



East Oregonian, File

Volunteer Ginger Haley sorts through presents for girls for Christmas Express on Dec. 17, 2018, at Agape House in Hermiston. In its 53rd year, the Hermiston Police Department and Umatilla County Fire Department No. 1 are accepting new, unwrapped toys for children up to age 11 through Tuesday, Dec. 14, 2021.



Frankie Lezama/Contributed Photo

The Nativity scene glows during the Santa Drive on Dec. 9, 2017, in Boardman. SECO Pallets organizes the event, which in its sixth year is Dec. 23, 2021.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Christmas Express is chugging along

HERMISTON — There still is time to climb aboard the Christmas Express — the Hermiston Police Department and Umatilla County Fire Department No. 1 are accepting toy donations for the 53rd annual holiday project.

People are encouraged to donate a new toy for children up to age 11. The deadline is Tuesday, Dec. 14. Take unwrapped toys to the Bob Shannon Safety Center, 320 S. First St., Hermiston.

Boardman hosts meet and greet

BOARDMAN — A meet-and-greet will introduce local citizens to the top candidates for deputy city manager in Boardman.

The public can attend the free reception Wednesday, Dec. 15, 5:30-7 p.m. in the Wells Spring Room at the Port of Morrow's Riverfront Center, 2 Marine Drive,

Boardman. Light refreshments will be served.

For more information, call Boardman City Hall at 541-481-9252.

Webinar offers help to 'Sandwich Generation'

PENDLETON — A free webinar on caregiving in the "Sandwich Generation," a term referring to those who are caring for both their children and their parents, is offered by McKay Creek Estates, Pendleton.

Caregivers who find themselves struggling to find a balance are invited to participate in the virtual event Wednesday, Dec. 15, 11 a.m. While there is no charge, people can RSVP via www.PrestigeCan-Help.com. The website also offers additional resources for caregivers.

For millions of Americans with aging parents and growing children, the demands of caring for both the older and younger generations can

be overwhelming. It often requires more than just time; the demands are physical, mental and emotional.

The webinar is hosted by Christy Yates, author of "Building a Legacy of Love: Thriving in the Sandwich Generation." She will discuss various hurdles that are common in caring for an aging loved one, while offering strategies to overcome difficulties.

For questions, call 541-276-1987.

SAGE Center collects holiday food donations

MORROW COUNTY — The SAGE Center in Boardman is partnering with Morrow County FFA Chapters for a holiday canned food drive. All donations will be distributed to food pantries throughout Morrow County.

People are invited to donate nonperishable food items by dropping them off by Wednesday, Dec. 15 at the SAGE Center. It is open Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 101 Olson

Road, Boardman.

Each item can count as a vote for your favorite school's Christmas tree. Also, everyone who donates will be entered into the Boardman Chamber of Commerce's holiday drawing. For more information, call 541-481-7243.

It's selfie time with the Grinch

UMATILLA — The Grinch is on the loose in Umatilla and is trying to wreak havoc on the holiday season. Find a mugshot of the dastardly character in each of the 12 city-owned parks for a chance to win prizes.

To enter, take a selfie with the mugshot and post it to the city of Umatilla's Facebook event page (Grinch Parks Scavenger Hunt!) with the hashtag #UmatillaGrinch, or stop by Umatilla City Hall, 700 Sixth St.

A list of Umatilla's parks can be found at www.umatilla-city.org. Follow the city's Facebook page for

some helpful hints while you hunt down the mean one, Mr. Grinch.

For questions, contact Esmeralda Perches, development and recreation manager, at 541-922-3226 or esmeralda@umatilla-city.org.

SECO elves gearing up for annual Santa Drive

BOARDMAN — Santa Drive is returning as SECO Pallets is hosting the sixth annual event.

The SECO family will deliver Santa Claus in a custom pallet sled Thursday, Dec. 23, 5 p.m., in Boardman. The popular holiday event features gifts from Santa (while supplies last), photos with Saint Nick and more.

Area businesses interested in decorating a vehicle for the event are encouraged to contact SECO via 541-303-3221, secopallets@gmail.com or by visiting www.facebook.com/secopallets.

—EO Media Group

Holidays can be tough for those who grieve



MARC MULLINS

MARC'S REMARKS

This time of year is challenging for people who have experienced the death of loved ones. My wife and I are among those who understand grief — especially around the holidays.

My mother, who died in 2015, would have turned 96 years of age on Dec. 12 if she were still alive today. Thoughts and remembrances of her will remain with me for as long as I live. My mother-in-law died this past Oct. 7 at the age of 87 years. I officiated at two services in celebration of her life shortly thereafter. This is an especially challenging time for my wife and her family, as we missed her mother's presence this past Thanksgiving and most certainly will miss her at Christmastime.

Earlier today, I received a phone call from a friend who I met in the Philippines when we both were Rotary Exchange Students in the

mid-1970s. Her husband died just two years ago and this is an especially trying time for her and her adult son and daughter. His birthday will be remembered on Dec. 14 as the family gathers together for a special occasion in his memory.

The holidays can be especially tough for those who grieve. That's why it's important to know that there are opportunities for us to remember, talk about and celebrate those we love who have predeceased us.

