

Aspiring librarian wins summer writing contest

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
NEWS EDITOR

When Cassidy McQuain found out that the theme of the Hermiston Public Library's teen summer reading program was about myths and magic, she was excited.

The Hermiston teen, age 18, loves Greek mythology.

"These stories explain how something happened, like the gods are fighting, and so that's a volcano that blew off its top," she said. "It's crazy that people made these stories up to explain everyday, normal things."

She immediately had ideas for the program's summer writing contest, and turned in a story about an archaeologist named Cass, who uncovers Pandora's Box while on a dig in Greece. After discovering the box, the heroine of the story meets many figures from Greek mythology, from Hades to Zeus.

The story was named the contest winner, and the prize included writing supplies



Photo contributed by Stacie McQuain

Cassidy McQuain won this year's Hermiston Public Library teen summer writing contest.

and an interview with the *Hermiston Herald*.

McQuain said most of the time she just shows her writing to her family, but she is working on a book that a family friend plans to illustrate for her. The book is a time-traveling tale involving the legends surrounding King Arthur.

"When I write, I can go anywhere, I can be anything I want," she said.

She said she doesn't usually write outlines of her stories first, she just gets an idea and sits down and starts

A summer in Greece
The following is a short excerpt from "A Summer in Greece," the fictional story by Cassidy McQuain that won the Hermiston Public Library's teen summer writing contest. To read the full story, visit www.hermistonherald.com.

Cass wiped the sweat off her brow. Greece during the summer season was really hot. She still couldn't believe she was getting to be part of one of the biggest archeological digs for Grecian artifacts ever known. Just three months ago, she was teaching archeology and Greek mythology classes at University of Oregon, and now she was the lead archeologist on this historical dig. This morning, she was focused on carefully removing an urn she discovered in the ruins a day earlier. As she used her pick to gently remove the final rock, she

was able to lift the precious piece from the ground. She then took it to the rinsing station, where she rinsed it off and observed how strange it was. It was dark black and unlike any urn she had seen before. It was square and had strange letters carved into it. As an archeology scholar, she was familiar with many languages, but didn't recognize this one, so she called over the linguistics expert. He thought it might be Old Greek, but he wasn't sure. Cass slowly lifted the top of the urn and that's when everything went black.

The next thing she knew, she awoke with a pounding headache in a grove of olive trees. Standing over her was a very tall, handsome man. He had blonde hair, protruding muscles, and was dressed in a white toga and golden sandals. He helped Cass sit up and then he handed

her a cup and instructed her to drink from it. She took a sip of the liquid, which was sweet and thick like honey and she asked, "What is this? And for that matter, who are you and where am I?"

The stranger replied, "You just drank nectar. My name is Zeus and you are in Greece. It is 1600 B.C."

Cass's head was reeling. This was not possible! She thought she must be dreaming. She thought perhaps she slipped in water, hit her head on a rock, and was comatose or having a dream. Zeus said, "You are not dreaming. I brought you here with magic. Remember that strange urn you had? It wasn't an urn; it was a box— Pandora's Box."

typing. She often gets those ideas from reading, which is another favorite activity.

It probably comes as no surprise, then, that she would also love the library — something McQuain said she "absolutely" does. She sits on the library's Teen Advisory Council, and hopes to become a librarian herself someday. Her

mother, Stacie McQuain, said Cassidy is in a high-risk category for COVID-19, so she was grateful that the library has so many online resources and created a summer reading program with activities that children and teens could do online or socially distanced.

"We're grateful in this digital age that the library

still exists and they take so much care of our community," Stacie said.

Cassidy said this summer reading program was "definitely different" than in years past, but she still had fun doing activities provided, including a scavenger hunt looking for pictures from Greek mythology around town.

The library is closed to visitors while Umatilla County is in baseline status, but residents can still visit www.hermistonlibrary.us to find information about curbside pickup and digital collections that library card holders have access to, such as e-books and audio books.

BRIEFS

Black Lives Matter march planned Aug. 29

A march for area residents against police brutality and systematic racism is planned Saturday, Aug. 29, from 4-6 p.m. beginning at Roy Raley Park, 1205 S.W. Court Ave., Pendleton.

The event will include speakers, a march through Pendleton, a car march, census and voter registration booths, and kid-friendly activities.

Masks are required, and social distancing is highly recommended. Masks and bottled water will be provide, and hand sanitizer will be available for use. Participants are asked to wear black if possible.

For more information, or if you would like to volunteer or host a booth at the event, email PDTBLM@outlook.com.

Trafficking awareness march scheduled

People are invited to march to raise awareness of child exploitation and human trafficking on Saturday, Aug. 22, in Hermiston.

The march will begin at 10 a.m. at the corner of Highway 395 and Elm Street next to McDonald's, and end at McKenzie Park.

Organizer Alicia Gregerson said she had originally hoped to have speakers and information set up at the park, but due to current COVID-19 restrictions the event will just be a march. She said she hopes that it will spark interest in future events, however.

The event is part of a "global march" on Aug. 22 encouraged by Freedom for the Children. The organization's website, freedomforthechildren.org, states that its goals include increasing awareness and asking for "change and reform within our governmental and law enforcement agencies to ensure that all justice is brought to the victims and more accessibility of support is provided for survivors."

Coronavirus relief funds available for nonprofits

Applications are now live

and open for Oregon's Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) Cultural Support program.

According to a news release, funds will be available to Oregon cultural organizations facing losses due to the COVID-19 health crisis. The \$25.9 million in funding was made available through a \$50 million relief package for Oregon culture recently approved by the Emergency Board of the Oregon Legislature.

Applications are due by noon Monday, Aug. 24, and approved funds must be distributed by Sept. 15.

All Oregon cultural nonprofits and community venues are welcome to apply. Funding will be determined based on eligible request amounts, an award allocation formula that establishes a base amount of funds per county or tribe and the organization's fiscal size.

COVID-19 expenses previously reimbursed by other federal CARES Act programs are not eligible.

The intended use of the CRF Cultural Support funds is to provide financial assistance to cultural nonprofit organizations and community venues that have canceled or postponed public programming because of public health executive orders associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

The federal CARES Act requires that CRF funding only be used to cover expenses that are necessary expenditures incurred due to the public health emergency and were not accounted for in the budget most recently approved as of March 27, 2020; and were incurred during the period that begins on March 1, 2020, and ends on Dec. 30, 2020.

For more information

visit culturaltrust.org/grants.

Navarrete awarded accounting scholarship

The OSCP Educational Foundation awarded the McDonald Jacobs PC Scholarship to Lionel Navarrete of Hermiston, a student at Portland State University.

Scholarships ranging from \$2,500-\$4,000 were awarded to 39 students based on academic performance and intent to both pursue a CPA career and work in the state of Oregon.

The Oregon Society of CPAs, founded in 1908, is a voluntary association of CPAs and prospective CPAs engaged in public practice, industry, government, and education. With over 4,200 members, the OSCP is committed to the continuing professional success of members.

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	Spanish 7:00 pm
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	Bilingual 11:00 am
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Pastor David Dever
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Sun. Worship Service.....11:00am
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Sunday School...9:15 am
Worship Service...10:30 am
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567-3013
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