Walmart Transportation Division to provide gifts to kids in children's hospitals and Ronald McDonald Houses.

Legacy Emanuel. Another group was headed to the Seattle area on Dec. 18. Ellwood expressed appreciation to everyone who

donated toys for the cause, which brought smiles to the faces of numerous children receiving medical treatment during the holiday season.



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Linda Bevington of L.L. Bevington receives a donation from the Pendleton Downtown Association's Fire Recovery Fundraiser from PDA executive director Wesley Murack.

# PDA pulls together to help their own

East Oregonian

PENDLETON — A downtown Pendleton business owner benefited from the generosity of the Pendleton Downtown Association.

The PDA's Fire Recovery Fundraiser awarded \$1,000 to Linda Bevington of L.L. Bevington, which suffered water and smoke damage from a recent downtown fire.

The idea for the fundraiser came from PDA executive director Wesley Murack's own personal experience. A building in

his hometown burned down when he was growing up and he recalled how the community came together to help the surrounding businesses damaged by the fire.

Murack said it's often unclear how much insurance will cover, how long the process can take, and the impact the process can have on a small business. The PDA raised \$1,000 in about a month — some from local donations, but most of it coming from individuals that don't live in Pendleton, Murack said.

"This goes to show the impact that our com-

munity has had on others throughout the country and the strong ties that exist to downtown Pendleton," he said

The PDA Board of Directors, Murack said, sifted through available data about which businesses were impacted by the fire damage. They determined that L.L. Bevington would see the most impact from the donations.

"Overall, we wish we could help everyone, but we are happy to help such an amazing pillar of our community in L.L. Bevington," Murack said.

# Keystone helps BMCC food pantry

East Oregonian

PENDLETON — A large portion of Keystone RV's annual food drive will be donated to Blue Mountain Community College's student food pantry, along with an additional \$1,500 worth of much-needed items for the pantry.

Keystone's annual food drive among its six production lines and offices brings in thousands of pounds of nonperishable food each year. Last year, Keystone donated 4,500 pounds of food to "The Den," BMCC's new student food pantry, which was about to open.

This year, in addition to

the food donations, Keystone group leaders from the 902 production line donated their time to cut firewood, and then partnered with the Pendleton Grocery Outlet to sell the wood outside their store. The effort raised \$625, and they collected additional funds from co-workers at Keystone for a total cash donation of \$1,500.

The funds will be utilized to purchase some much-needed items in the pantry, which has expanded to also include personal hygiene products, feminine products, diapers and other everyday needs. Besides the main pantry in Morrow Hall on the Pendleton cam-

pus, there are smaller pantries located at BMCC locations in Milton-Freewater, Hermiston and Boardman.

"We are so appreciative of Grocery Outlet of Pendleton, Keystone RV, and the generosity of its employees," said Joey Gros-Jacques, BMCC's director of TRiO Student Support Programs, which oversees the pantry. "These contributions will significantly help our students, who often struggle to pay for basic needs while attending college."

For more information about BMCC's food pantry, contact GrosJacques at 541-278-5849 or jgrosjacques@bluecc.edu.

## BIRTHS

- St. Anthony Hospital, Pendleton DEC. 11, 2019
- VANDENAKKER — Elizabeth C. Tinnell and Bryon C. Vandenaeker of Pendleton: a boy, Nicholas Charles Vandenaeker. DEC. 17, 2019
- FRANCO — Olivia D. Pedro and Enrique Franco Salas of Hermiston: a girl, Lively Alicia Franco.
- Good Shepherd Medical Center, Hermiston DEC. 13, 2019
- MENDOZA — Crystal S. Gomez and

- Teodoro Parra Mendoza of Umatilla: a girl, Ariela Rosa-Linda Mendoza.
- ROGERS — Justyce Cox and Kyle Strong/Rogers of Boardman: a girl, Alyson Louise Rogers. DEC. 14, 2019
- NISBET — Makayla L. Nisbet and Matthew W. Nisbet of Hermiston: a boy, James Roy Nisbet.
- DEC. 16, 2019
- NUÑO — Selina Abris-Mendoza and Victor Nuño Estrada of Hermiston: a girl, Viviana Nuño.

# Pet of the Week

MAVERICK

Maverick is a sweet gentle boy who had a rough start in life. He loves all ages of people, does not mind other dogs (do not know about cats). Maverick is a yr old and will be fixed soon, he is up to date on shots.

601 Pets Adopted in 2019!

Visit Maverick at the Pioneer Humane Society/Paws Tues - Sat · Noon - 4pm 517 SE 3rd ST, Pendleton 541-276-0181 Check out the PAWSABILITY Thrift Store

SAMURAI DOGGIE -megumi's dog grooming- 541.276.6220 920 SW Frazer Ste. 105 Pendleton, OR 97801