First Presbyterian Church of Pendleton, 201 SW Dorion Ave., will host a "Blue Christmas" event on Wednesday, Dec. 15, at 6 p.m. This will be a reflective service with readings, prayers and lighting of candles to remember those whose lives we miss. My co-pastor at First Christian Church, Karyn Dix, has worked with others from First Presbyterian Church, Peace Lutheran Church and the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer to make arrangements for the service.

Beginning on Sunday, Dec. 19, Pendleton First Christian Church, 215 N Main St., will host a weekly grief support group that will be

open to all who wish to gather with others for assistance in their process of grieving. This group will meet each Sunday at 3 p.m. in the fellowship hall on the first floor of the church building.

There is another group in Pendleton that offers grief support for children and families. The objective of Cason's Place (1416 S.E. Court Ave.) is to provide a caring and accepting environment that greatly enriches the healing process. Cason's Place is a safe place for children and their families to cope with the death of a loved one and share their grief with others who have had a comparable loss. You can learn more about Cason's Place by visiting its website at www.casonsplace.org.

I am grateful that there are opportunities such as these in Pendleton where love, care, hope and peace can be found at a time when the sting of death is so prevalent for many who grieve the absence of loved family members and friends.

Marc Mullins is co-pastor of the First Christian Church of Pendleton.

COURTS

Sentences

The following criminal sentences have been imposed in Umatilla County Circuit Court:

Michael Christopher Reyes, 33, an inmate at Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution, was convicted of charges from 2017 for assaulting a public safety officer, a Class C felony, and fourth-degree assault, a Class A misdemeanor; sentenced to 42 months in Oregon Dept of Corrections and a \$200 fine.

Jessica Mercedes Larson, 30, of Hermiston, pleaded guilty to a felony charge from 2017 of possession of oxycodone; sentenced to 18 months probation, 80 hours of community service and \$200 in fines.

Antonio Jose Miguel, 30, of Hermiston, was convicted of misdemeanor charges from 2020 of driving under the influence of intoxicants and reckless driving; sentenced to a one-year driver's license suspension.

There were no criminal sentences during the last week in Morrow County Circuit Court.

Lawsuits

The following lawsuits have been filed in Umatilla County Circuit Court (interest, court costs and fees not listed):

Larry E. Jenkins of Milton-Freewater vs. Ramiro Andrade Anbriz of Milton-Freewater, for \$50,000 but less than \$1 million for past and future medical costs, lost wages and expenses and past and future pain and suffering.

Progressive Universal Insurance Company vs. Gilbert Anthony Lucio, for \$16,823.22

There were no lawsuits of note in Morrow County Circuit Court.

Divorces

Divorce decrees were signed in Umatilla County Courts for:

Nicole Miracle and Patrick W. Miracle, both of Hermiston.

Marriages

Marriage licenses have been registered in Umatilla County for:

Spencer Allen Craig, 27, of Hermiston, and Whitney Brooke Gillen, 24, of Pasco. Lilian Maria Melendez, 23, and Gerardo Tellez, 28, both of Boardman.

Nicole Katherine Bell, 23, and Ian Arnold Ray Macgregor, 23, of Hermiston. Caitlin Elizabeth Clough, 23, and Gabriel Paul Blochlinger, 20, both of Pasco.

Keala Hope Vanhorn, 20, of Hermiston, and Justin Keith Terry, 32, of Pendleton.

Ellissa Lee Durning, 24, and Bradley Jay Lewis Chatfield, 25, both of Pilot Rock.

Jason Alexander Walsh, 19, and Lyndsey Nadine Smith, 27, both of Milton-Freewater.

Eric William Gabriel, 55, and Shauna Leigh Nosler, 51, both of Pendleton.

Community celebrated as Boardman tree lighted

By ERICK PETERSON
East Oregonian

BOARDMAN — The Christmas lights display at the SAGE Center at the Port of Morrow in Boardman run until the end of the year.

The community gathered Dec. 4 at the center for the lighting of the Boardman Christmas tree. Preschool students sang and danced to an adoring crowd, and the event included a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus, plus cookies and hot cocoa from the Mid-Columbia Bus Company.

Ariel Lissman, owner of The Learning Adventure, led the 15 children, who were from her school, in their performance. She said it was a warm-up for a Christmas presentation that will take place later in the month for their families, also at the SAGE Center.

Locals talked about their enjoyment of the event, their pleasure that they could gather as a community, even on a cold, dark December night.

The event had a good turnout, according to Kelsey Salata, Boardman Chamber of Commerce member and events director. She credited the children, refreshments and Santa for much of the attendance, but mentioned also the SAGE Center light show for attracting people.

The light show runs nightly seven days a week. Music accom-



Tammy Malgesini/East Oregonian, File

The light festival at the SAGE Center in Boardman is on display nightly through the end of December and is free.

panies the light show, and it can be heard on 88.3 FM or on the center's outdoor speakers.

Torrie Griggs, SAGE Center

manager, said she also was pleased with the event's turnout. She said that community gatherings like this create unity.

These days, they are especially important, she said, as people have struggled many months through the pandemic.