



Cousins Luciano Silva, Nadine Ortego and Alexis Silva pose for a photo before riding in the Kid Car Combo at the carnival during the 2017 Hermiston Cinco de Mayo celebration. This year's event features an expanded carnival, which opens Friday with Buddy Night at EOTEC.

STAFF PHOTO BY TAMMY MARGESINI

CINCO

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and more. Entertainment also features Aztec Dancers and Ballet Folklorico. In addition, there will be a battle of the bands, marching bands and a Saturday evening dance.

Be sure to bring a hearty appetite. In addition to several food-eating competitions, there will be numerous food vendors.

Contestants for Miss

Hermiston Cinco de Mayo include Ana Ramirez, Itzy Uriarte, Lizet Romo, Lorena Sandoval and Sonia Coria.

Organizers of the celebration are excited about the growth of the event. In addition to the nonprofit organizing committee, Lopez said they have received support from Hermiston Parks & Recreation and the city's Hispanic Advisory Committee.

Although a separate event, the Coastal Farm & Ranch Challenge of Cham-

pions Tour also is Saturday at EOTEC. Presented by Bonney's Ag & Auto Repair, it pits professional bullriders against some of the best bulls on tour. The event kicks off with a pedal tractor pull-off for kids ages 4-11 at 6 p.m. Each class winner receives a pedal tractor valued at \$400. The bullriders vs. bovines starts at 7:30 p.m. Advance tickets are \$14 at Bonney's Ag, 81600 N. Highway 395 or www.challengeofchampionstour.com. Kids 5-and-under are admitted free. Tickets purchased at the gate are \$17.

Another activity held in conjunction with the Challenge of Champions is an open house Saturday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Bonney's Ag & Auto Repair. It features free hot dogs, test drives and other refreshments.

For more information about the Cinco de Mayo event, visit www.facebook.com/HermistonCincoDeMayo. For more about the Challenge of Champions Tour, call 541-922-1213.

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FACTORY

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Stoolman said they plan to recruit in waves. They have already hired some people, including a few bilingual recruiters, to help with training and development.

Brian Jackson, Lamb Weston's project manager for the new facility, said construction started in February 2018, and the factory will be similar to the existing one but with the newer technology for processing potatoes. Stoolman said the new facility will produce 300 million pounds of french fries per year.

The company was the first recipient of Hermiston's long-term rural enterprise zone agreement, and

was given a 15-year tax break. Instead of property taxes, the company will pay \$1 million per year, to be split evenly between the city of Hermiston and Umatilla County. That \$15 million is about 42 percent of what the company would have paid without the agreement.

Brown said this was her second visit to a Lamb Weston facility, and that she was excited by the development in Eastern Oregon.

"We're all seeing the potential in potatoes," she said.

Brown stressed the importance of giving students the opportunity to graduate high school with skills that they can use in the workforce, if they choose to go that route.

"The same challenges

I'm hearing from employers in the valley, central and southern Oregon are the same ones I'm hearing here," she said. "They're looking for a skilled, quality workforce."

Hermiston assistant city manager Mark Morgan said it's difficult to compile a list of the biggest employers in Hermiston. That's because many, including Lamb Weston, are outside official city limits but still in the Hermiston ZIP code.

He noted that unlike most of the jobs at Hermiston Foods, which closed in late 2017, those at Lamb Weston would be permanent, full-time positions.

He said one stipulation of the 15-year tax exemption is that the salaries paid to workers had to equal the

countywide average, which he said is about \$38,000.

But he said that only applies to the workers hired at the new facility.

"While this will require them to pay the countywide average to new workers, if they pay less next door, there's gonna be some internal strife," he said, adding that those were issues the company would have to consider.

Some of the other large employers in Hermiston pay comparable wages.

Jennifer Gregerson, HR office manager for the Walmart Distribution Center, said the starting salary for any warehouse job is \$16.80, and that the DC employs about 800 to 850 people, depending on the season.

BY THE WAY

BTW

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Members of **Altrusa International of Hermiston** recently enjoyed a royal time. With their annual spring brunch falling on **Queen Elizabeth's** birthday, the group decided to add a crowning touch to their April 21 celebration. The decor featured everything from English telephone booths to British flags and a life-size cardboard cutout of the queen. Many of those in attendance shared about taking trips to England, as well as donning crowns and practicing the queen's wave.

