

# Local economy scores with AAU tourney

By TAMMY MALGESINI  
COMMUNITY EDITOR

AAU youth basketball coaches weren't the only ones going to their benches during the 16th annual Best of the West tournament.

With an estimated influx of 4,000 people in Hermiston over the weekend, area businesses changed their regular game plans to help accommodate lodging and meal options for teams.

"When we have these teams coming in, we will bring in some extra housekeepers," said Ryan Lynch, general manager of Comfort Inn & Suites. "We give them a pretty good rate and we'll change our breakfast hours if they have morning games."

Hermiston High School athletic director Larry Usher, who helps coordinate the event with the Hermiston Youth Basketball Club, said the Jan. 26-27 tournament featured 119 teams. In addition to duffle bags and basketball shoes, people coming to town open their wallets, he said.

Although a specific economic impact study hasn't been conducted on the Hermiston Youth Basketball Club tournaments, Usher said similar cities have estimated an average of \$100 is spent per person.

"I think that's a very conservative number," Usher said. "With at least one night in a hotel, 5-7 meals, a tank of gas and snacks — that adds up in a hurry."

Usher said in addition to local teams, people travel from the Tri-Cities, Seattle, Portland, Yakima, Seattle, Spokane and Idaho, including 20 teams from the Boise area. The infrastructure, including adequate hotel space and restaurants, is important to the success of the tournament, Usher said. Although they haven't outgrown available hotel space, he said locals do feel the impact during tournament weekends.



Staff photo by Kathy Aney/East Oregonian

**Teams from Boise, Idaho, and Richland, Washington, battle it out Saturday in the Sunset Elementary School gymnasium. The teams came to town for the Best of the West AAU basketball tournament, which used gyms in Hermiston, Echo and Stanfield and brought an estimated 4,000 people and a \$400,000 boost to the local economy.**

"I think the word is out when it's tournament weekend, don't go out to lunch or dinner," Usher said. "It will be hard to find a table."

While some teams were left scrambling to find a restaurant to accommodate a large group for a Saturday night team dinner, others planned ahead. Shortly after lunch, the Southeast Boise team placed an order for more than a dozen pizzas from Ye Olde Pizza Shoppe, said Nicole Roldan.

"The pizza place was really busy but because we called so early, we didn't have to wait," she said.

Members of the Idaho Elite teams were scattered at several different hotels, said Blaine and Dusty Moriarty. The Boise couple and their two sons, Parker, 11, and Cooper, 8, booked a room about a month ago at Oxford Suites.

While Cooper gave it a "thumbs up" for the swimming pool, Dusty was impressed with the hotel scheduling extra help to assist with the complimentary breakfast.

"The tournament people do a good job of letting the town know," Blaine said. "The town appeared ready

for all the teams."

Kelly Schwirser, who's in charge of marketing and communications with the Hermiston Chamber of Commerce, forwarded an email to its membership that the weekend tournament was the biggest yet. The Hermiston Youth Basketball Club hosts four, with the final one — For the Love of the Game — scheduled for Feb. 9-10.

The Moriartys said the weekend would likely cost their family about \$500-\$600 — including lodging, meals, gas and snacks. Roldan, whose daughter plays on the Southeast Boise team, estimated her weekend costs at around \$500.

In October, Robin Evans, the Southeast Boise coach, reserved rooms for the team at the Holiday Inn Express. Selling points, she said, included a complimentary breakfast and swimming pool.

"Also, it's centrally located with the games and restaurants," she said.

Roldan said they heard about the Hermiston tournament from other Boise-area teams. In addition to a shorter driving distance than going to Portland, she

said the gymnasiums were more conveniently located.

"The schools and their facilities are amazing," Blaine Moriarty added.

Also, Usher said little things like having food vendors outside a couple of the schools and onsite custom printing of tournament gear are added touches that people like.

Anna Francis of AJ's Printed Apparel had stations set up at the high school and Armand Larive Middle School. In addition to T-shirts, sweatshirts and drift long-sleeved shirts with tournament logos, people could have their names and uniform numbers added.

Francis, who launched her business in 1996, gives a percentage of her sales to the Hermiston Youth Basketball Club.

Also, Usher said she prints up special shirts for the winning team and the second place team. The tournament logo gear, Usher said, is a great way to promote and market the event.

"The tournament is a great opportunity for our community," Francis said. "It's great to see that many people in town. It's a lot of work but it's worth it."

# Good Shepherd sets goal at 5 million steps

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN  
STAFF WRITER

## SIGN UP

### Hermiston Walks

Go to <https://link.movespring.com/join>

Go to "sign up now"

Enter the organization code: APHA2019

Scroll down and click on "join team"

Search for the team name "Hermiston Walks."

