

# Merry Christmas

# Hermiston Herald

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### FIRE DAMAGE

Hermiston City Hall will remain closed through the end of January after a Dec. 17 fire in the HVAC system.

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### NEW YEAR'S EVE

Area businesses offer options for partying down on New Year's Eve.

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### PLASTIC BAGS

Local markets prepare for a ban on plastic grocery bags starting Jan. 1.

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## BY THE WAY

### The Nickel classified ad paper closes

Online advertising claimed another victim this week when **The Nickel** closed its doors Thursday.

The want ad newspaper, based in Hermiston, published classified ads covering Umatilla, Morrow and Gilliam counties for 42 years.

It announced on Thursday that it was closing for good, both in print and online.

"We greatly appreciate the support from hundreds of the most loyal customers over those years," the staff wrote on Facebook. "While we still have the support of many, it is just not enough to keep our doors open."

Newspapers across the country have seen their classified ad revenue decline steeply over the past two decades, as more customers migrate to using free online services, such as Facebook and Craigslist, to advertise items for sale.

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Both Hermiston and Pendleton recorded their

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### DHS delivers gifts to area children in foster care

By TAMMY MALGESINI  
COMMUNITY EDITOR

Santa Claus and his reindeer ain't got nothing on a dozen local Department of Human Services Child Welfare employees.

Caseworkers with the foster care program recently hitched up passenger vehicles to deliver carloads of gifts to foster children in Umatilla and Morrow counties — more than they have ever delivered before.

Jaime Meakins, who works as a case aide in the Hermiston DHS office, took the reins in "It Takes A Village," an effort to collect Christmas gifts for area foster children. In addition to specific items from wish lists, toys were accepted for kids and gift cards were sought for teens in foster care.

Harley Swain Subaru got in on the action by collecting winter apparel, while Rogers Toyota of Hermiston collected pajamas. Meakins said Lamb Weston plants in Boardman and Hermiston held toy drives, and giving trees were set up at the Heppner Les Schwab Tire Center, the Hermiston Goodwill, the Walmart Distribution Center and Walmart Transportation Division — which provided each child with at least two gifts. Also, the dairy co-op Tillamook provided 100 coats.

"Our conference room was completely full, and that was before we had everything," Meakins said. "The amount of stuff was amazing — we've never had a year like this before."

An unexpected partner in the effort, Meakins said, was New Hope Community Church. The Hermiston congregation designated a different collection focus for each week of advent.

Chris Hankel, the church's executive pastor, said the congregation had been looking at ways to build a relationship with DHS as a way

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# Spreading holiday cheer



Contributed photo

Jaime Meakins and Jamie Bremner of the Hermiston Department of Human Services Child Welfare office are surrounded by gifts as part of "It Takes A Village," an effort to provide a bright holiday season for foster children in Umatilla and Morrow counties.

## Potato dehydration plant to close

By JADE MCDOWELL  
NEWS EDITOR

Two years ago Stanfield residents were pushing hard to get the 3D Idapro Solutions dehydration plant shut down, but in the end it was market forces that did the facility in.

The plant on Hoosier Road, which dehydrates potato scraps to create a base material for dog food, will close at the end of the month, laying off 33 people, according to general manager Marty Gardner.

While the plant caused controversy and garnered fines in years past for the strong odors it produced, Gardner said the plant's closure had nothing to do with that. Instead, he said the company's sale volume had diminished considerably as more

businesses purchased the dehydrated materials from foreign sources.

"It's very assignable to market conditions," he said.

3D Idapro moved to Stanfield in 2016. In February 2017, the plant's scrubber, a device that helped reduce the scent of rotting potatoes, burned up in a fire.

Stanfield residents showed up in force to several city council meetings later that year, asking the city to shut down the plant. They said the strong odor, which they described using terms, such as "vomit" and "dead flesh," was keeping them from being able to spend time outdoors or open their windows.



Staff photo by Ben Lonergan

The 3D Idapro Solutions plant in Stanfield, which dehydrates potato scraps to create a base material for dog food, will close at the end of the month, laying off 33 people, according to general manager Marty Gardner.

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