

# Our Community

E-mail your community news items to:  
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## IN BRIEF

### Hospital administrator to provide update

The public is invited to learn about new developments at Good Shepherd Medical Center during the upcoming Hermiston Chamber of Commerce B2B Luncheon.

Nick Bejarano, marketing and communications director, will share on the topic of "What's Happening at the Hospital?" Tuesday at 11:45 a.m. at the Hermiston Conference Center, 415 S. Highway 395. The cost for the no-host lunch, which is catered by Nookie's, is \$10 for members and \$13 for non-members.

Those planning to attend are asked to RSVP by Friday. For more information or to register, contact 541-567-6151, info@hermistonchamber.com or visit www.hermistonchamber.com.

### EOTEC hosts horse plowing competition

The Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center will host a horse plowing competition and exhibition this weekend in Hermiston.

Prizes will be awarded for teams on both walking and riding plows. And, members of the public can even get in on the action, walking behind one of the plows for a small donation.

CC Plowing starts Saturday at 10 a.m. at EOTEC, 1705 E. Airport Road, Hermiston. Donations are encouraged

to help raise money for EOTEC and the plowing event.

Organizer Lee Carlson said horse plowing is becoming a lost art, and he hopes the competition will help renew interest. He said at least 12 teams are already slated to participate, and more are likely to sign up. The event is open to the public.

"We'd like to get more younger people involved in this," Carlson said. "It's a lot of fun. We need to promote it, to get more people involved in wanting to do this."

Judges will grade the teams based on how deep they plow, how straight the rows are and how well the team works together. It's an intense job, Carlson said, and one that could use some fresh faces.

For more information or to sign up, call Carlson at 541-571-4045.

### Museum foundation plans special board meeting

A special board meeting of the Umatilla Museum and Historical Foundation board is planned to inform current members of changes and allow the election of board members and officers.

The meeting will be held Saturday at 11 a.m. at the museum, 911 Sixth St., Umatilla. All current members are encouraged to assist the vice president in a successful transition toward future endeavors.

For more information, call the museum at 541-922-0209.

## Volunteers cook up fundraiser to benefit Laurie Ball-Kiser

By **TAMMY MALGESINI**  
Community Editor

Friends and volunteers with the Community Fellowship Dinner are continuing to serve up support for Laurie Ball-Kiser, the longtime coordinator of the twice-yearly meals.

Tom Marks, who first met the Hermiston woman at the First Christian Church and has volunteered with the holiday meals for two decades, said Ball-Kiser was transferred to Regency Hermiston a couple of weeks ago. While she is closer to home, her medical bills continue to pile up, Marks said.

"She's drowning in debt and we're trying to help her out," he said.

A benefit dinner is Sunday from 4-7 p.m. at the Hermiston Senior Center, 435 W. Orchard Ave. A suggested donation of \$10 is appreciated for the meal, which includes ham, turkey, cheesy mashed



FILE PHOTO

**Laurie Ball-Kiser gives directions to volunteers during a past Community Fellowship Dinner.**

potatoes, vegetables, rolls, coffee, tea and dessert.

Marks said donations have been made for the food and use of the senior center. In addition, it's an all-volunteer effort, so all money raised will go to help Ball-Kiser. Marks said people can still get on

board to help with the event, as they are expecting a large turnout.

While being treated for a kidney stone and urinary tract infection diagnosed in September, Ball-Kiser suffered at least one stroke. In addition to time spent in a recovery home, she has had extensive hospital stays, including the intensive care unit at Kadlec Regional Medical Center.

Although she has medical insurance, when a GoFundMe campaign was set up in late January, it was reported Ball-Kiser and her husband, Joe, were facing more than \$20,000 in medical debt. That campaign recently indicates nearly \$5,000 has been raised.

Cathy Stolz, owner of the Chuckwagon Cafe, said Ball-Kiser often reaches out to others, aware of their needs and struggles.

"She's just a warm and loving woman who loves

helping people," she said. "It's a ministry for her."

It's the community's turn, Stolz said, to reach out and minister to Ball-Kiser. Karen Snyder, who helped set up a benefit account, agreed. She said people who aren't able to help financially are asked to provide prayer support for the Kisers.

People can also make donations via:

- A GoFundMe link at [www.gofundme.com/laurie-ballkiser-benefit-fund](http://www.gofundme.com/laurie-ballkiser-benefit-fund)

- By check or cash via the Laurie Ball-Kiser Benefit Fund at Columbia River Bank, 1033 S. Highway 395, Hermiston.

- Drop off cash or checks for the Laurie Ball-Kiser Benefit Fund at Chuckwagon Cafe, 81027 N. Highway 395, Hermiston.

For more information on how to help, call Jan Cassens at 541-720-8262 or Cathy Stolz at 541-567-6329.

## Wildhorse Foundation giving tops \$10 million

Hermiston Herald

The Wildhorse Foundation recently announced it had surpassed \$10 million in total giving, which it distributes through quarterly grant awards.

George Murdock, board chairman, said the huge milestone reflects the rich tradition of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation in sharing and giving back to the community.

"A study of history actually reveals that Native Americans have a culture of giving and sharing dating back hundreds, if not thousands, of years and our

board is proud to be able to contribute to that legacy," Murdock said.

The foundation manages a community benefit fund established by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. The board considers 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. During the history of the foundation, more than 1,750 local and regional nonprofit organizations have benefited from Wild-

horse grants.

The foundation also announced fourth quarter awards, which included 28 disbursements for a total of \$205,369. The local recipients and purpose for the grants include:

**HERMISTON:** Friends of the Fair and Rodeo, \$10,000 for development of fair and rodeo facilities at Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center; Umatilla County Fair, \$10,000 for ADA/safety access corridor 1 paving.

**BOARDMAN:** Columbia River Community Health Services, \$3,500 for medical equipment; Riverside High School, \$7,500

for repair and resurfacing of track; Sam Boardman Elementary School, \$8,000 for Phase 1 of playground renovation.

**ECHO:** Echo School District, \$12,000 for community meeting and fitness center project.

**IRRIGON:** Irrigon Elementary School, \$5,000 for music enrichment opportunity.

The next application deadline is April 1.

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



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