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John Wambeke & Friends return for the 10th annual Cabin Fever show. Tickets are on sale for the Jan. 13 and Jan. 20 events.

Cabin Fever celebrates 10 years

By TAMMY MALGESINI
COMMUNITY EDITOR

John Wambeke & Friends are pulling out all the stops for the 10th annual Cabin Fever shows. Described as a delightful mixture of music and humor, the Hermiston man rounds up local talent to present the yearly event. Wambeke, whose mind-numbing day job includes washing windows, admits he has way too much time to think. “The main motivator is it’s a giant diversion. It takes my mind off what I have to do for a living,” Wambeke said with a guffaw. “It’s just for fun.” Speaking of fun, Wambeke said a decade ago that he’d continue to wrangle people in as long as everyone was still having a good time. The enjoyment is so contagious that Wambeke’s younger brother traveled from Montana to check out the show. Chris Wambeke,

who is 18 years younger than his brother, even played the part of a bachelor during a sketch resembling “The Dating Game,” a TV game show that was originally produced on ABC in 1965. “Chris said, ‘I just came out to see if it’s still fun,’” Wambeke said. “It’s still fun.” During the 2016 Cabin Fever shows, Wambeke polled the audiences to find out their favorite acts over the years. A surprise drumline got rave reviews. Wambeke has been doing double-time in trying to drum up something equally as exciting. Wambeke gets giddy with excitement when he talks about sketches for the upcoming show. “We have a ventriloquist act — sort of,” Wambeke said with an even more exuberant guffaw. With little prodding, Wambeke admits that Joe Lindsay will be playing the

role of a ventriloquist while Lindsay’s 9-year-old son, Andrew, plays the part of the “dummy.” While pondering ideas, Wambeke suggested the ventriloquist concept to Lindsay. “All you have to do is present the idea and he runs with it from there,” Wambeke said about Lindsay. A farmer from Lexington, Lindsay, is known for his sense of humor and musical abilities — traits that, Wambeke said, have apparently been passed down to his children. Andrew also will be singing during the show. Harry Noble, who performed in the first Cabin Fever concert, is returning to the stage. The 87-year-old Hermiston man will sing “Keep Your Eyes on the Hand,” a Hawaiian song that gives pointers while watching hula dancers. And, for the 10th annual event, Thelma and Eunice — the lovely spinsters portrayed by Wambeke and Pat Ward — are in need of a

makeover. The gals will be getting gussied up at Betty’s Discount Beauty Barn. The low-budget styling salon features a hair dryer mounted on a lampshade. The event features a pair of Dutch oven dinner shows or guests can choose to attend the show only. Tickets for the dinner, which are \$38 each, are limited. Wambeke encourages people to buy tickets early to ensure a spot at the dinner table for a delicious meal cooked up by Sharon’s Sweet Treats. Show only tickets are \$15. The Cabin Fever shows are Saturday, Jan. 13 and Saturday, Jan. 20 at the Hermiston Conference Center, 415 S. Highway 395. The dinner event is at 6 p.m., and show only guests are invited to arrive at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are available at Cottage Flowers, 1725 N. First St., Hermiston. For more information, call 541-567-4305 or search Facebook for “Cabin Fever Concert Hermiston.”

IN BRIEF

Assembly of God presents Christmas in Hermiston

Awesome music, a touching message and memories you’ll never forget are promised during Christmas in Hermiston. Rev. Terry Haight of the Hermiston Assembly of God Church describes the special service as an interactive, family-friendly event with a “clear message about Christmas.” In addition, he invites everyone to attend. The service is Sunday, Dec. 24 at 11 a.m. at Hermiston Assembly of God Church, 730 E. Hurlburt Ave., Hermiston. People are encouraged to reserve free tickets in advance. If necessary, the church may add a second service. In addition, complimentary childcare is available for children under 5. Kids over 5 years are welcome to attend the service. For more information or to make a reservation, call 541-567-5831 or visit www.christmasinhermiston.com.

Program seeks nominations for poet laureate

Nominations for Oregon’s next poet laureate are currently being accepted. The poet laureate fosters the art of poetry, encourages literacy and learning, addresses concerns relating to the humanities and heritage, and reflects on public life in Oregon. All styles and sub-genres of poetry, including prose, slam poetry, cowboy poetry, are considered. During the two-year term, the poet laureate will provide a minimum of 10 public readings/events per year in urban and rural settings across the state. They receive an honorarium of \$10,000 per year, as well as an annual travel subsidy. Nominations must be submitted by Saturday, Jan. 13 via an online form at www.oregonpoetlaureate.org. The next poet laureate will begin their term in April 2018. For more information, contact Mikaela Schey at 503-241-0543 or m.schey@oregonhumanities.org.

Desert Arts seeks youth dancers

Nearly two dozen young dancers are needed for Dancing with the Hermiston Stars. Presented by the Desert Arts Council, 10 boys and 10 girls, ages 10-16, will be chosen to participate. Dancers will work with professionals from the Utah Ballroom Dance Company during rehearsals (Jan. 8-11, the time will be announced), a dress rehearsal Saturday, Jan. 13 at 3 p.m. and the community performance Saturday, Jan. 13 at 7 p.m. All activities will take place in the auditorium at Hermiston High School. Participants will receive a free ticket to the event. Others who want to attend need to purchase tickets, which are \$20 for adults and \$10 for students. For more information or to register (by Friday, Dec. 29) to perform, call Hermiston Parks & Recreation at 541-667-5018 or stop by 180 N.E. Second St.

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