



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dawn Long, the 2018-19 president of Altrusa International of Hermiston, enjoys the Aug. 30 club picnic at Hat Rock State Park. The annual event also serves as a introduction to prospective members.

## Altrusans cook up changes to increase membership

By TAMMY MALGESINI  
COMMUNITY EDITOR

Food, fellowship and fun were the central focus of the annual club picnic of Altrusa International of Hermiston.

In addition to the barbecued burgers, Altrusans were looking to increase interest in membership. The Hermiston club hosted the Aug. 30 event at Hat Rock State park. They invited Altrusans from Pendleton and the Mid-Columbia groups, as well as past members and prospective members.

The Hermiston club, which was organized with 32 initiates on May 14, 1977, sizzled with 67 members 10 years later. In recent years, membership has dwindled to 44, said Dawn Long, 2018-19 club president.

The reason for the decline, said Pam Cooper, is varied. In addition to a few deaths, job changes, people moving and additional time commitments have also taken a toll on membership. The Hermiston gals — although Altrusa is open to men, only one male has joined the local club over the years — don't want to see Altrusa go to the wayside.

"We've seen clubs 'age out' and they miss that opportunity to bring younger people in," said Cooper, who's in her 70s. "If you have an average age of 75, how do you get younger people interested in joining?"

However, it's not just Altrusa that's losing members. Cooper, who has been a member since 1983, said many service organiza-

tions are seeing less participation. Nancy Lauck, who joined in 2011, agreed, saying churches also are experiencing declining memberships.

### Altrusa changing with the times

Long, who's been a member since 2012, said they've been mixing things up recently in hopes of attracting new members as well as encouraging past members to re-join. One of the biggest changes, she said, was cutting back regular meetings to twice a month — the club previously met weekly for a no-host luncheon. The new format also eliminated the catered meal.

Lauck, a past president and currently the publicity manager, said when they made the change they were just one of two clubs in the district — which includes 20 groups from Oregon, Washington, Montana and British Columbia — that still met weekly.

"Some of the older members were initially upset about it," Cooper said. "But our meetings have blossomed."

Cooper, Lauck and Long said it's important to change with the times. One of the things Lauck said they kept hearing from younger members was that taking a regular lunch hour is a thing of the past.

"It's just a different dynamic than when Altrusa first started," she said.

The inner workings of the club, Cooper said, are built around decisions and activities done by committees. So, cutting the regular meetings in half hasn't impacted what the club

does. In fact, she said it's had a positive impact — including the addition of five new members.

There are many choices for people to join service organizations, said Cynthia Traner, who was initiated July 19. She was looking for a way to utilize her talents and make a difference. Her interest in Altrusa was piqued when she started seeing the small lending libraries popping up around the region.

"I kept seeing the 'Little Red Libraries' and I thought, 'This is so sweet,'" Traner said. "Literacy is such an important thing."

Lauck was drawn in by a sewing project that was being conducted by Altrusa members at her church. And, Long was interested in the weekend backpack program — although coordinated by Agape House, Altrusans provide hands on assistance with the project — filling backpacks with food for kids who might otherwise go hungry over the weekend.

"Also, I was looking for something to join to get to know people," Long said. "It's the best way to meet people, to just jump in."

"It's a way to find a sisterhood and to get plugged into and give back to the community," Traner added.

While Altrusa membership is by invitation, people who are interested are encouraged to contact a member. In addition, they hold periodic events where they invite prospective members to attend. To visit a meeting, contact Long at [hermistonaltrusa@gmail.com](mailto:hermistonaltrusa@gmail.com). For more information, visit [districttwelve.altrusa.org](http://districttwelve.altrusa.org) or search Facebook.

### BRIEFS

#### AAUW sets potluck, membership meeting in Pendleton

The American Association of University Women is kicking off its 2018-19 year with a potluck and membership meeting.

AAUW's mission is to assist in bettering the lives of women and girls. Through a grassroots effort, they work to empower women through advocacy, education, philanthropy and research. The Pendleton branch is the nearest group in the region.

Prospective members are invited to attend. The event is Thursday at 5:30 p.m. in the Vert Club Room, 345 S.W. Fourth St., Pendleton. Those attending are invited to bring a main dish, salad or dessert to share. Beverages and utensils will be provided.

For more information, contact Marlene Krout at 541-276-7596 or [mkeykrout@yahoo.com](mailto:mkeykrout@yahoo.com).

#### Town hall in Walla Walla focuses on veteran's services

Veterans and their families are invited to voice their thoughts and learn more about benefits and services available during a Veteran Town Hall Meeting.

The event is Thursday from 6-7:30 p.m. in the theater building at Jonathan M. Wainwright Memorial VA Medical Center, 77 Wainwright Drive, Walla Walla. Topics of discussion will include facility updates and improvements to the delivery of care in the community. Walla Walla VA leadership and other staff will be on hand to listen to veteran's concerns about service delivery.

