

# Shoebox gifts offer holiday hope

National Collection Week is Nov. 15-22

By TAMMY MALGESINI  
Hermiston Herald

It takes a village when it comes to coordinating efforts for Operation Christmas Child — that's the sentiment of both Barb Wattenburger, Hermiston area drop-off leader, and Carol Frink, who heads up collection efforts at Stanfield Baptist Church.

An outreach ministry of the international Christian relief organization Samaritan's Purse, shoebox-sized packages are filled with toys, hygiene items, school supplies and other small gifts, which are distributed across the globe. OCC shares God's love in a tangible way, letting disadvantaged children know that they are special. People are encouraged to include a note of encouragement, a photo or Bible verse with their package.

Often, Frink said, it's the first gift some of the children have ever received. An item as simple as a tooth-

brush gives them something of their own that they don't have to share with dozens of other kids.

"Something we see as being so insignificant can really make a difference for children that don't have anything," Frink said. "As humans, that's the least we can do."

Operation Christmas Child is launching National Collection Week Nov. 15-22. Locally, people can drop shoebox gifts off at New Hope Community Church in Hermiston. From there, the boxes are taken to the Tri-Cities, before heading to a processing center in preparation for international distribution.

When Samaritan's Purse established a drop-off location in Hermiston a decade ago, Wattenburger became a year-round volunteer with OCC. For a handful of years prior to that, she transported boxes to the Tri-Cities collection site.

And it's not a solo effort in the Wattenburger household, as she recruited her husband, Paul. In addition, she's teaching multi-generational giving back by

including her grandchildren. "Packing OCC boxes is one of our activities at Camp Wattenburger," she said.

## Stanfield Baptist wraps up effort

Frink is overwhelmed with gratitude by the response of her church family. The first year resulted in more than a dozen gift-filled boxes — and then, the effort exploded.

"In 2014, we had 128 shoeboxes. We thought that was huge coming from 14," Frink said. "We all have a heart for hurting children."

Over the past few years, Frink said congregants at Stanfield Baptist have really stepped up. Initially, she set a church goal of 400 in 2020. However, when OCC officials expressed concern that the global pandemic might result in lower participation, she approached the congregation, who responded by collecting enough items to pack 503 shoeboxes.

Wattenburger said she had no idea what to expect in 2020. However, she was excited to share that the

number of shoeboxes collected in the area increased, with donations coming from 20 churches and several businesses.

"We are not just excited about the large numbers, but more importantly that each one of those boxes represents a child who was reached and shown that they are special and loved as an individual," Wattenburger said.

Ever the optimist, Frink increased this year's goal to 600. During a packing party, held Oct. 28, the final count was 619.

"It takes a village to pull this off," she said in a Facebook post. "I am so grateful for our church family and their faithful support."

Individuals, service groups, businesses and churches are invited to fill shoebox-size packages with gifts. More information, including gift guidelines, an option to track your shoebox and an opportunity to virtually "Build a Box," is available at [www.samaritanaspurse.org/occ](http://www.samaritanaspurse.org/occ). A donation of \$9 is requested to assist with shipping and other project costs.



Maria Hurty/Contributed Photo

**Congregants from Stanfield Baptist Church participate in a shoebox gift packing party Thursday, Oct. 28, 2021, for Operation Christmas Child. An outreach ministry of the international Christian relief organization Samaritan's Purse, the gifts will be distributed to disadvantaged children across the globe.**

## OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD DROP-OFF LOCATION

- New Hope Community Church**  
1350 S. Highway 395, Hermiston
- Monday, Nov. 15, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
  - Tuesday, Nov. 16, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.; 5-7 p.m.
  - Wednesday, Nov. 17, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
  - Thursday, Nov. 18, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.; 5-7 p.m.
- Friday, Nov. 19, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
  - Saturday, Nov. 20, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
  - Sunday, Nov. 21, noon to 2 p.m.
  - Monday, Nov. 22, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Contact: Barb or Paul Wattenburger at paulandbarbw@gmail.com, 541-567-8650 or 541-626-3159.

# Hermiston High School FFA students place at the National FFA competition

Ag issues Forum Team takes third place in Indianapolis

Hermiston Herald

The Hermiston FFA Agricultural Issues Forum Team competed at the FFA National Convention on Oct. 27. This was the semi-final round of the competition after the team had previously competed virtually in the regional round of competition earlier this year.

