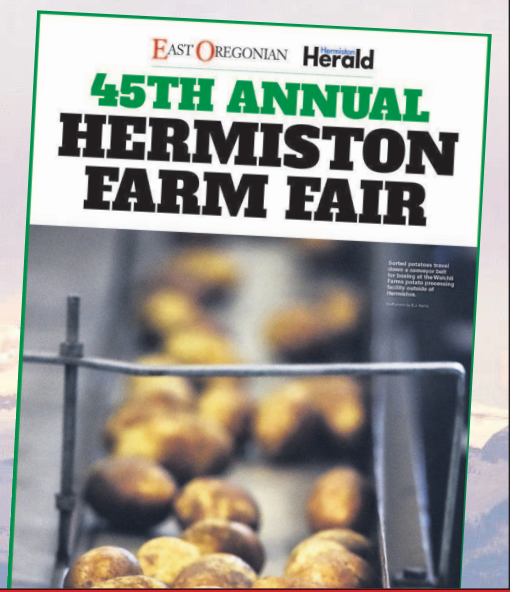


Hermiston Herald

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INSIDE

POSTPONED

The Hermiston City Council delayed their vote on raising electric rates for Hermiston Energy Services customers.

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TREE SALE

Umatilla firefighters aren't selling Christmas trees this year, but Encore Wellness 4 Life has stepped up to fill the need.

PAGE A4

TALL ORDER

At 6-4, Hermiston girls basketball player Jordan Thomas towers over the competition.

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BY THE WAY

Journey to Bethlehem canceled

Hermiston will be missing a holiday tradition this year after the **Hermiston Seventh-Day Adventist Church** announced it will not be holding its live nativity **Journey to Bethlehem** this year.

The church at 855 W Highland Avenue was gutted by a fire in June, and an announcement on the church's Facebook page stated that the event would be canceled this year as a result.

...
The annual holiday concert of the **Inland Northwest Musicians** is Saturday, Dec. 8 at the **Echo Community Center**. "The Carols of Christmas" features the orchestra and chorale performing holiday music, including traditional and contemporary songs.

Although there is no admission charge, due to the popularity of past holiday concerts, it is highly recommended that people make reservations. Contact 541-289-4696 or inwm@machmedia.net. See next week's **Hermiston Herald** for a story about the event.

...
Representatives from the **Harkenrider Senior**

See BTW, Page A6

COMMITTED TO ADVOCACY



New CASA volunteers holds their right hands in the air while being sworn in Monday in the courtroom of Umatilla County Circuit Court Judge Eva Temple in Hermiston.

STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

New CASAs prepare to advocate for local foster children

By JADE MCDOWELL
STAFF WRITER

When the situation at home gets so bad a child is removed from their parents, having someone in their corner can make a big difference.

More children will have that opportunity after 10 new court-appointed special advocates were sworn in Monday.

Known as CASAs, the specially-trained volunteers are assigned to be a child's advocate as they move through the court system. They visit with the child at least once a month, attend supervised visits and court hearings, meet the foster parents and biological parents, study the details of the case and submit reports to the judge about what they believe is in the child's best interest. In October, 73 foster children in Umatilla and Morrow counties had a court-appointed special advocate, but 106 did not.

"Since we got these ones sworn in,



Umatilla County Circuit Court Judge Eva Temple signs a certificate of completion for a new CASA volunteer after a swearing in ceremony Monday in Hermiston.

STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

we can probably get another 15 to 20 kids CASAs," said Jesus Rome, the CASA manager.

At age 23, Meagan Duncan-Osborn is younger than most CASAs, but she didn't want to wait to give back. Duncan-Osborn was adopted out of foster care when she was young, and wants to

be an example and a source of hope for future generations of foster children.

Duncan-Osborn said she was removed from her mother's care when she was "very young" and placed with strangers for a while before her father's

See CASA, Page A16

A Meal for All

Volunteers work overtime to make Fellowship Dinner

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN
STAFF WRITER

The first volunteers for the Community Fellowship Dinner got to the kitchen at 6 a.m. Thursday and got to work sterilizing pans, carving turkey and putting food in the ovens for the hundreds of people that would soon gather at Hermiston High School for a Thanksgiving meal.

Not 24 hours earlier, they'd been staring at a problem: clogged drains, which stopped them from washing

dishes and prepping turkeys.

With 40 birds to prepare for the next day's Community Fellowship Dinner, they didn't miss a beat, instead working ahead on other parts of the meal until plumbers arrived.

Despite the hiccup, things were running smoothly again the next morning, with volunteers bustling in the kitchen and finding things to do.

"We are so far ahead it's scary," said co-kitchen manager Jan Cassens.

Cassens and co-kitchen manager Heather Smart have worked to make sure the event is a well-oiled machine for volunteers. They start meeting in September to figure out what they already have and what they'll need for the year's event.

See MEAL, Page A16



Gerri McMullen and Connie Jorgensen, both of Hermiston, plate food during the Community Fellowship Dinner Thanksgiving meal on Thursday in Hermiston. For more Thanksgiving images, see A15

STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS



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