

# The Arc bingo goes dark during pandemic

Nonprofit organization taps into financial reserves to survive

By TAMMY MALGESINI FOR THE HERMISTON HERALD

Guidelines imposed because of COVID-19 have altered how people work, socialize and participate in recreational activities. Stay home orders, social distancing and restrictions on group gatherings have also changed how people engage in service organizations and volunteer activities. This series in the Hermiston Herald highlights how area service clubs and groups have responded to the pandemic.

The familiar murmur that precedes the exuberant sound of someone calling out "bingo" has been quieted for the past 36 weeks at games sponsored by The Arc Umatilla County. The nonprofit organization was forced to cancel its ongoing fundraiser with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Jan Schroth, outgoing The Arc president, said the group's mission is to advocate for the rights and full participation of all children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

"Together with our network of members, we improve systems of supports and services; connect families; inspire communities and influence public policy," the rest of the mission statement reads.

Schroth said The Arc Umatilla County typically serves between 200-300 people and families throughout the year. The global pandemic, she said, caused all fundraising and programs with the local organization to come to a screeching halt.

The Arc's annual Summer Recreation and Inclusion Program was among the coronavirus casual-



Hermiston Herald, File  
**Alisia Mendoza of Hermiston calls out bingo numbers while running the game at The Arc of Umatilla County's bingo night in Hermiston in 2012. The nonprofit has had to suspend bingo in 2020 due to COVID-19.**

ties this year. The free two-week event, Schroth said, is offered during summer vacation to families who have school-aged children.

"We are not having any of our regular activities that people have come to enjoy, like dances and parties," she said. "We have not been able to offer any trainings."

In addition to the weekly bingo games, which began in November 1977, The Arc hasn't been able to book the use of its West Orchard Avenue building. Revenue from rental fees, Schroth said, is how the organization covers costs associated with maintaining the building.

General membership meetings, Schroth said, haven't been held since the onset of restrictions on in-person gatherings. And she said it hasn't been practical to hold them online because many of the members don't have access to computers or the internet.

After a delay of five months, treasurer Kristi Smalley said The Arc was finally able to hold its annual meeting. Attendance at the Nov. 10 gathering was sparse, yet productive, she said. Despite measures to reduce expenditures, Schroth shared that the group has seen a net

loss of more than \$12,000. By tapping into its financial reserves, Smalley and Schroth said they should be able to meet expenses for at least the next few months.

The annual meeting included the installation of officers and directors, as well as discussing what programs are resuming. Given the sometimes fluid parameters regarding limitations on public gatherings, people are encouraged to check with The Arc for up-to-date information. Less than 20 hours after announcing plans for an upcoming The Arc Activity Night, the event was canceled due to Gov. Kate Brown's Nov. 13 announcement of a two-week "coronavirus freeze."

Schroth, however, is optimistic about The Arc's future. Looking ahead, she said the board hopes to resume larger in-person activities.

"The people that come to our activities miss the opportunity to visit with each other," Schroth said.

Also, she acknowledges that the lack of funding has been hard. Schroth is a bit concerned with the higher utility bills that come with the winter weather. While they don't know the timeline, she said the board is

## The Arc of Umatilla County installs officers, directors at annual meeting

HERMISTON HERALD

The annual meeting for The Arc of Umatilla County was held on Nov. 10, 2020, at The Arc Building, 215 W. Orchard Ave., Hermiston.

The meeting, which included installation of officers and directors for the next year, was delayed by five months due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Attendance at the meeting was sparse yet productive, according to a news release, and included a report by outgoing president Jan Schroth, which emphasized the lack of revenue and, despite measures to reduce expenditures, a net loss of over \$12,000.

Directors for the next year are Kirsten Kinsel, Shalena Myers, Jolene Pooley, Tasha Blenlyenberg, Nichole Malmberg, TJ Smith, Jana Smith and Miranda Rector. Officers include Kristi Smalley (treasurer), Joyce Beemer (secretary), Jan Schroth (outgoing president), Debbie Herrera (vice president) and Anna Dickman (president).



The Arc Umatilla County/Contributed Photo  
**Directors for The Arc Umatilla County for 2020-21 are (left to right) Kirsten Kinsel, Shalena Myers, Jolene Pooley, Tasha Blenlyenberg and Nichole Malmberg (not pictured: TJ Smith, Jana Smith and Miranda Rector).**



The Arc Umatilla County/Contributed Photo  
**The Arc Umatilla County officers for 2020-21 include (left to right) Kristi Smalley (treasurer), Joyce Beemer (secretary), Jan Schroth (outgoing president), Debbie Herrera (vice president) and Anna Dickman (president).**

committed to resuming its bingo games when it's deemed safe.

