



STAFF PHOTO BY TAMMY MALGESINI

Students in Kendra Scott's ABLE Classroom at Rocky Heights Elementary School create nautical-themed decorations Tuesday for the Hermiston Education Foundation's Beach & Beef Fundraiser. The event is coming up Saturday at the Hermiston Community Center.

Education foundation fundraiser cruises for cash

By TAMMY MALGESINI
COMMUNITY EDITOR

Students in Kendra Scott's ABLE Classroom were busy with a special art project Tuesday morning at Rocky Heights Elementary School.

The kindergarten through third graders were creating nautical-themed decorations for the Hermiston Education Foundation's annual Beach & Beef Fundraiser.

"Wow, it's beautiful," one young student said as he held up his drawing for others to see.

The community is invited to "Come Sail Away With Us" as the nonprofit foundation raises money to help enhance the educational experience of students throughout the Hermiston School District. Proceeds are used to award grants to staff for projects or equipment that fall outside the district's budget. Also, a scholarship program started this past spring provided \$2,500 scholarships to six graduating seniors.

"They are creating opportunities that we wouldn't be able to do without their support," said Lori Mills, Sandstone Middle School principal.

In its ninth year, the fundraiser features a cruise ship theme. Be sure to grab a boarding pass for Saturday's event at the Hermiston Community Center, 415 S. Highway 395. The doors open at 5 p.m., offering guests a chance to bid on silent auction items and mingle. The all-you-can-eat crab and steak kabobs dinner starts at 5:45 p.m. The live auction kicks off at 7 p.m. Also, there will be a no-host bar.

Although it's not required, foundation treasurer Tori Espinosa said people are invited to have fun and be creative in dressing up for the event. Live entertainment will be provided by the high school jazz band. In addition, all hands will be on deck as student groups assist with serving, acting as auction runners and other tasks.

Foundation funds student opportunities

Since 2003, the education foundation has disbursed \$300,000 in grants that help support such activities as field trips, providing items for drama performances and purchasing musical instruments, technology equipment or other supplies for special projects.

Rob Doherty, science teacher and Armand Larive Television advisor at Armand Larive Middle School, has requested numerous grants over the years. In addition to equipment for the ALTV program, he's received funding for registration fees for the Student Television Network Convention in 2016 in Atlanta and 2017 in Anaheim.

Attending the conferences, Doherty said, includes workshops with industry professionals and competitions with top students from across the United States. An honorable mention in the Anchor Team contest during the 2017 event has inspired students, Doherty said.

"I have found that the students who make the commitment to work hard and prepare for the convention come back with a higher level of confidence in themselves," he said. "When I see

what the students bring back home with them, the feeling is exhilarating."

While student fundraising helps, Doherty said it's insufficient for the trips. Receiving a grant for registration fees, he said, removed the financial burden from families — ensuring that each student who had signed up could attend.

Foundation board members and district educators credit community members for reaching into their wallets to provide additional support to the schools. Mills said some programs or projects come up after the district budget has been approved. Community support through the education foundation, she said, enables them to take advantage of those situations.

"We're in a community that is very supporting of education," said Karen Sherman, HEF grant committee facilitator. "They want to see our kids have as many opportunities as they can."

Jerad Farley, Rocky Heights principal and a member of the HEF board, agreed, saying the community recognizes that they are good stewards of money received.

"We're not just sitting on a big pile of cash," he said. "As quickly as it's coming in, it's going out to provide opportunities for students in the Hermiston School District."

Tickets for the fundraiser are \$35 each. They are available at the district office, 305 S.W. 11th St.; the Hermiston Chamber of Commerce, 1055 S. Highway 395, Suite 111; and at www.squareup.com/store/hef. If available, tickets will be sold at the door.

IN BRIEF

Deadline looms for young citizen nominations

Altrusa International of Hermiston is seeking nominations for young people that are under the age of 21 who demonstrate commitment, personal responsibility and a positive attitude.

The person selected will be recognized as the outstanding young citizen during the upcoming Distinguished Citizens Awards Banquet in Hermiston. The youth, along with two guests, are invited to join the Altrusans for the banquet, which is Wednesday, Feb. 21 at 6 p.m. at the Hermiston Community Center.

Nomination forms are available at the Hermiston Chamber of Commerce (1055 S. Highway 395, Suite 111), local schools and churches. They are due by Monday, Feb. 5.

