

KEATING

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Instead, Keating staff — Principal Amanda Wilde, teacher Toni Myers and para-professional Debbie Radle — shrunk the event to just the school, and involved every student in the preparation of the traditional feast.

“We decided, why not just do it with the kids?” Wilde said.

But “shrunk” doesn’t mean “small” — the turkey, donated by a neighbor, weighed 30 pounds and had to be split between two roasters.

“We have such an invested community,” Wilde said.

The meal preparation was divided between grades:

- Kindergarten: corn
 - First: rolls
 - Second: gravy
 - Third: pumpkin pie
 - Fifth: stuffing
 - Sixth: mashed potatoes
- (The school doesn’t have any fourth graders this year.)

Everyone, regardless of grade, was involved with the clean up.

“It’s part of cooking,” Myers said with a smile.

The kitchen is located in the school’s basement, and Myers worked with each group as lunch — and feast time — neared.

“They’ve been so excited all morning,” Myers said as she pulled pots and pans from the cupboards, and the scent of



Nathan Cook and Paisley Churchfield, both second graders at Keating Elementary, work together to make gravy.

“We’re so thankful for you. We’re your teachers, but you teach us something new every day.”

— Amanda Wilde, principal, Keating Elementary School

roasted turkey filled the room.

Two kindergartners tackled the task of opening cans of corn — the vegetable of choice based on a school vote.

“I’ve never gotten to open a can before,” Wren Lyon said as Myers hooked an opener on the lid of the can.

Tim Merchant took the

first try, cranking the opening while Myers held it steady.

“Go muscles!” Myers said as Tim concentrated on his job.

This made Wren pipe up: “I have muscles, too!”

As students took turns in the kitchen, the others worked on their “thankful” posters.



Grades 3 and 6 were in charge of setting the table for Keating’s Thanksgiving feast. Bailey Myers, on the left side of the table, adds napkins after Asher Blair, in blue, and Levi Whitley set out the handmade placemats.

One space, for favorite food, was filled with “pizza” on many designs.

Except Clara’s, which declared elk steak as her favorite meal.

“I love to hunt,” she said.

The students in grades 3 and 6 prepared the long table after a lesson on a proper table setting.

On top of each homemade placemat — made with woven strips of construction paper — was a name card,

a plate, a napkin, a cup, a fork on the left and a knife on the right. Each place also got a baby food jar full of fresh, homemade butter.

Then it was time to eat.

Each grade took a turn through the line, saying “yes, please” or “no, thank you” for each item, served by Myers and the sixth graders.

When everyone’s plate was heaped with food, Wilde and Myers said a few words

before the students dug in to their meal.

“I’m so proud of you guys — we haven’t gotten to do this for a while,” Wilde said. “We’re so thankful for you. We’re your teachers, but you teach us something new every day.”

Then it was Myers’ turn. “You mean so much to us,” she said. “Thank you for being so amazing.”

Photos by Lisa Britton
Baker City Herald



Paisley Churchfield colors her “thankful” poster while awaiting her turn to help prepare Thanksgiving dinner at Keating Elementary on Monday, Nov. 22.



Kindergartners Tim Merchant and Wren Lyon help teacher Toni Myers open cans of corn — the side dish of choice by popular vote.



Keating first graders took turns adding butter to the fresh-baked rolls. The students are, from left, Ava Mason, Freya Giff and Nino Giff.

CHARGES

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According to the indictment, Smith had the personal identification of a Baker City resident, and also stole personal checks belonging to that resident.

The crimes occurred on or about Nov. 8, the same day Baker City Police arrested Smith in his 2003 Mercedes sedan parked in lot on East Campbell Street.

Police said Smith lives in the vehicle.

Smith was arraigned Nov. 9 in Baker County Circuit Court on charges of second-degree burglary, second-degree theft, third-degree theft and three counts of unlawful entry into a motor vehicle.

He was lodged in the Baker County Jail on \$40,000 bail. He was released on Nov. 16 by posting 10% of the bail.

Baker City Police officer Jared Wood arrested Smith at 1:27 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 23 at the Courthouse, where he was scheduled to enter a plea on the charges from his Nov. 8 arrest.