A field of the best 16 teams from across the nation faced off in the semi-finals, and Hermiston FFA advanced to the final round to compete against the top four teams.

In the final round, the teams started with a clean slate and their final placings were decided based on their performance in the finals and round of questions. They also performed in front of a brand new panel of judges and, for the first time, a live audience of several thousand FFA members, advisors and convention guests.

After a 24-hour wait, the final placings were announced at the National FFA Convention's Second Business Session in front of a crowd of over 53,000 in Lucas Oil Stadium (home of the Indianapolis Colts).

With hundreds of thousands more watching on the FFA livestream and RFD TV, Hermiston FFA was recognized as the third-place team in the United States. The awards presentation also included individual Gold Medals for the team members and a



Hermiston School District/Contributed Photo

**The Hermiston High School FFA Ag Issues Team (Abby Conner, Alexis Leathers, Daytona Tracy, Keeva Hoston, Anna Guerrero, Cidney Estes and Grant Hills) pose for a photo Friday, Oct. 29.**

cash prize for the Hermiston FFA Chapter.

The team consists of Hermiston students and recent graduates who have been competing for more than 10 months to reach this point. The team members are Alexis Leathers, Cidney Estes, Anna Guerrero, Abby Conners, Grant Hills, Daytona Tracy and Keeva Hoston.

"These students represent some of the best and brightest young minds in the United States. I am beyond proud of the hard work and dedication that they have put in to accomplish this amazing achievement," Sandy McKay, Hermiston FFA advisor, said.

The "Ag Issues" Career Development Event requires FFA members to select a contentious issue at the forefront of agriculture, research it and create a skit with both sides of the issue being debated to demonstrate the pros and cons of the topic.

Hermiston chose the emerging Vertical Farm-

ing industry as its topic and compared it to traditional farming in a skit that mimicked a classroom setting. After performing the skit, the Hermiston Ag Issues Team faced questions from respected industry judges, at each level of competition, to reach the pinnacle of FFA competition: the National Convention stage in Indianapolis, Ind.

The Hermiston FFA Agricultural Communications Team also competed at the FFA National Convention on Oct. 27. As with the Ag Issues team, this was the semi-final round of the competition after the team previously competed virtually in the regional round of competition earlier this year.

A field of the best 16 teams from across the nation faced off in the semi-finals and the competition highlighted some of the best and brightest students in the country. The Hermiston FFA Chapter was recognized as one of the best in the field, as they received the second-highest award

possible with a Silver Team Award and plaque. The awards also included individual medals for each team member based on their individual placings.

Participants in the Agricultural Communications Career Development Event work as a team of communication consultants to develop a written media plan, present the plan to a panel of judges, and, as individuals, apply what they have learned during practicum, a quiz, and editing exercise. This team CDE challenges students to communicate effectively while advocating to consumers about agriculture and telling the FFA story. Students will use a variety of media in their plans: social media, broadcast and print advertising, press releases, fliers, brochures, blogging, displays, and more.

The Hermiston FFA team is made up of four students: Kylie Temple, Ashlyn Hofbauer, Cadence Cooley and Elizabeth Doherty. The students have been working on this competition for ten months. They won the Oregon state title, moved through the first round of nationals, and competed strongly in the semi-finals round in Indianapolis.

"Both the Agricultural Issues and Communications

teams spent countless hours and months preparing," Tom Spoo, Hermiston High School principal, said. "It is impressive how well the kids performed given all the distractions while preparing. I want to thank the HHS staff members, as well as the parents and alumni who

have been so supportive in this process and always kept kids first."

Both teams will be recognized at the Board of Education's November business meeting to highlight their participation and success at the national competition.

**November 5-6-7, 2021**

Custer's 26th Annual Christmas

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	<b>Sunday 10AM-4PM</b>

All local, state and federal Covid-19 protocols will be followed.