For more information, contact Altrusa at hermistonaltrusa@gmail.com. For more about the awards banquet, visit www.hermistonchamber.com or call 541-567-6151.

Gathering encourages sharing gospel

What if we followed God with perseverance instead of insecurity?

That is the focus of a faith-based gathering of women in Texas that is being live-streamed across the globe. Women are gathering in churches, homes and community centers to participate in the event. In Hermiston, New Hope Community Church is coordinating IF: Gathering Hermiston to participate in a program that includes a large gathering and then break-out groups to facilitate deeper conversations.

IF: Gathering Hermiston is Friday, Feb. 9 from 5-9 p.m. at New Hope Community Church, 1350 S. Highway 395. It continues Saturday, Feb. 10 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in 30 host locations. A suggested donation of \$1 for the registration is requested to offset costs for the live-stream. Childcare for kids through age 5 is available by donation.

The focus is on Paul's letters to Timothy as he reminded him of the power and responsibility of sharing the gospel. The gathering will also serve as a celebration and encouragement to share about God's work.

To register, visit <https://register.ifgathering.com/event/ifhermiston>. For more information, contact Heather Beal at if.hermiston@gmail.com or search Facebook.

Book Talk features 'A Man Called Ove'

A feel-good story about a cranky old man who gets a crash course in relation-

ships with his new neighbors is the topic of a book club discussion in Stanfield.

The public is invited to discuss "A Man Called Ove" by Fredrik Backman during the upcoming Book Talk. The gathering is Thursday, Feb. 8 at 7 p.m. at the Stanfield Public Library, 180 W. Coe Ave. Treats will be served.

A New York Times bestseller, the story unfolds after the neighbors crash into the curmudgeon's mailbox. It leads to a heart-warming and comical tale of crazy cats, unexpected friendship and the art of backing up a U-Haul.

Multiple copies of the book are available at the library. For more information, call 541-449-1254.

Town hall features senior planning

All area veterans and seniors are invited to attend a Town Hall meeting, which included representatives from Legal Aid Services of Oregon.

The free gathering will feature information about wills, trusts, estate planning, bankruptcy and referrals to attorneys who can assist with specific needs. The meeting is Tuesday, Feb. 6 at 10 a.m. at the Irri-gon branch of the Oregon Trail Library District, 490 N.E. Main St. To arrange for transportation, call 1-844-676-5667.

For more information or to RSVP, call Morrow County Veterans Services at 541-922-6420.

Good Shepherd offers babysitting class

Youths interested in learning general childcare techniques are invited to attend Babysitting Basics 101.

Participants will learn about children's developmental stages, basic first aid and infant/child CPR. The next class is offered Saturday, Feb. 3 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Good Shepherd Medical Center, 610 N.W. 11th St., Hermiston. Open to ages 10-15, the fee is \$40, which includes lunch and all class materials.

Those who plan to attend need to pay and register in advance. The class also will be offered April 7 and May 5.

For more information or to register, call 541-667-3509.

Special service features singing hymns

Food, fun and fellowship are featured during an upcoming special service.

The Hymnspiration is Sunday from 4:30-5:30 p.m. at Victory Baptist Church 193 E. Main St., Hermiston. Everyone is invited to show up and sing old hymns.

For more information, contact Chris Finley at johnchris_1@msn.com or 541-571-2516.



Dave Hughes, left, of Agape House accepts a check from representatives of the Columbia Basin Board of Realtors, including Donn Walls, president Linda Andreason, Shirley Parsons, Heidi Carver, Sherie Britt, Debbie Brandt, Mike Boylan, Stephanie Hughes, Dean Kegler, Tracy Hunter and Maggie Rodriguez.

Realtors donate to Agape House

During the Christmas party of the Columbia Basin Board of Realtors, people dug deep to help support Agape House.

Affiliate members of the Realtors board brought table centerpieces that were auctioned, with proceeds of \$1,017 donated to Agape House.

Representatives from the board — including president Linda Andreason, Mike Boylan, Debbie Brandt, Sherie Britt, Heidi Carver, Stephanie Hughes, Tracy Hunter, Dean Kegler, Shirley Parsons, Maggie Rodriguez and Donn Walls — presented the checks to Dave Hughes, Agape House executive

director, during the board's Jan. 17 general membership meeting.

Agape House provides assistance to people in need in Hermiston and the surrounding area. For more information, including ways to support the nonprofit organization, call Hughes at 541-567-8774.

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