"The Arc has been in Umatilla County since 1967 and we will continue to be here and hopefully stronger as we navigate this new challenge," Schroth said.

For more information about The Arc Umatilla County, including how to make a donation, visit [www.thearcumatilla.org](http://www.thearcumatilla.org), email [arc@eotnet.net](mailto:arc@eotnet.net) or search Facebook.

## Wildhorse Foundation grants aid dental and mental health programs in Eastern Oregon

HERMISTON HERALD

The Eastern Oregon Healthy Living Alliance has received a \$1,500 from the Wildhorse Foundation to support dental and mental health programs in Eastern Oregon, the organization announced in a press release.

"This funding supports the work EOHLA, Advantage Dental from DentaQuest, InterMountain Education Service District, and community partners carry out in providing dental services, dental education, and mental health first aid training," the release stated.

Funding to support dental programs is being distributed to Healthy, Happy Smiles (HHS) and Everybody Brush! in partnership with Advantage Dental and the IMESD. The programs include free dental screenings, fluoride varnish, fol-

low-up for students identified to have urgent dental care needs and more, in addition to education outreach events that include materials on brushing, flossing, fluoride, orthodontics, tobacco's effect on the mouth, sugary foods and drinks, and more.

The support for mental health programs is being distributed to Mental Health First Aid, which according to the release is "a nationally evidence-based program that gives people the skills to identify, understand, and respond to individuals who may be experiencing signs of a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis."

Training sessions are available for adults, youth and teens, the release stated, and focuses on teaching how to apply "first aid" and connect people with appropriate care.

The Eastern Oregon

Healthy Living Alliance was formed in 2014 to support health initiatives in Eastern Oregon, and its board has representation from each of the 12 counties it represents.

The Wildhorse Foundation receives 3% of the net gaming revenues from Wildhorse Resort & Casino run

by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation outside Pendleton, and uses the money for grants to charitable causes in Umatilla, Union, Morrow and Wallowa counties in Oregon and Benton and Walla Walla counties in Washington.

**Order Thanksgiving Centerpieces NOW**  
(for pickup or delivery the week of Thanksgiving)  
**Kopacz**  
NURSERY & FLORIST  
541-567-3278  
465 W. Theater Lane, Hermiston  
Mon-Sat 9am-5:30 • Sun 11am-4pm  
"Where flowers are our business"

**RECYCLE!**  
CARDBOARD • NEWSPAPER • GLASS • TIN • ALUMINUM  
EIGHT LOCATIONS TO SERVE YOU!  
SANITARY DISPOSAL TRANSFER STATION  
RECYCLING DEPOT  
**1. Hermiston - 220 W. Harper Rd.**  
**2. Stanfield - W. Wood (by Grange Hall)**  
**3. Echo - 321 W. Main St. (next to Fire Hall)**  
**4. Umatilla - Hwy 730**  
(next to Columbia Harvest Foods)  
**5. Umatilla County - Hwy 395 N.**  
(next to transfer station)  
**6. Umatilla County - 81144 N. Hwy 395**  
**7. Irrigon - 198 W. Columbia Lane**  
**8. Boardman - SE Front Street**  
**REMEMBER:**  
**CONTAMINATION TURNS RECYCLABLES INTO TRASH!**  
**Sanitary Disposal, Inc.**  
Hermiston/McNary Hwy • Hermiston  
541-567-8842

You don't have to stop smoking in one day.

## START WITH DAY ONE.

Quitting smoking isn't easy. It takes time. And a plan. The Great American Smokeout is 19 November.



Call the Education Department to arrange a private appointment with one of our certified Tobacco Cessation Counselors to start your journey to a smoke and vape-free life!

Working every day to promote a healthy community  
**GOOD SHEPHERD**  
HEALTH CARE SYSTEM  
Education and Wellness Services 541.667.3509  
American Cancer Society

**Hermiston Herald**  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2020  
FREE DELIVERY  
EASTERN OREGON MARKETPLACE  
Now you can listen to [hermistonherald.com](http://hermistonherald.com) in English and Spanish!  
Look for the new **Trinity Audio Player** at the start of [hermistonherald.com](http://hermistonherald.com) news stories and select the language you prefer for story playback.  
It's just another way that the Hermiston Herald is bringing our community stories to you.

With more than **13,700** copies of the Hermiston Herald now mailed directly to homes in west Umatilla County and north Morrow County, there has never been an easier way to get your message into thousands of local homes each week.  
**Reach new customers** in new ways with the help of advertising professionals at the Hermiston Herald.  
Jeanne Jewett 541-564-4531 | Angela Treadwell 541-966-0827  
**Hermiston Herald**