

## What's happening

### Today

■ Teens in grades 7-9 are invited to a **junior high dance** sponsored by the city of Davis from 7 to 9:30 p.m. at the Veterans' