

'The Impact of One' highlights CASA volunteers

Wildhorse hosts statewide conference

By TAMMY MALGESINI
COMMUNITY EDITOR



Heisler

Torres

A Multnomah County Circuit Court judge and the founder of Oregon Foster Youth Connection will share about their experiences in the foster care system during an upcoming conference.

The impact and connections that Judge Xiomara Torres and Pamela Heisler made with CASA — Court Appointed Special Advocate — volunteers shaped their lives and career choices. The two women are keynote speakers for "The Impact of One," a statewide conference that highlights the work of CASA volunteers. The event is Monday, Sept. 23 at Wildhorse Resort & Casino, located off Exit 216 of Interstate 84, Mission. Check-in begins at 7:30 a.m. and the program runs from 8:15 a.m. to 5 p.m. Registration is \$50,

which includes lunch.

Torres escaped the war-torn country of El Salvador with her family at age 9. By the time she was 13, she entered the foster care system where she remained until she aged out.

In a YouTube video, Torres talks about the impact her CASA volunteer made on her life. Without her, Torres said she likely would have ended up homeless and she wouldn't have pursued higher education.

"She's just been an amazing support for me as an advocate and as a friend," Torres said. "She became, obviously, someone that's a dear friend to me."

Heisler, who was in the foster care system for 11 years, went on to earn a master's degree from

"She's just been an amazing support for me as an advocate and as a friend"

Xiomara Torres,
Multnomah County Circuit Court judge

Portland State University in public administration, specializing in nonprofit management. OFYC unites current and former foster youths as a way to advocate and serve as leaders to improve the child welfare system.

Currently serving as executive director of Prevent Child Abuse Oregon, Heisler also is on the board of directors for Foster Youth in Action, which organizes a national, grassroots network of current and former foster youths.

The statewide conference also features numerous other presenters, including advocates, legal and child services professionals, and motivational speakers. In addition, Sen. Bill

Hansell, R-Athena, and his wife, Margaret, who served as Umatilla County's CASA director for 12 years, will speak.

Jesus Rome, Umatilla-Morrow Head Start CASA program coordinator, said the conference is 18 months in the making. After attending the National CASA Conference in Boston, he was motivated to host a statewide conference in Eastern Oregon.

Locally, Rome said there are nearly 300 youths in the foster care system in Umatilla and Morrow counties. Of those, 100 are served by CASA volunteers. It is Rome's hope that more people will get involved.

"I'm excited to spearhead this event," he said. "It will be a way to celebrate our advocates and what they do for our foster children and community."

For more information or to register, visit www.jacksoncountycasa.org/the-impact-of-one. For questions, contact Rome at 541-667-6170 or jrome@umchs.org.

Funland Park rebuild, 4-H to benefit from Horneck event

HERMISTON HERALD

A banquet and fun run are planned to remember Don Horneck and raise money for agricultural education in his honor.

Sponsored by the Hermiston Lions Club, the events honor the longtime agronomist and soil scientist at OSU's Hermiston Agricultural Research and Extension Center. Horneck, who died Sept. 28, 2014, was an active member of the Lions Club.

In addition to donating proceeds to Umatilla County 4-H, money also will go to Hermiston's Funland Park rebuild project.

The 5K fun run and walk will begin Saturday, Sept. 28 at 9 a.m. at Riverfront Park. Registration opens at 7:30 a.m., with an entry fee of \$15.

The evening banquet and auction begins with a social hour at 6 p.m. at the Hermiston Community Center, 415 S. Highway 395. Dinner will

be served at 6:30 p.m., followed by live and silent auctions. Among activities to spice up the evening will be the Dessert Dash, with sweets prepared by local restaurants and caterers. Also, Josie Evans of Lexington will provide entertainment and Charlie Clupny will emcee.

Banquet tickets are \$40 and are available at Good Shepherd Health Care System, Kuhn Law Office, OSU Research & Extension Center, Hermiston Chamber of Commerce and Umatilla Electric Cooperative.

Banquet sponsorships are available by contacting Phil Hamm at philip.b.hamm@oregonstate.edu or Bill Kuhn at wjk@kuhnlawoffices.com. Contact Aaron Treadwell at atreadwe@umchs.org to donate auction items.

For more information, call Kuhn Law Office at 541-567-8301. The Lions Club can make arrangements to collect auction donations, which are tax deductible.

BRIEFS

Presentations highlight ABE savings program

People can learn more about the Oregon ABE Savings Plan during several upcoming presentations.

A state-based program, it was established to enable people with disabilities and their families to achieve financial security without losing their critical benefits. Money saved in an ABE account doesn't count against asset limits for benefits like SSI, Oregon Health Plan, SNAP and Section 8.

