

Beer fest on tap

Eight other brewers will converge at the Hermiston Brewing Company Saturday

BY SEAN HART
HERMISTON HERALD

People can vote for their favorite craft beers in Hermiston Saturday by sampling the beverages produced by brewers at the first Beerex Fest at Nookies Restaurant & Brewery.

General Manager Monica Todd said eight brewers from as far away as Springfield are “locked in,” including Alameda, Ice Harbor, Hop Valley, Prodigal Son, Laht Nepur, Beer Valley, Dragon’s Gate and Terminal Gravity.

They will join Nookies’ regular brewer at the event. With no limit on the number of beers each brewer can bring, attendees may have difficulty choosing their favorite for the people’s choice award.

Sales Manager Bill

Foster said several other brewers might also attend, and many of the beers to be sampled are only available from those brewers, such as those from the Hermiston Brewing Company inside Nookies.

“It will be an opportunity for (people) to try some beers that they otherwise would not be able to get their hands on,” he said. “Obviously, nothing of this magnitude has been done right here in this area, and that’s something we really wanted to do was to try to help give that extra kick to craft beer. We just want to use this as a platform for craft beer.”

Different beer-based foods will also be available to pair with the drinks, and the Walla Walla-based blues band Big Font will provide music for the event, which will take place outside. Hermiston Brewing Company currently has 22 beers on tap inside Nookies that people can try and will have at least five on tap outside.

Hermiston Brewing Company brewmaster Tom Torresdal said he

will be unveiling a new beer for the event, Speedwagon Pale Ale, which he believes will win the people’s choice award.

“It’s an American-style pale ale, a citrus aroma, strong malt back,” he said. “It’s for a fan of IPAs, the big, bold, new American citrus hop flavor. If you like a little bit of hop-iness, it’s a good pale ale.”

He said he is excited for the festival.

“There’s going to be a lot of great brewers,” he said. “Hopefully, it’s starting something that can continue through the years. Hermiston is ready to get put on the beer map.”

Todd said she is not sure how many people will attend the first of what she hopes will be an annual event, but she is excited, as well.

“We’re here to be with the community,” she said. “Come check us out. We wanted to see how we could partner with other brewers around us and build a community here off of this beer fest.”

The festival will take place from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday outside of Nookies,



MAEGAN MURRAY PHOTO

Hermiston Brewing Company has a wide variety of beers on tap, some of which will be featured at the Beerex Fest Saturday outside of Nookies Restaurant, along with craft beers from at least eight other brewers.

125 N. First St., Hermiston.

For \$10, attendees will receive 10 tickets to sample the craft beers. For \$15, attendees will receive the 10 tickets and a souvenir event glass, but supplies are limited. For \$5, designated drivers and others who do not want sample tickets can attend. People who have paid the \$270 fee for a lifetime membership as a Nookies “founder” can attend for \$8.

For more information, call 541-289-7414 or visit hermistonbrewingcompany.com.



SEAN HART PHOTO

Nookies Restaurant & Brewery Sales Manager Bill Foster pours one the business’s craft beers Monday. On Saturday, the business will host its first beer festival in Hermiston with a variety of other brewers featuring their craft beers, as well.

District encouraging parents to save for college through partnership

BY MAEGAN MURRAY
HERMISTON HERALD

By the time they are in seventh grade, students who would be first-generation college students have largely made up their minds whether they will pursue college or not after high school.

Hermiston School District Online Coordinator Michelle Jensen, whose Ph.D research focused on the topic of college readiness, said one of the main reasons students give for why they won’t attend college is because they don’t believe it is affordable.

“Their financial situation at home is limiting their dreams,” she said.

The Hermiston School District, however, is hoping to change that mindset by partnering with the Oregon State Treasurer’s Office for a new program geared toward promoting ways parents can start saving for their child’s post-secondary education.

The Hermiston School District was one of five school districts in the state selected for a program known as “Be College Ready,” a pilot-program sponsored by the Oregon Treasury Department that promotes the state’s 529 Oregon College Savings Plan. With the program, the treasury department will provide schools in the district with promotional materials, including folders, pens, pencils, posters and pamphlets that they hope will attract the interest of parents and guardians to start a college savings plan.

John Valley, outreach director for the Oregon 529 College Savings Network, said organizers are asking schools to put information about the program in their newsletters and also host presentations about the program, to inform families about how the program



MAEGAN MURRAY PHOTO

Sunset Elementary School first-grader Tomas Martinez Jr. drills into a bone with the help of Dr. Deryk Anderson, an orthopedic surgeon at Advanced Orthopedic in Hermiston, as SES fifth-grader Gabriella Martine and Highland Hills Elementary School fifth-grader Alonso Garcia watch at a K-8 College and Career Family Night Thursday at Armand Larive Middle School. The Hermiston School District hopes to increase students’ and families’ interest in pursuing college by participating in a program geared toward raising awareness of the Oregon College Savings Plan.

works. In return, the organization will donate \$529 to schools that have the presentation.

