

**FARM**

*Continued from Page A1*

The program focuses on agricultural education on many scales, from a home garden to a commercial ranch.

"The students are able to connect with different people in the community, from ranchers to natural resource personnel," Delgado said.

Delgado, who has a background in environmental education and youth development, said that is what she enjoys most about the academy: seeing the students meet and learn from people in their field of work.

"They get to know the time, effort and energy that goes into getting food to the table," she said. "Students learn where their food comes from — that their fruit doesn't just come from the store, and their beef doesn't just come from the store."

The program is open to fifth- and sixth-grade students and has events scheduled mainly on one Friday each month, with 20-30 students participating. Some in-class lessons are held with all the fifth- and sixth-grade students involved.

In October, students took a field trip to Thomas Orchards in Kimberly. Sixth-grader Ernie Shorts said it was one of his favorite activities so far. He said he was most interested in how they graft trees.

"They cut up some branches from the kind of tree they want and cut into a stump," he said. "They put the branch in these and that's what kind of tree grows."

Sixth-grader Destiny Pe-layo also said she enjoyed the trip to the orchards.

"My favorite part has been being with friends and learning so many things with them in a fun way," she said.

Delgado said the students picked apples for one to two hours, some picking their body weight in fruit. She added that some came away



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

**Farm-to-School students scoop out pumpkin seeds for roasting and make jack'o lanterns.**

interested in planting their own fruit trees, drying fruit or learning more about marketing or machinery.

Amelia Hall said she was amazed at Jennifer and Lance Barkers' Morning Hill Forest Farm, which the group visited in late September.

The Barkers live off grid at a high elevation in Bear Valley, where the temperature is known to dip down to freezing, or below, several months out of the year.

"I thought it was really cool how they could use solar energy, even when it was cloudy," Hall, a sixth-grader, said.

She and her brother, fifth-grader Grant Hall, were so impressed by the Barkers' handcrafted solar ovens, they were interested in building their own.

"Their greenhouse was super hot — 90 degrees," Amelia added. "It was pretty chilly outside."

"It was a huge tem-

perature change," said her schoolmate, fifth-grader Ali-ci Archibald.

Future planned field trips include visits to area ranches and a trip to observe bees and taste honey.

Delgado said she and the volunteers with the program work to help the students learn about food production and healthy eating options.

She said she was particularly pleased with their excitement after visiting the orchards.

"I quizzed them, and the students really remembered the points they'd learned that day," Delgado said.

The Farm-to-School Academy is funded with a grant from Oregon Farm to School and School Gardens through the Oregon Department of Education, and operates in partnership with the South Fork John Day Watershed Council, OSU Extension office and Grant School District No. 3.

**PALMER**

*Continued from Page A1*

deleting any public emails, in response to a July request by the plaintiffs.

"Defendants' complete lack of cooperation required Plaintiffs to initiate this suit to vindicate the public's basic right to be informed of the conduct of government officials," Daniels said in the Nov. 17 statement. "Even after commencing this litigation, Plaintiffs continued to face delays and circumstances that required the expenditure of significant resources, including delays in production and discovery, motion practice, and most significantly, evidence that suggested that public records had been destroyed."

After a series of correspondence between the parties related to the lawsuit, and depositions of Palmer and DeFord, Daniels said in the statement the plaintiffs obtained all the non-exempt documents they requested and, thus, were entitled to reasonable attorney fees as the prevailing party in the case.

Cramer had dismissed the lawsuit Nov. 3 at the request of the defendants' attorney, D.

Zachary Hostetter — after Daniels admitted court intervention was no longer necessary because the documents had been released — but the dismissal stated it did not preclude the plaintiffs from seeking attorney fees.

In the Nov. 17 statement, Daniels said the suit was filed under Oregon Revised Statute 192.450(2) and that ORS 192.490 applies to such actions. The latter states, in part, "If a person seeking the right to inspect or to receive a copy of a public record prevails in the suit, the person shall be awarded costs and disbursements and reasonable attorney fees."

Daniels said in the statement the plaintiff is the prevailing party when records are disclosed after a lawsuit has been filed, and he cited several similar Oregon cases in which the plaintiffs were awarded attorney fees.

