

# Our Community

E-mail your community news items to:  
community@hermistonherald.com

**IN BRIEF**

## Wildhorse Foundation announces grant awards

The Wildhorse Foundation recently announced its fourth quarter grants, which included disbursements to several organizations in Hermiston and Stanfield.

In Hermiston, recipients included Armand Larive Middle School, \$4,272 for iPads for seventh grade math classes; Agape House, \$7,500 for the elementary students weekend food program; and Inland Northwest Musicians, \$1,300 for repair and maintenance of donated string instruments.

In Stanfield, the Stanfield Community Center received \$5,075 for a kitchen remodel, including a range hood, six-burner range, griddle, convection oven, warming oven, pot rack, food prep tables and hot well.

The quarterly awards totaled \$185,391, which was distributed to 28 recipients in Umatilla County, as well as Eastern Oregon and eastern Washington.

The foundation manages a community benefit fund established by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation from its gaming operation. The board considers quarterly grant applications in the areas of public health and safety, education, the arts, historic preservation, gambling addiction services, salmon restoration, environmental protection and cultural activities. The next application deadline is Friday, April 1.

For more information, visit [www.wildhorseresort.com](http://www.wildhorseresort.com) or contact Tiah Degroff at 541-966-1628 or [tiah.degroff@wildhorseresort.com](mailto:tiah.degroff@wildhorseresort.com).

## Free seminar helps eliminate inflammation

A Saturday Seminar will provide assistance with removing inflammation.

Lighten Up will provide information and demonstrations on relaxing and gentle ways to release all types of inflammation.

Presented by detox specialist Sunita Sherrie Gay Parke, the session will be offered in three locations:

- Saturday, April 2 from 11 a.m. to noon at Umatilla Marina Park

- Saturday, April 9 from 11 a.m. to noon at Irrigon Marina Park

- Saturday, April 16 from 11 a.m. to noon at Hermiston Butte Park

Those 15 an older are invited to attend. Also, it's requested that people refrain from smoking or drinking and to leave pets at home.

For more information, call 772-233-3112.

## Tai Chi provides better balance

An exercise class designed to assist with core strength, flexibility and balance is offered at the Hermiston Senior Center.

The free 12-week Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance, falls prevention program, starts Tuesday, April 5. It runs Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:30-2:30 p.m. at 435 W. Orchard Ave., Hermiston — located on the Umatilla County Fairgrounds. Those who plan to attend don't need to register in advance.

The program, which can be done standing or seated, is a proven intervention that can help older adults reduce their risk and fear of falling and live longer, healthier lives. No prior experience is needed to participate. New participants are invited to join the group during the first three weeks of the series, wear comfortable

clothing and shoes with flexible soles.

The classes, led by volunteer instructors Mickie Morris and Mary Solomon, are sponsored by the CAPECO Area Agency on Aging.

For more information, contact Helena Wolfe at 541-561-5443 or [hwolfe@capeco-works.org](mailto:hwolfe@capeco-works.org).

## Informational gatherings feature cup of joe

Coffee with the Chiefs continues with an opportunity for the public to visit with Chief Scott Stanton of Hermiston Fire & Emergency Services and others.

Stanton hopes to have a dialogue with people about the upcoming reformation vote, as well as general information about the fire district.

Upcoming gatherings are:

- Thursday, March 24 from 8:30-9:30 a.m. at Sun Terrace Assisted Living, 1550 N.W. 11th St., Hermiston

- Thursday, March 31 from 8:30-9:30 a.m. at Eastside Market, 582 E. Main St., Hermiston.

For more information, call Stanton at 541-567-8822.

## Community theater sets auditions

More than 15 adult parts are available for College Community Theatre's "Evening of One-Act Plays."

Auditions are set for Wednesday, March 30 and Thursday, March 31 at 7 p.m. in the Bob Clapp Theatre at Blue Mountain Community College, 2411 N.W. Carden Ave., Pendleton. The auditions are open to the entire community, not just BMCC students and staff. No advance preparation is required. Selections from the plays will be used for cold readings.

The production, which covers a broad range of topics and theatrical styles, will feature seven short plays directed by seven CCT directors. The performance dates are May 12-15 and 19-22.