The purpose of the pilot program, Valley said, is to get parents to think about college savings options.

“I’m not getting anything out of this,” he said. “I’m not making any kind of commission ... The point of the program is to raise awareness that 529 is an option.”

Valley said, to sign up for an Oregon College Savings

Plan, people only have to pay \$25 to open an account in their student’s name — there is no minimum balance required. The hope is that parents and others will then keep contributing to the account through time to build up the account that will go toward the overall cost of their child’s college education. The account, he said, can build interest, and all earnings with withdrawals used to pay for qualified higher education expenses will be free from

federal and Oregon income tax.

“Our hope is that people will look at it as an opportunity to offset costs

for post-secondary education,” he said.

Valley said the average beneficiary of those accounts is currently 10 years old, but program organizers hope to change that by getting parents to think about a college savings plan while their children are even younger.

“Over time, especially when you start early, it can really add up,” he said.

Valley said while interest rates may fluctuate, a contribution of \$50 per month for six years can add up to \$11,000 at a 6 percent rate of return. The beneficiary, he said, does not have to live in Oregon. Oregon residents can open an account for students who live out of state.

Hermiston School District Superintendent Fred Maiocco said the school district, especially the high school, has worked through the years to ensure that students have the resources they need to qualify for and be successful in college. The district has hosted college and career fairs, taken students to college campuses, provided SAT preparation, scholar-

ship application help and assistance with filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. He said, when it comes down to it, however, because the cost for college is the biggest barrier for families, the district wanted to do more for area families.

“We are delighted to be working with the State Treasurer’s Office to offer various incentives and supports for the use of section 529 plans,” he said. “We are giving families more tools in their kit bag ... We don’t want students to think that college is outside their reach.”

Maiocco said he believes the college savings plan makes it easier for students’ families to save for college.

“Look at the cost of saving versus borrowing,” he said. “It is night and day.”

Valley said if the program is successful this year, organizers hope to make it a state-wide initiative.

For more information, visit <http://www.oregon.gov/treasury/pages/index.aspx>.

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In Loving Memory

Florence Spear Melvin, age 89 of Hermiston, Oregon died following a long illness 2/18/15 at the Columbia Care Cottage in Hermiston where she resided for several years. Florence was born to Orlin and Alta Gray Spear in Topeka, Kansas on March 6, 1925. She was preceded in death by her husband, Bert R. Melvin, Sisters Etta Correll Mack, Teresa Walker, Brother Luther Correll and grandsons, Stuart Stratton and Carey Ancel. Florence is survived by sisters Pauline Huff of La Junta, Colorado and Irene Brown of Port Ludlow, Washington and 7-children, Marie Robertson of The Woodlands, Texas, Betty Roussos of Vancouver, BC Canada and Lee Melvin of North Plains, Oregon, Doris Walls, Darlene TeHennepe, Karen Boardman, and Donna Brown of Hermiston, 11 grandchildren and 16 great grandchildren. The family will always remember the kind, loving, generous and honorable way that she lived her life. Florence quietly and humbly lived out her faith by example and her spirit resides in the bosom of her Heavenly Father. Her body will be interred beside her husband in the Hermiston Cemetery. As a child, Florence lived with her family on land they homesteaded in Kansas, but when they lost their farm they went west in a covered wagon, first to New Mexico and then to California where they settled in Vallejo. As a teen during WWII, Florence joined the war effort and worked in a California ship yard. Florence moved to Onalaska, Washington and then to Salem, Oregon with her brother, where she met Bert Melvin. The family moved to Ontario, Oregon and later to Cottage Grove. Bert built a home for his family, but when they were at the drive-in theater their house burned and they lost everything. The town's people were kind and generous, and soon the family had more than before the fire. Shortly afterward they moved to Irrigon and then in 1954 to Hermiston where Florence remained until her death. Anyone who met Florence was impressed not only by her goodness, but by her intelligence and sense of humor. It was obvious that she loved people and animals, but especially her mini schnauzers, Sumo Max, Sammy, Gin and Pippie. Florence worked in the Hermiston School District kitchens for 27 years until her retirement. Of all Florence's accomplishments the greatest of all was her success as a mother. When times are tough, her children never went to bed hungry if she had to deny herself. She supported her children in all of their school and church activities and in 1961 Florence was recognized as mother of the year. Even though Florence's family and friends will greatly miss their lives were far richer because of her.

