



Participants during the fifth annual Diaper Dash bundled up for the March 2 event. Coordinated by the Hermiston Church of the Nazarene, donations of diapers were collected to distribute to those in need in the community.

Contributed photo

Frigid fun run brings in diaper donations

By TAMMY MALGESINI
COMMUNITY EDITOR

Diapers and more diapers — and baby wipes, too — were donated during the Diaper Dash.

Despite the lingering snow and ice, the fifth annual event drew 134 participants. The entry fee for the frigid 5K and 10K walk/run was a package or box of diapers.

Organized by the Hermiston Church of the Nazarene, Dawn Kennison-Kerrigan said diapers and wipes have continued to come in after the March 2 event — totaling nearly 10,000.

Kennison-Kerrigan said a group of youths approached the church's pastor, Rev. Eric Fritz, inquiring about a way they could help people in the community. Somehow, the idea of diapers came up — and the Diaper Dash was born.

The idea was to collect diapers as the entrance fee and then distribute them to those in need in the community. Providing diapers is a practical way to help ease a burden in times of need.



Contributed photo

Nearly 10,000 diapers were collected during the fifth annual Diaper Dash at the Hermiston Church of the Nazarene.

They are distributed to parents, single moms and dads, grandparents and local agencies.

Participants include everyone from single adults and couples to families with their kids. In addition, Kennison-Kerrigan said several sports teams from Hermiston High School have been involved. Some of the teams, she said, were looking for some fun fitness activities to kick off their

conditioning season.

Valerie Vandecar, interim director at TruCare Pregnancy Resource Center, is thrilled with the diaper donations. She estimated that the agency gives out an average of 20 packs a week.

"It's a huge blessing to us and our clients," Vandecar said.

In addition to thousands of diapers that were donated during the dash, the church

received a huge surprise when unexpected deliveries from Amazon and the Military Exchange arrived. Kennison-Kerrigan said an enclosed note said, "Hope this gets your Diaper Dash off to a good start."

A friend of Fritz's watched one of the church's streaming services and learned about the event. A veteran, he challenged some of his military buddies to donate — word spread across the country with other veterans and military personnel sending diapers, Kennison-Kerrigan said. Three days after the Diaper Dash, a shipment arrived with more than 1,000 diapers and an additional 1,080 baby wipes.

The effort, Vandecar said, goes beyond the diaper donations. The message TruCare clients receive, she said, is that others really care about them.

"It just builds a sense of community for our clients," Vandecar said.

Kennison-Kerrigan said plans are already underway for the sixth annual event. It will be held the first Saturday in March 2020.

United Way serves up 'Tastiest Taco' fundraiser

By TAMMY MALGESINI
COMMUNITY EDITOR

The United Way of Umatilla & Morrow Counties is setting the table for a tasty way to raise money.

People will have an opportunity to put their taste buds to the test during Tastiest Taco 2019. United Way has teamed up with 10 area restaurants and food trucks for the contest and fundraiser. Beginning April 12 and leading up to Cinco de Mayo, people can sample tacos and vote on their favorite from the participating restaurants and food trucks.

"This is a fun and tasty

way to raise money to help meet the critical needs of agencies in Umatilla and Morrow counties," said Beth Harrington, United Way's resource development coordinator.

To participate, people need to buy a \$10 stamp book. The booklet provides one free featured taco (including vegetarian options) from April 12 through May 5 at each of the 10 participating vendors — including six locations in Hermiston and one each in Irrigon, Pendleton, Stanfield and Umatilla. Also, Tastiest Taco T-shirts are available for \$15.

When visiting the vendors, bring your booklet to get it stamped. And, for added fun, Harrington encourages people to post a photo to social media with #tastiesttaco2019. At the conclusion of your trek for tacos, be sure to complete your journey by visiting the United Way website to cast your vote. The winning vendor will receive a Tastiest Taco plaque.

Tastiest Taco stamp books can be obtained via www.umatillamorrowunitedway.org, Columbia Bank branches in Hermiston (1033 S. Highway 395) or Pendleton (2101 S.W. Court

Place), Banner Bank, 125 S.E. Court Ave., Pendleton, or the United Way office, 125 S.E. Court Ave., Suite B, Pendleton.

The United Way partners with community organizations to help provide funding for needed programs and services. Unless designated otherwise by the giver, money donated through the local United Way is disbursed locally to assist non-profit organizations in Umatilla and Morrow counties.

For more information about Tastiest Taco 2019, contact Harrington at 541-276-2661 or beth@uwbluemt.org.

Air museum takes flight with upcoming events

By TAMMY MALGESINI
COMMUNITY EDITOR

The public is invited to learn more about the Pendleton Air Museum during several upcoming events, including an open house, gala ball and anniversary celebration.

Held in conjunction with National Vietnam War Veterans Day, the open house is Friday. The public is invited to drop by the museum between 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 21 S.W. Emigrant Ave. In addition to browsing the displays and enjoying coffee and cookies, veterans will be on hand throughout the day to visit with people. Also, museum coordinator Becky Dunlap extends a special invitation to Vietnam veterans from across the region to come and take part in informal conversations with museum visitors.

Also on the horizon is the Bombs Away Ball. The fundraising event is Sat-

urday, May 11 from 5:30-10 p.m. at the National Guard Armory, 2100 N.W. 56th St., Pendleton. Tickets are \$40 each, which includes dinner, live music, dancing and a no-host bar.

Brass Fire, a regional horn band fronted by Brad Rozema of Hermiston, will play jazz, funk, blues, rock, and swing. In addition to saxophone, trumpet, trombone, piano, bass, guitar and drums, band members provides vocal renderings. Nearly two decades after a small group interested in aviation and military history began to gather, the Pendleton Air Museum opened its first physical museum. Volunteers will celebrate its one-year anniversary during an open house Saturday, May 18 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

For more information, contact Dunlap at 541-278-0141, pendletonairmuseum@gmail.com or visit www.pendletonairmuseum.org.



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No personal attacks; challenge the opinion, not the person. The Hermiston Herald reserves the right to edit letters for length and for content.

Letters must be original and signed by the writer or writers. Anonymous letters will not be printed. Writers should include a telephone number so they can be reached for questions. Only the letter writer's name and city of residence will be published.

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