For more information, contact Craig McIntosh, BMCC theatre arts instructor and CCT artistic director, at 541-278-5928 or [cct@bluecc.edu](mailto:cct@bluecc.edu).

# Heppner turns green with Irish for holiday

By JENNIFER COLTON  
Staff Writer

Green of all shades covered Heppner over the weekend for the 34th annual Wee Bit O'Ireland Festival, the celebration of Heppner's Irish heritage and, of course, St. Patrick's Day.

Wee Bit O'Ireland started on Thursday with the performance of the play "Intrigue at Glendalough," and grew each day with sheepdog trials, vendors, food, children's activities, a talent show, art shows, competitions, the classic car "Cruz-In," the KUMA Coffee Hour — with its highly esteemed Irish Brogue Contest — and the Great Green Parade down Main Street.

"We have a good crowd, and they all seem to be having fun," said Sheryll Bates, Heppner chamber director. "There's such a big, rich Irish heritage here that it's important to share it and for the younger generations to pick it up. It takes a lot of people to do this, but they're Irish, so of course they do it. We always say if you're not Irish when you get here, you will be when you leave."

Of all Saturday's events, one of the most popular is always the Wel-



STAFF PHOTO BY JENNIFER COLTON

Children scramble for candy during the Great Green Parade in Heppner.

ly Toss, a competition where individuals and teams launch a Wellington boot as far as possible.

The team and the individual able to throw the boot the greatest distance win bragging rights and prizes.

According to the community website for Upperthong Village — the United Kingdom location of the Welly Wanging World Championships — the Welly toss originated during an argument between two farmers after one spilled ale on the other. During the argu-



STAFF PHOTO BY JENNIFER COLTON

Kevin Murray, of Heppner, tosses a Wellington boot during the Welly Toss, Saturday at Heppner's Wee Bit O'Ireland Festival. Murray took second place in the competition.

See GREEN, A7

# Arbor Day event encourages tree planting

By TAMMY MALGESINI  
Community Editor

For more than 25 years, the Hermiston Rotary Club has headed up an effort to make Hermiston a little greener.

In recognition of Arbor Day, tree starts will be given away during the project that also is supported by Hermiston Parks & Recreation. Area residents can make selections from red maple, select river birch, eastern redbud, green ash, bald cypress and little leaf linden.

The event is Saturday, April 2, beginning at 9 a.m. in the parking lot at Smitty's Ace Hardware, 1845 N. First St., Hermiston. Carlisle Harrison, who has remained enthusiastic about the yearly effort since its inception, said many of the available trees are typically distributed during the first hour.

According to the Arbor Day Foundation, National Arbor Day is the last Friday in April, but many states



STAFF PHOTO BY TAMMY MALGESINI

People sort through tree starts during a past Arbor Day tree giveaway. Sponsored by the Hermiston Rotary Club and Hermiston Parks & Recreation, this years event is April 2 at Smitty's Ace Hardware in Hermiston.

observe Arbor Day on different dates according to the best tree-planting times. Rather than designating a single day, the Oregon Legislature identifies the first full week in April as Arbor Week.

Paul Ries, manager of the Oregon Department of Forestry's Urban and Community Forestry Program, said trees are important to Oregon's quality of life. Trees and forests, he said, enhance

the environment by providing shade, raising property values and by creating fish and wildlife habitats.

The department encourages people to find ways to celebrate Arbor Week, including park clean-up efforts, reading publications about trees, participating in tree-related craft projects, and, of course, planting trees.

At a past giveaway event, Harrison said it's best to plant the tree starts right away. However, if unable to get it in the ground immediately, it's important to keep the roots wet in a bucket of water.

Tree planting tips are available at [www.arborday.org](http://www.arborday.org). For more information about the local tree giveaway, call 541-667-5018.

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Jacob Tyler Jones

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Tell your favorite graduate how proud you are in our Graduation 2016 special section in the East Oregonian and Hermiston Herald & share their "Then" & "Now" Photos!

Publishes: May 28<sup>th</sup> in the EO & June 1<sup>st</sup> in the HH  
Send in your text and photos to [cmcclellan@eastoregonian.com](mailto:cmcclellan@eastoregonian.com) or bring to Chris at the East Oregonian office by May 18<sup>th</sup>.  
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**It's not like her.**  
Mom has always been so patient, but now when I ask her questions she gets angry.

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