Smith remained in the Baker County Jail on Friday morning, Nov. 26. His bail was set at \$35,000, and he

can be released by posting 10% of that amount.

Smith is scheduled to enter a plea on all the charges Dec. 16 at 1:30 p.m. in Circuit Court.

During Smith’s arrest on Nov. 8, police found multiple items that had been taken from outside homes and from unlocked vehicles, according to a press release from Baker City Police.

Police Chief Ty Doby said the police department had received multiple calls about Smith in October, from residents who said they had seen the black Mercedes parked in their neighborhoods.

On Oct. 27 a resident on Indiana Avenue called police and reported that a man was sitting in a black Mercedes outside the caller’s home.

Police found Smith in the car with multiple items that had been stolen, according to the press release. Smith had other items that police believe were stolen, but they couldn’t find the theft victims.

Smith was cited and released on Oct. 27, Doby said.

On Nov. 5, owners of Hills Auto Parts and Repair at 800 Campbell St. reported that several vehicles, some belonging to customers and some to the business, had been en-

tered, with items taken from inside. The value of the items is approximately \$1,950, according to an affidavit filed as part of the case by Baker City Police officer Johnathan Parsons.

Smith was identified as a suspect through video surveillance at the business, Doby said.

On Nov. 8, police again talked to Smith after he parked in a lot on East Campbell Street, Doby said. They found more stolen items. Police arrested Smith and this time he was lodged in the Baker County Jail.

Doby said Smith told police that he drives around the city, taking packages from porches and other items outside homes.

Doby said Smith also said that he goes through parking lots at local motels, looking for unlocked vehicles and stealing items from those vehicles.

Doby said Smith has “addiction issues.” He said he believes Smith owns the Mercedes, although he doesn’t have insurance on the car.

Police said after arresting Smith Nov. 8 that the investigation was continuing and that additional charges could be filed.

THEFT

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The couple has not had any contact with Cavan for several months, Baxter said.

The indictment on criminal charges follows a civil lawsuit that the Skillicorns filed on Aug. 13 in Baker County Circuit Court.

The suit names as defendants James and Felicia Cavan, doing business as Dreams to Reality.

The lawsuit includes a copy of the construction contract agreement between the Skillicorns and James Cavan, dated May 26, 2021.

The agreement calls for the Skillicorns to pay Cavan a total of \$457,700, including a \$150,000 deposit at the time the agreement was signed.

According to the civil suit,

Cavan used \$29,500 of the \$150,000 deposit for materials and labors, which consisted of building the foundation for the Skillicorns’ home. Cavan has not refunded the remaining \$120,500.

Jeff Skillicorn wrote in an Oct. 4 court filing that around July 20, Cavan told him he had lost his contractor’s license and could not finish the home.

“Defendants have acknowledged their obligation to reimburse Plaintiffs and have expressed that they do not have readily available funds to reimburse Plaintiffs,” the lawsuit states. “For that reason, Defendants offered to reimburse Plaintiffs using the proceeds from the sale of Defendants’ house and principal place of business.”

On Sept. 27 a default order was approved in Baker County Circuit Court and

Cavan was ordered to pay the balance of the Skillicorns’ deposit, \$120,500.

On Oct. 21, Judge Matt Shirtcliff signed a supplemental judgment ordering Cavan to pay an additional \$12,521.65 in attorney’s fees and other costs.

According to the Oregon Construction Contractors Board, a contractor’s license was issued to James and Felicia Cavan on June 24, 2016. That license has been suspended and is not active, according to the agency.

Disciplinary records from the Construction Contractors Board show that the Cavans were fined \$1,000 in March 2021 for doing work without being certified as a lead-based paint renovation contractor.

Their license was suspended on July 22, 2021. The records don’t list a specific reason for the suspension.



Becky from troop 50042 is trying to earn her GS Silver award by collecting donations from our caring community

Please place your donations in the barrel. Anything would be appreciated. Barrels are located at Safeway, Grocery Outlet and Albertson’s

Donations needed: Dog food wet and dry • Cat food wet and dry • Cat litter • Bedding for cats and dogs • Dog and cat toys • Collars and Leashes, etc.

Help Becky earn her Girl Scout Silver Award! Please donate today! The barrels will be here 11/11/21 through 12/27/21