

SAGE Center makes magazine's fan-favorite list

BY TAMMY MALGESINI
COMMUNITY EDITOR

The SAGE Center placed 53rd in the *Oregon Business* magazine's top 100 fan-favorite destinations in Oregon.

"People are pretty amazed at what we have going on here in our small town," said Andrea Orcutt, assistant events coordinator. "They are really impressed with the quality of the exhibits and how the museum flows."

At 101 Olson Road in Boardman, the SAGE Center — Sustainable Agriculture & Energy — is a visitor center created by the Port of Morrow. In addition to interactive displays, it has a theater and museum store.

Orcutt said about 15,000 people visited SAGE last year.

One of the main goals of the museum, Orcutt said, is to educate the public about what's happening in Morrow County. The interactive displays, she said, showcase the region's agriculture, technology and jobs.

Education coordinator Stefanie Swindler said among the highlights are a simulated hot air balloon ride that provides an aerial view of Morrow County, and a chance to plant corn in a tractor simulator. The exhibit offers visitors a chance to compare their skills with GPS technology farmers use to plant crops.

Also, Orcutt said the Processing Kinetic Sculpture

provides information about food products grown in the area. Essentially, she said it shows visitors how potatoes go from field to table.

The museum store features local products, including honey, wine and soaps. In addition, there are books by local authors, pottery and woodworking created by local artists and hands-on activity kits for kids.

The 204-seat theater includes a large screen. The SAGE Center hosts monthly movie nights. In addition, Swindler said local school and youth groups periodically hold special movie nights as fundraisers.

Researchers studied 38,000 reviews on Google, TripAdvisor and Yelp for the

Oregon Business magazine list. The top destinations will be charted on a map — which will be distributed at visitor centers — for people to use as a guide when traveling across the state.

Other regional destinations making the list include Pendleton House Historic Inn (11) and Tamastlikt Cultural Institute (28). To view the full list, visit www.oregonbusiness.com.

The SAGE Center is open Monday through Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. with extended hours from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Regular admission is \$5 or \$3 for seniors and students; there is a family maximum of \$20. For more information, visit www.visitsage.com.



FILE PHOTO

Linda Mackey of Natural Maximum Alpacs demonstrates the use of a loom during the 2017 Morrow County Harvest Festival at the SAGE Center. The interactive visitor center in Boardman was included in *Oregon Business* magazine's top 100 fan-favorite destinations in Oregon.

BRIEFS

Veterans' advisory committee seeks applicants

Veterans are needed from across the state to serve on an advisory committee to act as advocates and represent veteran concerns.

Established in 1945, the Veterans' Affairs Advisory Committee holds quarterly meetings across the state on the first Wednesday in March, June, September and December. Appointed by the governor, those interested are invited to submit an application.

The deadline to apply is Monday, Feb. 22. For more information or to obtain an application, visit www.oregon.gov/odva. For questions, contact vaac@odva.state.or.us or 503-373-2383.

The Arc hosts valentine's party

Treats, DJ music and valentine fun is featured in an event sponsored by The Arc Umatilla County.

The public is invited to attend the Valentine's Dance Party Sunday from 2-3:30 p.m. at The Arc, 215 W. Orchard Ave., Hermiston. The cost is \$5 per person.

A nonprofit organization, The

Arc advocates for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. They offer activities to help in connecting the community and expanding opportunities for people with disabilities.

For more information, call 541-567-7615 or visit www.facebook.com.

Fundraising gala offers passport to Paris

An enchanted French-themed dinner and dance will raise money for the local Court Appointed Special Advocate program.

For more information, call 541-567-7615 or visit www.facebook.com. An Evening in Paris transports people to the "City of Love" with a plated dinner and a dueling piano show. In addition, people will have an opportunity to show support for local foster children in the community.