# Church DIRECTORY

<p><b>First Christian Church</b> "Grow Your Faith Through God"</p> <p>Sunday School...9:00 am Worship Service...10:30 am</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>567-3013</b></p> <p>775 W. Highland Ave., Hermiston</p>	<p><b>LANDMARK BAPTIST CHURCH</b> 125 E. Beech Ave. • 567-3232</p> <p>Pastor David Dever</p> <p>Sun. Bible Classes.....10:00am Sun. Worship Service.....11:00am Sun. Evening Worship.....5:00pm Tues. Creation Club (Sept-May).4:30pm Wed. Prayer &amp; Bible Study.....5:00pm</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="http://www.hermistonlmbc.com">www.hermistonlmbc.com</a></p>	<p><b>Hermiston Christian Center &amp; School</b> Sunday Gathering: 10:00 AM</p> <p><i>This gathering is also livestreamed on our Facebook page.</i></p> <p>Nursery care is available 3 years &amp; under Kids Club available 4 years-5th grade</p> <p><b>Sunday Prayer Gathering: 6:00 PM</b></p> <p><b>NEED PRAYER? CONTACT US!</b> 1825 W. Highland Ave. 541-567-3480   <a href="mailto:hcc4u.org">hcc4u.org</a> <a href="mailto:hcc4u2020@gmail.com">hcc4u2020@gmail.com</a></p>																		
<p><b>St. Johns Episcopal Church</b></p> <p>N.E. Gladys Ave &amp; 7th, Hermiston 541-567-6672</p> <p>JOIN OUR INCLUSIVE CONGREGATION ON OUR JOURNEY WITH JESUS Services 9:00am Sundays In-person or streaming on Facebook or Zoom</p>	<p><b>Seventh-day Adventist Church</b> Saturdays Sabbath School.....9:30 a.m. Worship Service.....11:00 a.m. English &amp; Spanish Services</p> <p style="text-align: center;">541-567-8241</p> <p>855 W. Highland Ave. Hermiston, OR 97838</p>	<p><b>COME WORSHIP WITH US AT THE COUNTRY CHURCH</b></p> <p>Sundays at 11:00am 32742 Diagonal Rd. Hermiston, OR</p>																		
<p><b>OREGON TRAIL VETERINARY CLINIC</b> Capable Hands. Caring Hearts</p> <p>Mark Sargent, DVM • Brent Barton, DVM Eugenio Mannucci, DVM, CVMA • Jana von Borstel, DVM, CVMA</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Small and Large Animal Care</b></p> <p>Mon: 8-6 Tue - Fri: 8-5 Sat: 8-12 Emergency Service</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 1.2em;"><b>541.567.1138</b></p> <p>80489 Hwy 395 N Hermiston <a href="http://www.oregontrailvet.com">www.oregontrailvet.com</a></p>	<p>Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, animal shelters need our help more than ever. Please donate to your local shelter, or offer to foster an animal in need.</p>	<p><b>Our Lady of Angels Catholic Church</b> 565 W. HERMISTON AVE. MASS SCHEDULES</p> <table style="font-size: 0.8em;"> <tr><td>Monday-Friday</td><td>.....English 8:00am</td></tr> <tr><td>Tuesday-Friday</td><td>.....Spanish 6:00pm</td></tr> <tr><td>SATURDAY</td><td>.....English 5:00pm</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>.....Spanish 9:00pm</td></tr> <tr><td>SUNDAY</td><td>.....English 9:00am</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>.....Spanish 11:00am</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>.....Spanish 1:00pm</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>.....Spanish 6:00pm</td></tr> <tr><td>Parish Office</td><td>.....541-567-5812</td></tr> </table>	Monday-Friday	.....English 8:00am	Tuesday-Friday	.....Spanish 6:00pm	SATURDAY	.....English 5:00pm		.....Spanish 9:00pm	SUNDAY	.....English 9:00am		.....Spanish 11:00am		.....Spanish 1:00pm		.....Spanish 6:00pm	Parish Office	.....541-567-5812
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**To advertise in the Church Directory, please contact**  
**Audra Workman 541-564-4538 or email [aworkman@eastoregonian.com](mailto:aworkman@eastoregonian.com)**

## CAN/BOTTLE DRIVE & RAFFLE

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**Located at the old Affordable Family Eyewear building on Hwy 395 in Hermiston (across from Oxford Suites)**

**All money raised is for the stray animals in need of vet care.**

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**Thank you for your support of the animals in need. Donations are tax deductible.**