

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL

Hermiston Herald

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HOPEFUL

A Hermiston man looks toward an experimental treatment to slow his scleroderma.

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DINNER TIME

The Community Fellowship Dinner is looking for volunteers to help serve meals on Christmas day.

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The Hermiston boys basketball team keeps their winning streak alive.

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BY THE WAY

Sign advertises new athletic club

The **Hermiston Herald** offices will be closed at noon on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve and closed completely on Christmas Day and New Year's Day to allow our staff to enjoy time with their families during the holidays.

...
A banner outside the former **Columbia Court Club** at 80903 N Highway 395 is advertising the **Hermiston Athletic Club** "opening soon."

The building has been closed since a fire in 2016, but former owner **Steve Watkins** announced in October he had sold it to a new owner who planned to re-open it.

We reached out to the email address listed on the website, www.hermiston-athleticclub.com, and haven't heard back yet, but look for more information in a future edition of the **Hermiston Herald**.

...
A current display at the **Hermiston Public Library** features the artwork of **Kim La Plant**. The Hermiston woman, who grew up in the Ozarks, goes by the moniker **Ozark Hippie**.

Also, due to upcoming holidays, the library will

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Families wrap up holiday traditions



Staff photo by Tammy Malgesini

Chet and Deana Hall with their blended family on their wedding day this summer at Rockaway Beach. The couple has incorporated the four gift Christmas challenge as part of their family holiday tradition.



Staff photo by Tammy Malgesini

Presents wrapped in the same paper don't have tags on them at the home of Chet and Deana Hall. As part of the four gift Christmas challenge, the Hermiston couple's family finds out which gifts are theirs when they get to the bottom of their Christmas stocking.



Contributed photo

Shawn Logue plans a family trip to Leavenworth, Washington, each December. Rather than spending a lot on presents, the Hermiston woman said they focus on family time together during the holiday season.

By **TAMMY MALGESINI**
COMMUNITY EDITOR

Santa Claus doesn't have anything on a Hermiston woman when it comes to making a list and checking it twice.

Deana Hall learned about the four gift Christmas challenge several years ago on the internet. The idea is to get four presents for each person with a focus on the categories of something they want, need, wear and

read. She's utilized the method for a handful of years — even modifying it to include a "mom's choice" for a fifth gift.

After marrying Chet Hall this past summer, their blended family increased to seven kids between the ages of 10 and 26. Deana said the organized plan makes holiday shopping more manageable.

"Before it was a free-for-all," she said. "Also, it's much easier on the budget."

Adding to the fun and surprise, gifts for the Christmas challenge don't have name

tags on them. Each of the seven kids will find out which presents are theirs when they find the piece of corresponding wrapping paper at the bottom of their stocking.

James and Jolene Pooley were looking for a different way to approach the holiday season this year when they became aware of the four gift Christmas challenge.

"It makes sense," James said. "Last year we kind of went overboard for everyone. It's

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Christmas Express delivers hundreds of meals, presents

By **JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN**
STAFF WRITER

After one box brimming with canned foods and a whole turkey, an armful of wrapped presents and a pair of warm socks, everyone who walked out the doors of the Agape House on Monday felt the effects of Christmas Express as it rolled through Hermiston.

The annual effort by the Hermiston Police Department yielded 500 boxes of food, turkeys, bags of potatoes and onions, and hundreds of gifts for children ages 0 to 11. On Sunday, the police department delivered the haul to the Agape House, which is distributing the donations to families Monday through Wednesday.

Volunteer Ginger Haley checked in families as they came to collect

donations. She checked off a list of 350 families and individuals in need, who were recommended by the schools, Department of Human Services, Head Start and local churches.

As families filed in, the children gravitated toward the pile of stuffed animals in the corner, while the parents perused the tables of hats, gloves and stocking stuffers. Each family also got to take home a jar of oatmeal cookie mix, and wrapped presents for each of their children. After collecting toys and gift boxes inside, visitors drove to the back of the Agape House building, where volunteers Doug Alvarez and John Carraher loaded boxes of food into cars.

Jan Maitland, an Agape House employee, said if someone was not



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Volunteer Doug Alvarez loads a box of food into the back of a vehicle during the Christmas Express on Monday at Agape House in Hermiston.

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