The fundraising event is Saturday, Feb. 24 from 6-10 p.m. at the Hermiston Community Center, 415 S. Highway 395. General admission is \$40 per person and VIP seats are \$75 each. Tickets are available at Umatilla Morrow County Head Start, 110 N.E. Fourth St., Hermiston or www.umchs.com/donate.

Money raised from the event will go toward training, education

and recruitment of CASA volunteers. Not every child in the community has someone to speak on their behalf. As advocates, CASA volunteers help provide a voice for foster children, as well as providing guidance and support.

For more information, contact Briana Montano at 541-564-6878 or bmontano@umchs.org.

Kiwanis seeks scholarship applicants

The Hermiston Noon Kiwanis Club is accepting applications for its Perry Johnson and Russell Dorran post-secondary education scholarships.

Current seniors at Hermiston High School or graduates of Hermiston who are attending college in academic programs are eligible to apply. Applications are available at the HHS counseling office or the Hermiston Chamber of Commerce, 1055 S. Highway 395, Suite 111.

Evaluation of applicants includes academic record, community service, leadership qualities and financial need. The applications must be submitted by Friday, March 23. Interviews with potential recipients will be scheduled.

The scholarships are given in

memory of a pair of past Kiwanis members. A Baptist minister, Johnson championed youth services and supported education. Dorran was a charter member of the club, as well as the Hermiston Elks Lodge, Hermiston Development Corporation and Blue Mountain Community College board.

For more information, contact George Clough at 541-567-6024, 541-314-3182 or Hermiston Noon Kiwanis Club, P.O. Box 375, Hermiston, OR 97838.

Tax-Aide offers free help to eligible taxpayers

The AARP Foundation's Tax-Aide program provides free tax assistance and preparation through April 17.

Assistance through Tax Aide is not limited to older adults, said Joyce De Monnin, AARP Oregon communications director. Older adults, families and even college students who have low and moderate income levels are eligible for the free services. AARP membership is not required.

AARP volunteers are trained and IRS-certified each year to ensure they are aware of the latest changes to the U.S. Tax Code.

People are encouraged to check the website for information and what to bring when going to a Tax-Aide site. The schedule includes:

•Hermiston Public Library, 235 E. Gladys Ave. Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

•Boardman Senior Center, 100 Tatone St. Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

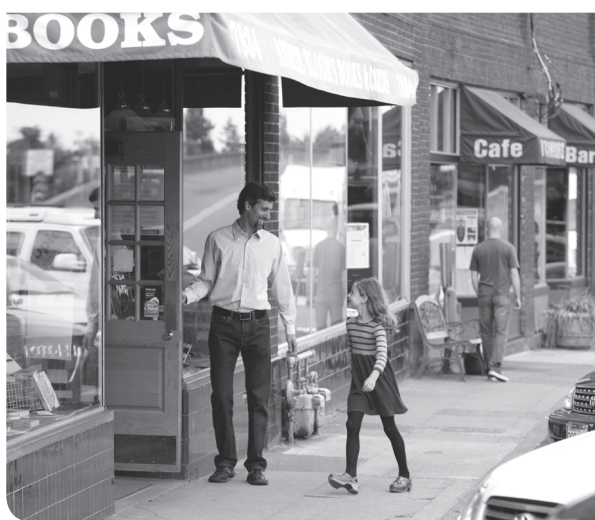
For more information, visit www.aarpfoundation.org/taxhelp or call 1-888-227-7669.

Hits Deep Live tour features Toby Mac

Christian alternative, urban pop and rap musician Toby Mac will be performing in Kennewick.

Mac got his start in DC Talk, a Grammy-winning Christian pop group formed while he was in college. When the group disbanded in 1999, Mac — aka Toby McKeehan — embarked on a solo career.

Mac has continued to garner awards, including a handful of Grammy Awards. He received Best Contemporary Christian Music Album in 2013. As part of his Hits Deep Live tour, Toby Mac will perform Thursday, Feb. 15 at 7 p.m. at the Toyota Center in Kennewick. Tickets are \$15-\$70 and are available at www.ticketmaster.com.



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