

Raices offers grants for DACA applicants

HERMISTON HERALD

A local organization is offering grants for people who would otherwise struggle to pay the fee to renew their Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status.

Raices, a grassroots organization in Hermiston that advocates for the needs of the Latino community, held a fundraiser at the Union Club on Saturday with 220 participants. Raices member Roy Barron said the event was the organization's largest yet, raising more than \$2,000.

DACA does not provide a path to citizenship, but it does protect undocumented immigrants who meet certain criteria from deportation. DACA recipients must

have been born after 1981, been brought to the country before their 16th birthday, have lived in the United States continuously since June 15, 2007, be a current high school student or high school graduate and not have any felonies or serious misdemeanors on their record.

"I feel like this is one of the few things most Americans can get behind, because these are people who were brought here through no fault of their own, and there are very stringent requirements," Barron said of DACA.

Recipients must apply for a renewal every two years. Currently, the total fee for renewal is \$495, but the Trump administration announced last fall that they

intend to raise it to \$765 in 2020.

Barron said that much money can be a significant financial hardship. A "scholarship," or grant, from Raices can help cover the cost.

The application is posted on the Raices Facebook page at www.facebook.com/roots541.

Applicants must be a DACA recipient living in Umatilla or Morrow counties. The deadline to apply is Jan. 15 and recipients will be announced on Jan. 31.

Anyone who wishes to donate to the cause can send money to @raices541 via the Venmo app or \$raices541 via Cash App. For more information, email raices541@gmail.com.



Contributed photo by Raices

Board members of Raices pose for a photo at the organization's DACA fundraiser at the Union Club on Dec. 28.

Hermiston teen killed in car crash remembered fondly by family, friends

By JESSICA POLLARD
STAFF WRITER

A Hermiston teenager who died in a car crash last week was a star student, a lover of debates and one of Lana Del Rey's biggest fans.

Brett Jewett, 16, lost his life on Jan. 1 in a fatal crash on Highway 207. But the stories that people who knew him have to share about their beloved son, brother and friend are so vivid, his authentic demeanor lives on.

According to his sister, Maddie, 18, he just couldn't wait to get a job after his 16th birthday in November. He wasn't the type to wait around for life to happen, she said.

"He was mad at himself that he hadn't gotten one yet," she said. "He was excited about customer service because he can charm the pants off people."

It's a quality that Brett always seemed to have, his mother, Shannon Jewett, remembers.

When a teenaged family friend came to visit from Chicago, Brett was just an elementary schooler when he offered her a keepsake — one of his mother's nicest amethyst rings, plucked from her jewelry box.

"He wanted to set up a little dinner for her, even though she was like 10 years older," Maddie said.

Friends, family and Hermiston High School Principal Tom Spoo remember Brett as someone who tried hard in school.

"He was one of our top students," Spoo said.

Brett's family said he had many interests, but he was drawn to video production and digital art. His sister described him as a video-game expert.

"We were wondering if he'd do something with that," Shannon said. "But he also loved to argue."

He loved to debate politics with Maddie.

At Hermiston High School, where Brett was a



Contributed photo

Brett Jewett sips an iced mocha, a drink that family members say he particularly enjoyed, at the Union Club in Hermiston recently. Jewett, a sophomore at Hermiston High School, was killed in a two-vehicle car crash on Jan. 1 along Highway 207 outside of Echo.

sophomore, a team of psychologists and other mental health professionals provided student support on Monday. It was the first day back from winter break, and five days after Brett's untimely death.

Administrators said that substitute teachers were on call all day, in case any educators needed to step out of their classrooms to process tragedy. Kaitlyn Curtis, a 16-year-old junior at the high school, befriended Brett when he first moved to Hermiston from Heppner in elementary school. The pair loved participating in local community theater together. And although that was years ago, the friendship stuck.

"We were, in a way, each other's rock," she said.

Harley Pennington, 18, is friends with Maddie, and said she considered Brett her best friend.

