

Hermiston Herald

Teddy bears, colons and gift cards equal healthy fun

By Tammy Malgesini • Staff Writer

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Nolan the Colon provides information about colorectal cancer. It's one of the featured displays during Saturday's Family Health & Fitness Day at Hermiston High School.

Nolan the Colon will make an appearance at the Family Health & Fitness Day.

In addition to the giant colon replica, the free health fair event offers a variety of medical screenings and testing, information and activities for healthy lifestyle choices and the popular Teddy Bear Clinic.

The free event is Saturday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Hermiston High School, 600 S. First St.

Provided through the American Cancer Society, Nolan the Colon increases awareness about colorectal cancer and the importance of colorectal screening, said Catie Brenaman, community health educator at Good Shepherd Medical Center. According to the ACS, colon cancer is the third most common cancer. However, it's also the most preventable.

The health fair also includes adolescent well child checks. Available to ages 12-21, youths who complete the exam will receive a \$10 gift card (while supplies last) for such businesses as Subway, Safeway, Amazon and Obie's.

Angie Treadwell, OSU Extension SNAP Ed Coordinator, said offering the well child checks free of charge provides an opportunity to teach kids and their parents the importance of preventative care. The gift card, she said, provides an extra incentive for youths to participate.

"We know that age group isn't always getting their wellness exams," Treadwell said. "It can help address issues before they become serious."

Many physical and mental health conditions, substance use disorders and health risk behaviors begin to emerge during adolescence. Early identification and appropriate treatment and interventions can make a lifetime difference.

The Teddy Bear Clinic is an experiential activity that replicates a visit to the emergency room. Participants are given a teddy bear and then participate in the admission process, describing symptoms and giving a health history of the stuffed animal. Appropriate medical tests are performed, a diagnosis is provided and discharge instructions are given.

"It's kind of a fun process," Brenaman said. "It's interactive for the kids and they get to leave with a teddy bear."

The exercise, Brenaman said, helps in familiarizing kids with the process of ER visits, which helps in reducing fears they may have with going to the hospital.

Treadwell also is excited about the Food Hero booth. Hermiston High School FCCLA students will assist in that area, which features the preparation (and sampling) of healthy snacks. In addition, thanks to a donation from Dave's Killer Bread, people will get to take a loaf of bread home with them.

Other activities, Treadwell said, include being fitted for bicycle helmets, car seat checks and exercise programs such as yoga and tai chi. From prenatal to senior citizens, there will be something for everyone, she said.

"What I love about this is it's not just one person or organization," Treadwell said. "This is the community coming together to do something to benefit the entire community."

For more information, contact the Good Shepherd's education department at 541-667-3509 or healthinfo@gshealth.org.

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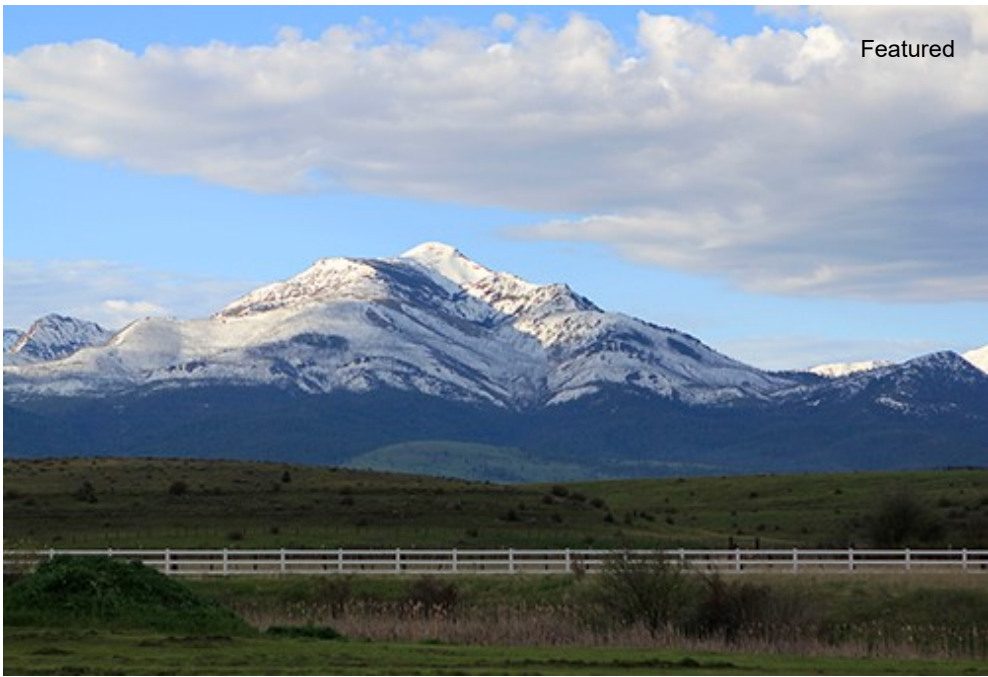
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