There's strength in numbers, and Good Shepherd Medical Center is hoping to capitalize on that idea as they encourage community members to join them in a national exercise challenge.

The hospital's Education Department has created a team for the "Billion Steps Challenge," an effort by the American Public Health Association to get participants to collectively walk one billion steps. The challenge started at the beginning of 2019, and participants have until April 7 to join the "Hermiston Walks" team.

Jaime Crowell, the hospital's Community Health Educator, said so far there are 3,000 participants nationwide, which have so far reached 300 million steps. But only five people have signed up for the Hermiston team. The Hermiston team's goal is to collectively walk 5 million steps by the end of the challenge.

"If you break that down to 10,000 steps a day, that's only 50 people that need to do that many steps, for 10 days," Crowell said. "And we have way more than 10 days left."

But more than reaching the goal, Crowell said the point of the challenge is to get people exercising.

"It's to show that physical activity can be fun, and a good way to jumpstart physical activity is through competition or doing a challenge," she said.

She encouraged families to make their own goals, or compete with each other to reach a certain number of steps.

Participants can sign up for the challenge by creating a Movespring account, where they can sync their

device to track their steps. They can also manually enter their steps, or enter the distance they walked or ran.

She said although the team is named "Hermiston Walks," it's open to anyone in the surrounding areas, too.

In a few months, Crowell said the hospital hopes to debut another tool that they hope will encourage people to walk more — the Northeast Oregon Prescription Trails website. The website, modeled after a program in New Mexico, will have a catalog of local parks and trails, with photos, descriptions of the trails, and things users need to be aware of, like accessibility for wheelchairs.

"Doctors, dentists, even veterinarians can write prescriptions for exercise as part of management of chronic diseases," Crowell said. "Exercise has been proven to be as effective if not more in prevention of diseases."

She said that she hopes the tools will help the community shift toward relying on exercise as a sustainable way to improve health.

Crowell said there are other ways people can learn to form healthy habits if they need some extra help. The hospital has free classes, like a physical activity class, and a "jumpstart weight loss through exercise" class.



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# COMING FEBRUARY 13

## SCREEN time

### Exclusively in the Wednesday East Oregonian and Hermiston Herald



**Meatless Wednesday: Flavortown Market goes to the greens and beans**

By Andrew Warren  
TV Media

In the first round of the competition, host Guy Fieri gives the competing chefs a list of ingredients that their dishes must feature. Then, in the second round, the chefs spin a wheel that randomly gives each of them a meat dish that they must create vegetarian. Finally, Guy gets tricky in the final round and takes away the remaining competitors' shopping carts before sending them out to shop for the ingredients needed to make their guilty pleasure dishes.

"Guy's Grocery Games" is similar to other cooking competition shows, with a chef getting the six after each round once the judges have had a chance to taste and evaluate all of the dishes. The contest is held inside of a supermarket, and the competitors are required to "shop" for their own ingredients from the store's shelves, and all sorts of twists tie into the unique twists.

The judges that Guy has brought in to taste the week's mystery meals are a who's who of Food Network celebrity chefs. There's a pair of "Food Network Star" winners in Danaric Phillip ("Southern at Heart") and Anni Sempura ("Art Party"), along with frequent judge and "Top Chef All-Stars" winner Richard Blais. Vegans don't have to be having, and with those three discerning judges ready to taste everything on the plate, the contestants in this week's "Guy's Grocery Games" have to pack as much punch into their dishes as they can.

**cooking this week**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
12:00 p.m. <b>CGU The Great British Bake Off</b> (New!) 1:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 1:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 2:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 2:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 3:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 3:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 4:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 4:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 5:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 5:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 6:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 6:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 7:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 7:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 8:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b>	12:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 1:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 1:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 2:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 2:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 3:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 3:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 4:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 4:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 5:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 5:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 6:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 6:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 7:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 7:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 8:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b>	12:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 1:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 1:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 2:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 2:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 3:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 3:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 4:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 4:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 5:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 5:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 6:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 6:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 7:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 7:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 8:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b>	12:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 1:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 1:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 2:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 2:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 3:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 3:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 4:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 4:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 5:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 5:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 6:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 6:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 7:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 7:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 8:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b>	12:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 1:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 1:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 2:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 2:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 3:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 3:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 4:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 4:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 5:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 5:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 6:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 6:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 7:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 7:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 8:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b>	12:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 1:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 1:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 2:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 2:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 3:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 3:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 4:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 4:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 5:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 5:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 6:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 6:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 7:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 7:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 8:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b>	12:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 1:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 1:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 2:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 2:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 3:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 3:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 4:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 4:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 5:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 5:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 6:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 6:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 7:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 7:30 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b> 8:00 p.m. <b>FOOD Network's Chopped</b>

Guy Fieri as seen in "Guy's Grocery Games"

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