"Disallowing all fees in this case would simply reward recalcitrance, encourage gamesmanship on the part of public bodies, and undermine the very goals of transparency and open government that the Public Records Law and its one-way attorney fee provision intend to

foster," Daniels said in the Nov. 17 statement.

As of Dec. 5, the defendants have not filed a response to the plaintiffs' request for fees in circuit court. Hostetter did, however, file a brief request for attorney fees on behalf of DeFord.

In an exhibit submitted with a Nov. 18 statement for attorney fees, Hostetter said DeFord is entitled to \$19,106 because "there was no objectively reasonable basis for plaintiffs to sue" her. Hostetter said ORS 192.490(1) allows a person to file a claim only against a "public body," which DeFord is not. He said DeFord is not a custodian of public records, nor an elected official who has custody of public records, as defined by the previously mentioned law.

Daniels filed an objection Nov. 30 to DeFord's attorney fee request, stating it should be denied because there was a reasonable basis for naming her in the suit and that she was not the prevailing party, in addition to procedural errors.

Neither Palmer nor The Oregonian have responded to emailed questions about the lawsuit.

**HEART**

*Continued from Page A1*

The visits help solidify relationships between the medical communities, he said. He typically travels with a small team of professionals and offers echo-tech services, such as the test Kevin received, every other visit.

Kevin underwent a more-than-five-hour surgery where his heart valve was replaced with a mechanical valve. Oftentimes a valve from a pig or cow is used, but because Kevin was so young, a mechanical valve was used because it wouldn't need replacing. However, he will be on blood thinners the rest of his life.

To fix the aneurysm, they removed part of his aorta and replaced it with an artificial graft.

Dr. Matt Slater, the surgeon performing the operation, did not sugarcoat the danger of the procedure, Haley said. They were told multiple times that Kevin might not survive the surgery.

"I think we heard he could die at least three times in five minutes," she said.

The procedure involved cutting open Kevin's chest to repair the valve and the aorta. Before going under, Kevin said his goodbyes, just in case. "I was scared," he said, knowing his heart would lit-



The Eagle/Rylan Boggs

**Haley and Kevin Walker outside their home in Grant County. A cardiologist who regularly visits John Day diagnosed Kevin's heart problems that required emergency open-heart surgery.**

erally be in the doctors' hands.

The surgery was Kevin's first, and he had never had never been under anesthesia before.

"It was nice when I woke up," he said.

The recovery was painful, but the most severe danger had passed. After a week in the hospital, he was able to return home.

The Walkers were greeted by a wave of support that has carried them into the holiday season. Friends, family members and coworkers have all helped the family and facilitated Kevin's recovery.

"The outpouring of support from so many members of our community has reconfirmed why this will be our forever home," Haley wrote in an email.

Kevin will be unable to work until at least February, so his mother set up a GoFundMe account to help with medical and recovery expenses in the interim. So far, the page has raised \$2,895 for the family.

Kevin is lucky to be alive, but it's only by chance he received the echocardiogram that detected the heart problems. As fire season was wrapping up, Kevin was presented with the option to extend his employment to fight fire in Colorado for two weeks.

Instead, he chose to stay behind at the last minute and was able to receive the test that saved his life.

"I was right on the fence," he said. "If I would have done that, I probably wouldn't be here."

**POLARIS ONE STOP SHOPPING**

**LS Tractors**

Men's & Women's Bibs

Men's & Women's Jackets

**30% OFF**  
Selected In-Store Items

Men's, Women's & Youth Helmets

Ballcaps & Beanies

Goggles

Gloves

**Sales & Services**  
821 W. HWY 26, John Day  
**541-575-0828**  
www.johndaypolaris.com

**efco** **OPEN HOUSE**  
Dec 17th 11am to 5pm

**Come check out Gregg's inventory of efco at Polaris**  
blowers. earth augers. pruners & much more

starting at  
**\$239<sup>99</sup>**  
DS2200 & DS2400

starting at  
**\$249<sup>99</sup>**

This holiday season, please join us in donating to our food bank. We are not accepting food items this year. We are accepting monetary donations. Please drop off at the Blue Mountain Eagle for the Grant County Food Bank. Accepting donations until Dec. 30, 2016

Grant County's newspaper since 1868

04905