For more information, contact Linda Wondra at 509-525-5200 or [linda.wondra@va.gov](mailto:linda.wondra@va.gov).

#### Victory Baptist resumes monthly Hymnspiration in Hermiston

An evening of food, fun and fellowship will feature the singing of old hymns.

Victory Baptist Church is resuming its monthly Hymnspiration service. Everyone is welcome to attend the informal service Sunday from 4:30-5:30 p.m. at 193 E. Main St., Hermiston.

For more information, contact Chris Finley at [johnchris\\_1@msn.com](mailto:johnchris_1@msn.com) or 541-571-2516.

#### Kidz programs kick off at Hermiston Nazarene church

A new year of KidzOwn Worship is kicking off at the Hermiston Church of the Nazarene.

Geared for children ages 4 through fifth grade, the special program features wor-

ship, prayer and lessons geared for kids. The kick-off event, which is Sunday at 10:15 a.m., will include a celebration — complete with bouncy houses. The church is located at 1520 W. Orchard Ave., Hermiston. Youths entering sixth grade are invited for a special promotion celebration.

In addition, the Wednesday night kids' program, Kidz in the Word, will begin Sept. 12 from 6-7:30 p.m. Its focus will build on the Sunday lesson and theme through songs and activities. It's also for children ages 4 through fifth grade.

For more information, contact 541-567-3677, [hermistonnaz@gmail.com](mailto:hermistonnaz@gmail.com) or visit [www.hermistonnazarene.org](http://www.hermistonnazarene.org).

#### Head downtown for First Thursday

Refreshments, specials and a bonus drawing are all a part of the Hermiston Downtown District's First Thursday.

The event is Thursday from 4:30-7 p.m. in nearly 20 downtown businesses. People are encouraged to come down and take a stroll, visit with friends and shop local. Also, be sure to get a drawing ticket and get it signed when visiting participating businesses. To enter the drawing, get four or more signatures on the entry card and drop it off at Two96 Main, this month's host business.

And, don't forget, Thursday also is the Maxwell Market — Hermiston's farmers' market. It runs from 4-8 p.m. at South First Place and West Locust Avenue.

For more about First Thursday, call 541-289-1112 and for more about the farmers' market, visit [www.facebook.com/maxwellmarketupdates](http://www.facebook.com/maxwellmarketupdates).

#### Book club to discuss 'Fallen Land'

A book by award-winning author Taylor Brown is the topic of the upcoming Bookminders, the Hermiston Public Library book club.

Participants will discuss "Fallen Land" Tuesday, Sept. 11 at 1:30 p.m. at The Pheasant Bar & Grill, 149 E. Main St., Hermiston. The club meeting is free and people may arrive early for a no-host lunch.

Set during the Civil War, the historical novel shares the story of a young couple, who on horseback, are fleeing from a dangerous band of marauders. Seeking a safe haven where they can make a home and begin to rebuild their lives, the gritty and action-packed tale also chronicles a love story.

The book club, which is free and open to everyone, meets the second Tuesday of each month. A limited number of copies of "Fallen Land" are available at the library. For more information, call 541-567-2882 or stop by the library at 235 E. Gladys Ave. For more about the author, visit [www.taylorbrownfiction.com](http://www.taylorbrownfiction.com).

BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION



### Cayuse Goat Ranch conservation easement would protect Oregon for fish and wildlife habitat

The Bonneville Power Administration intends to fund the purchase of a conservation easement on approximately 76.5 acres of mixed conifer forest, native grasslands and riparian/wetland habitat along the Umatilla River, approximately 10 miles east of Pendleton in Umatilla County, Oregon. When the purchase is complete, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) will own and manage the property for fish and wildlife conservation purposes and BPA will receive a conservation easement to ensure that the habitat values on the property are always protected.

The funding will be provided as part of BPA's ongoing efforts to protect, restore and enhance habitat for Spring Chinook, Coho and Middle Columbia River Steelhead. The acquisition would serve as partial mitigation for the construction and operation of the Federal Columbia River Power System which includes dams on the main stem Columbia and Snake rivers. The purchase of the conservation easement would specifically satisfy some of BPA's mitigation needs to acquire new fish and wildlife habitat as identified in the National Marine Fisheries Service 2008/2010/2014 Biological Opinion that guides BPA's protection of salmon and steelhead listed under the federal Endangered Species Act.

The CTUIR will develop a management plan to guide the protection and enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat on the property. The CTUIR will provide the public an opportunity to review the draft plan. BPA will review the plan for consistency with the purpose of the acquisition and the terms and conditions of the conservation easement prior to its implementation. A letter describing the proposed purchase, a map and information describing environmental review requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act are available at [www.bpa.gov/goto/LandAcquisitions](http://www.bpa.gov/goto/LandAcquisitions).

For more information, contact BPA project manager Hannah Dondy-Kaplan at 503-230-4071 or [hadondy-kaplan@bpa.gov](mailto:hadondy-kaplan@bpa.gov). You can also call 800-622-4519 toll free.

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