The informational meetings are Wednesday, Sept. 18 from 8:30-9:30 a.m. at the Umatilla County Developmental Disabilities office, 817 S.E. 13th St., Pendleton; and again from 5:30-6:30 p.m. at The Arc Umatilla County, 215 W. Orchard Ave., Hermiston. The final presentation is Thursday, Sept. 19 from 10-11 a.m. at the Aging People with Disabilities office, 1555 Southgate Place, Pendleton.

Many Oregonians who qualify for the ABE program aren't aware of it. For more information, contact Kaellen Hessel, Oregon Savings Network advocacy and outreach manager, at kaellen.hessel@ost.state.or.us, 503-378-6085 or visit www.oregonable-savings.com.

Community Bank to present apple awards

Community Bank is seeking nominations to recognize outstanding teachers with their new Apple Appreciation Awards.

During the month of September, each of the bank's branches is collecting nominations. One teacher from each town where the bank is located will be presented with the award.

In addition to acknowledging amazing teachers, the program will support school clubs. The winning teacher will choose a club or student organization at their school to receive a \$200 donation from the bank.

To be eligible, the person must be a current teacher in kindergarten through 12th grade and employed at a public or private school in a town

served by Community Bank. Anyone can submit a nomination.

To nominate a teacher, stop by a Community Bank branch or access a form on the bank's Facebook page. The deadline is Monday, Sept. 30.

Community Bank was founded in 1955 by a group of Joseph business leaders as the Bank of Wallowa County. Since then, it has grown across the region, including branches in Hermiston, Heppner, Milton-Freewater and Pendleton.

For complete rules, visit www.communitybanknet.com. For questions, contact Tom Moran, president and CEO, at 509-525-9860 or tmoran@communitybanknet.com.

Trail run benefits Women for Agriculture scholarships

A trail run to raise money for the scholarship fund for the Eastern Oregon Chapter of Oregon Women for Agriculture is this weekend.

The Echo Sage Trail Run is Saturday with registration at 8:30 a.m. at Sno Road Winery, 111 W. Main. The event, which begins at 9 a.m., features 5K, 10K runs as well as a walk and fun run. The registration fee is \$25. Those not competing are invited to hike the course and enjoy the views of the vineyards of Sno Road Winery.

For more information, contact all 541-705-5799 or easternoregonowa@gmail.com. To register or for more about the trail, visit www.echosagetrailrun.com.

Awareness walk shines light in darkness

A community event to raise awareness about suicide, to honor loved ones and to support survivors of suicide loss is planned in Pendleton.

The Umatilla County Out of the Darkness Walk is Saturday with registration beginning at 10 a.m. at Roy Raley Park, 1205 S.W. Court Ave., Pendleton. A ceremony and the walk starts at 11 a.m. There is no registration fee, however, donations will be accepted. Those who raise \$150 will

receive an official event T-shirt.

The event is being held in conjunction with National Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month. It is coordinated by Umatilla County Public Health and Lifeways. Money raised will go to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention to invest in research, create educational programs, advocate for public policy and support survivors of suicide loss.

For more information or to register, visit www.afsp.org/pendleton. For questions, contact Amanda Walsborn at 541-278-5432 or amanda.walsborn@umatillacounty.net.

Parking lot sale supports Eastern Oregon Mission

Agape House will host a parking lot sale to benefit Eastern Oregon Mission programs and outreach.

The event is Saturday from 8:30-11:30 a.m. at 500 Harper Road, Hermiston. Items available include clothing (five items for \$1), furniture (price as marked) and knick-knacks (you name the price). Donations will be accepted through Friday.

Eastern Oregon Mission is the parent organization of Agape House and Martha's House, which serve area individuals and families in need. For more information, to volunteer or make donations, call 541-567-8774.

American Legion post fires up the barbecue

All area veterans and their families are invited to a free picnic.

Hermiston American Legion Post 37 is providing hamburgers, hot dogs and fried chicken. Post members will bring salads and side dishes. In addition, Walchli Farms is donating melons.

The event is Saturday at noon at McKenzie Park, 320 S. First St., Hermiston. Non-post members aren't required to bring anything, except their immediate family and big appetites.

For more information, contact 541-561-3236 or 541-720-0475.



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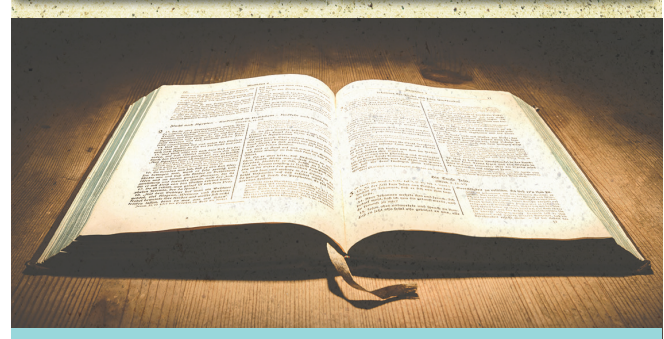
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