"Many nights, we would stay up until 4 a.m. just playing games and talking about life for hours," she said. "I could tell him anything and he would accept me no matter what."

Brett was a perfection-

ist, according to his family. He kept his clothes immaculately clean, and got his hair cut every two weeks. He had strong moral convictions, and they came to light at a young age.

"If people were going to do something he felt wasn't right, he just would not do it," Shannon said. "It's hard to be that way, and he stuck to it."

One time in school, his classmates teased their substitute teacher, according to Shannon. Brett would have none of it. Of his own accord, he wrote an apology to the teacher on behalf of the whole class.

"He struggled to find friends with as much conviction as him," Maddie said. "His moral compass was dead-on."

His grandmother, Jeanne Jewett, an account executive at the *Hermiston Herald*, said he often seemed beyond his years.

"He wanted the best for his mother and sister," she said. "He was very much the man of the family."

And — being as competitive as he was — his family was impressed when he at long last accepted defeat during the final Monopoly game he shared with his mother and sister.

On Monday, his father, Brian Jewett, a trooper with the Oregon State Police, said his son had a way of winning over people's hearts easily.

"He was happy-go-lucky but set on his ways, too," he said.

Brian added he was thankful he got to see Brett right before his passing. Maddie and her brother were returning from a visit with their father in Ione before the crash.

"Apparently, God needed him now. He was taken at such a young age," he said. "I was looking forward to his future."

A celebration of life service will be held at 7 p.m. Thursday at New Hope Community Church in Hermiston.

Umatilla County adds sheriff's patrol deputy

By ALEX CASTLE
STAFF WRITER

The Umatilla County Board of Commissioners authorized adding another deputy position to the sheriff's office Thursday morning, giving the county its 18th patrol deputy on staff.

The authorization moves a deputy who had previously been contracted from the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office to serve in the county's community corrections division back to the UCISO.

While the deputy had also requested a transfer back to the sheriff's office, Commissioner George Murdock said, the community corrections division lacks the state funding to continue its contract.

The move also continues the county's commitment to expanding its patrol force, which has remained a priority since a public safety levy was voted down in 2013.

Murdock said the county only had seven deputies on staff at the time and public comments and polling indicated it

was the highest priority for taxpayers. The levy would have added 18 deputies to the county in one fell swoop and was a surprise when voters rejected it resoundingly.

Entering 2020, Murdock highlighted the need to continue the county's criminal division expansion as something he hoped to accomplish.

"We've made a lot of headway over the years," he said in an interview on Monday. "Our polling data and conversations with the public show that public safety remains a high priority."

Later during Thursday's meeting, the commissioners reappointed Robert Wolfe to the Umatilla County Fair Board and filled the board's upcoming vacancy by appointing Michael Engelbrecht as the board-elect.

"He was primarily selected because of his experience," said Commissioner Bill Elfering, who was a part of the interview process for candidates. "He was very familiar with the board duties

and has interacted with the board in the past."

Engelbrecht works at Barrett Business Services Inc. (BBSI) in Hermiston and has volunteered and contributed to the fair in previous years, according to Elfering.

Engelbrecht will fill the seat vacated by Stephen Anderson, who's not eligible for reappointment when his term concludes at the end of 2020.

As the first board meeting of the new year, Thursday also marked the official appointment of Commissioner John Shafer as the new county chairman, while Murdock's role reverts to vice chairman.

The change mostly means Shafer becomes the board of commissioners' spokesman, or the "voice of the county" as he's put it, and he'll lead the board's meetings. Murdock, who has held the role for several years, said the chairman takes the lead on overseeing much of the day-to-day operations because the county doesn't have a manager.

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PET OF THE WEEK
Cody is a sweet & timid old boy who likes to get loves and will give in return (on his terms). He is sight impaired, which makes him a bit skittish. He is scared of loud noises, and will get excited when it's time to eat. He loves to lay out of the way where he feels secure. Please consider meeting Cody so he has a home to spend the rest of his days with love.

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