

BTW

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Activity Center graciously accepted a \$5,000 donation during its Nov. 13 senior lunch.

Mark Morgan, Hermiston's assistant city manager and a member of the **Hermiston Rotary Club**, presented the check on behalf of the club.

Midwife **Catherine O'Brien**, DNP, CNM has joined the **Good Shepherd Women's Center** team.

O'Brien has been a nurse for more than 30 years and has a Master of Science in Nurse-Midwifery and a Doctor of Nurse Practice degree, according to a news release from **Good Shepherd Health Care System**.

She was living in Spokane Valley, Wash. previously and said she chose to come to Hermiston because she always had a desire to serve women in a rural community. She joins **Kelli Ste-**

phenson as the women's center's second midwife, and said the fact that **Stepenson** also studied at **Frontier Nursing University** was another factor in her decision to move.

O'Brien is welcoming new patients to the Good Shepherd Women's Center located at the Good Shepherd Medical Plaza at 620 NW 11th Street in Hermiston. To schedule an appointment call 541-667-3801, or established patients may request an appointment through your MyHealth Patient Portal or app.

It's the season of giving — and of taking things that belong to someone else.

Law enforcement is warning people who ordered holiday gifts online or are sending them to loved ones via mail to beware of package thieves, who are out in force this time of year. **Hermiston Police Department** posted tips on their Facebook page for foiling criminals, including a rec-

ommendation to install a home video surveillance system if possible.

Major shippers, such as the **U.S. Postal Service**, **UPS** and **FedEx** all offer tracking services that can help keep a valuable package from being left on a porch unattended for long. The apps, accessible by smartphone or on the shippers' website, in some cases allow you to choose when a package is delivered, get notifications for when a package is delivered and provide delivery instructions. When possible, ask for packages to be left somewhere less visible, such as behind a fence or inside a shed.

Other tips for preventing package theft include requiring a signature on delivery, shopping local, purchasing a lockbox and having a package delivered to a more secure location such as your place of work or a trusted friend. If you're sending someone a package, make sure they know it's on its way.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Phyllis Tincher of Ring Praise Music Ministry plays three octaves of **Schulmerich** handbells during concerts with **Sean Rogers**. The musicians will perform a free Christmas concert Dec. 3 in Hermiston.

Music ministry rings in holiday season with free concert

By **TAMMY MALGESINI**
COMMUNITY EDITOR

A pair of musicians will truly ring in the holiday season as Ring Praise Music Ministry shares the story of Jesus Christ through music and scripture.

The Ring Praise Christmas Concert features **Phyllis Tincher** on handbells and **Sean Rogers** on keyboards. The free performance is Monday, Dec. 3 at 6:30 p.m. at Faith Presbyterian Church, 1005 S.E. Ninth St., Hermiston.

Also, while in the area, Tincher and Rogers will play at Two Rivers Correctional Institution in Umatilla. Although that concert isn't open to the public, people are asked to lift the performance in prayer in hopes that inmates who attend will be drawn closer to God.

The musicians first performed together in 2002 when Tincher was invited to ring handbells at a Boise church where Rogers served as the accompanist. That launched their music ministry of playing hymns and contemporary praise songs during concerts in the greater Boise area. Tincher and Rogers then began traveling to small communities in Eastern Oregon and Idaho.

As the Ring Praise Music Ministry, Tincher and Rogers have released three albums featuring collections of hymn arrangements. In addition, their Christmas CD, "Come to the Manger," includes 15 traditional and contemporary holiday songs.

Tincher began solo ringing in 1997 and directed her first handbell choir in La Grande. For many years during the holiday season, Tincher brought three octaves of Schulmerich handbells and played for The Salvation Army's Red Kettle Campaign near her home in Nampa, Idaho. She also



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Ring Praise Music Ministry features **Phyllis Tincher** on handbells and **Sean Rogers** on keyboards.

teaches adult and youth handbell classes at conferences and workshops.

An Ontario native, Rogers tours extensively as a collaborative pianist with vocalists and instrumentalists throughout the United States. As a solo concert artist, he's known for improvisational skills in multiple genres on keyboards. Rogers has been called a "virtuoso performer who makes music come alive" for audiences of all ages.

Sonology Music has published four arrangements by Tincher and Rogers, which can be heard at www.sonology-music.com/music-search. They received praise for their rendition of "Silent Night" by Kevin McChesney, an award-winning composer and arranger.

"One of the finest writing duos in the business brings us a fresh, beautiful take on a traditional favorite," McChesney said. "If you don't think anything new or more lovely could be said about the much-arranged 'Silent Night,' treat yourself to this wonderful setting — it'll change your mind."

Hermiston council raises senior taxi ticket prices

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
STAFF WRITER

Hermiston's taxi tickets for senior and disabled residents will be more expensive in January.

The city council voted Monday to raise the tickets from \$2 to \$2.50. It also raised its subsidy to Umatilla Cab Company, paying the company \$6.75 instead of \$6.60 per ticket redeemed for a ride.

The program, which started in 2007, subsidizes rides for Hermiston residents over age 62 or with a documented disability. Qualifying residents can visit city hall and purchase tickets, which they can use for a one-way taxi ride. The city subsidizes the ride by

paying qualifying cab companies an additional \$6.60 (now \$6.75) for each ticket used.

Assistant city manager **Mark Morgan** said ridership has gone up significantly this year, jumping from 17,500 in 2017 to 18,000 from January through the end of October so far this year. Morgan said that puts the city on pace to subsidize about 23,000 rides by the end of the year, which would put the city over budget by about \$27,000.

The city had expected ticket sales to decrease after it implemented the HART, a free public bus system, at the beginning of 2017. While ridership of the HART rose from 2,700 rides in 2017 to more than 8,000 so far this year, Morgan said bus rid-

ers seem to mostly be residents who don't qualify for the taxi program.

Morgan said **Kayak Public Transit**, which operates the bus system under contract with the city, is planning to expand the HART's hours of service at the beginning of the year, likely running from about 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

In order to handle the budget shortfall for the taxi ticket program and accommodate future growth, Morgan recommended raising the taxi ticket price from \$2, where it has been since 2009, to \$2.50. While the increase will cost residents, Morgan also pointed out that the HART remains a free alternative to a taxi ride for those who can't afford it.

Hermiston man injured in rollover crash in Washington

YAKIMA — A Hermiston man was injured in a one-vehicle rollover Saturday morning on Interstate 82, three miles west of Zillah, Washington.

Omar Campos, 18, was transported to **Astria Toppenish Hospital** in **Toppenish, Washington**. Nursing supervisor **Steve Hogsett** said Campos was treated and then discharged in stable condition.

Campos was the passenger in a 2001 Dodge Durango driven by **Isaac J. Sanchez**, 19, also of Hermiston. Sanchez was not injured in the crash. Both occupants were wearing seat belts.

Washington State Patrol trooper **J. Campbell** of the **Yakima Command Center** reported Sanchez was driving eastbound near **Milepost 49** when he lost control of the vehicle and rolled

into the median. The vehicle was totaled. Sanchez was charged with driving too fast for the conditions. According to **Campbell**, alcohol and drugs were not involved in the crash.

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