In addition to having fun, Altrusa clubs around the world are active in service projects in an effort to create better communities. To learn more about becoming involved, contact the local group via hermiston-altrusa@gmail.com, www.districttwelve.altrusa.org or search Facebook.

As part of an Earth Day project, **Girl Scouts of Oregon and Southwest Washington Service Unit 22** worked with the **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers** to clean-up a pond in West Park at the **McNary National Wildlife Refuge**.

Participants from Umatilla, Morrow, Gilliam and Wheeler counties worked on the April 21 project — cleaning up the area, planting

coyote willows and cottonwood trees, and removing invasive Russian olive trees. Afterwards, they traveled to **Bechtel National Planetarium** at Columbia Basin College in Pasco to hear a presentation about the life of trees.

In addition, more than 80 people, including from Boardman and Irrigon, participated in activities at **Camp Arrowhead**, located near Stevenson, Washington. They worked on trail restoration and planted trees, including a Douglas fir, mountain hemlock and a Western red cedar to commemorate Earth Day and celebrate 70 years of outdoor skill-building, friendships and appreciation for nature at Camp Arrowhead. **Allie Roberts**, GSOSW outdoor program manager, said thousands of girls have participated in activities and made memories at the camp.

For more information about local Girl Scouts programs, contact **Sarah Shipe** at 503-977-6861, sshipe@girlscoutsw.org or visit www.girlscoutsw.org.

It's a good weekend to party in Hermiston, with Cinco De Mayo and bull riding at the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center, a late model race at the Hermiston Raceway on Saturday night and beautiful weather in the forecast.

Hermiston police will be out and about, too, conducting DUII patrols through an

Oregon Impact grant.

Capt. Scott Clark reminded locals and visitors alike through the Hermiston Police Department's Facebook page to be safe and responsible (and that DUII applies to legal and illegal drugs as well as alcohol.)

The **Arc of Umatilla County** was recently rolling in the dough, raising \$1,850 during a bowling tournament at **Desert Lanes** in Hermiston.

Twelve teams, including 60 bowlers, participated in the April 21 event. After two games totaling 1,937 pins, the top team was **Focus**, which included **Zaaron Allen, Selena Allen, Jerry Vaughan, Steve Hoffman** and **Richard Hoffman**. Coming in second was the **Hole-in-1** team with 1,559 pins. A team representing **Desert Lanes** placed third and **Jilli's Silly Bowlers** came in fourth.

The evening also included a raffle featuring a quilt donated by The Arc president and tournament co-chair **Michele Keitzke**. Also, multiple businesses and individuals supported the event with team and lane sponsorships.

A nonprofit organization, The Arc advocates on behalf of children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The majority of the money raised from the tournament will be utilized to provide an inclusion summer camp,

said **Kristi Smalley**, The Arc vice president and event co-chair.

For more information about The Arc, call 541-567-7615 or visit www.facebook.com/arcofumatillacounty.

You can submit items for our weekly *By The Way* column by emailing your tips to editor@hermistonherald.com or share them on social media using the hashtag **#HHBTW**.

IN BRIEF

Construction crew causes gas leak

HERMISTON — Residents of five homes had to evacuate for about an hour Tuesday afternoon due to a gas leak in Hermiston.

Jimmy Davis, a battalion chief for the Umatilla County Fire District, said a construction company was working in the area of West Orchard Avenue and 13th Place when they hit a two-inch gas line around 1:48 p.m.

Davis said the department had people in a 300 to 400-foot perimeter of the leak evacuate due to the smell and a gas cloud.

He said Cascade Natural Gas had the flow of gas to the leak area stopped by 2:56 p.m.

COMING EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, MAY 2
ECHO FFA PLANT SALE, 1-5 p.m., Wednesday through Saturday, Echo School District, Garfield Street, Echo. Prices start at \$1. Flowers include petunia and Calibrachoa hanging baskets, color bowls, Easy Wave petunias, Double Mad petunias, Portulacas, Gazinias and more. Vegetables and fruits include tomatoes, lettuce, kale, cucumbers, squash, green beans, sugar snap peas and more. (Brooke Vander Veen 541-376-8436 ext. 6227)

ADVENTURE TIME STORY TIME, 2-3 p.m., Hermiston Public Library, 235 E. Gladys Ave., Hermiston. Stories and activities for developmentally disabled children and adults. Free. (541-567-2882)

TOUR OF KNOWLEDGE, 7-8 p.m., Eastern Oregon Higher Education Center, 980 S.E. Columbia Drive, Hermiston. Discussion of public hearings, meetings and events relevant to the area, and reports on sites and facilities that impact natural resources and places of historical interest. Free and everyone welcome. (Eileen Laramore 541-303-3872)

THURSDAY, MAY 3
SPRING COLLECTIVE GOODS SALE, 7-30 a.m.-5 p.m., Good Shepherd Medical Center conference room 1, 610 N.W. 11th St., Hermiston. A good selection of books, toys, gifts, games and unique items. Proceeds help buy medical equipment and fund medical scholarships for local students. (June Rosenberg juner1942@gmail.com)

HERMISTON SENIOR MEAL SERVICE, 12 p.m., Our Lady of Angels Catholic Church parish hall, 565 W. Hermiston Ave., Hermiston. Cost is \$4 for adults, free for children 10 and under, \$4 for Meals on Wheels. Extra 50 cents for utensils/dishes. Bus service to parish hall by donation. (541-567-3582)

BOARDMAN SENIOR MEAL SERVICE, 12 p.m., Boardman Senior Center, 100 Tatone St., Boardman. Cost is \$4 for seniors 55 and over or \$5 for adults. (541-481-3257)

SENSORY STORY TIME, 12-30 p.m., Boardman Public Library, 200 S. Main St., Boardman. For children

from birth to age 4. (541-481-2665)

YARN CLUB, 5:30 p.m., Hermiston Public Library, 235 E. Gladys Ave., Hermiston. (541-567-2882)

THE ARC UMATILLA COUNTY BINGO, 6-10 p.m., The Arc Building, 215 W. Orchard Ave., Hermiston.

Doors open at 6 p.m., seats may be held until 6:30 p.m., then all seats first come, first served; games begin at 7 p.m. Proceeds benefit Umatilla County citizens with developmental disabilities. 18 years or older, must have proof of age and photo I.D. Basic pot \$20, prizes range from \$20-\$750. (541-567-7615)

FIDDLER'S NIGHT, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Brookdale Assisted Living, 980 W. Highland Ave., Hermiston. Enjoy light refreshments, listen to some favorite oldies or join in the jam session. All ages welcome. (541-567-3141)

FRIDAY, MAY 4
IRRIGON FFA PLANT SALE, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Irrigon High School, 315 E. Wyoming Ave., Irrigon. Support local FFA students and get some great plants for spring. (541-922-5551)

PRESCHOOL STORY TIME, 10:15 a.m., Hermiston Public Library, 235 E. Gladys Ave., Hermiston. For children from 3-6 years old. (541-567-2882)

STORY AND CRAFT TIME, 2 p.m., Echo Public Library, 20 S. Bonanza, Echo. (541-376-8411)

VFW BINGO, 6 p.m., Hermiston VFW, 45 W. Cherry St., Hermiston. Doors open at 6 p.m., games begin at 7 p.m. Everyone welcome. (541-567-6219)

SATURDAY, MAY 5
PANCAKE BREAKFAST, 7-10 a.m., Stanfield Community Center, 225 W. Roosevelt, Stanfield. Costs \$6 for full breakfast/\$3 for light meal. (Rose Emerson 541-449-1352)

YARN CLUB, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., Hermiston Public Library, 235 E. Gladys Ave., Hermiston. (541-567-2882)

HERMISTON CINCO DE MAYO, 10 a.m.-10 p.m., Eastern Oregon Trade & Event Center, 1705 E. Airport Road, Hermiston. Live entertainment, food vendors, beer garden, carnival, activities and a bullfighting competition in the rodeo arena.

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MAMMOTH CUP GOLF TOURNAMENT

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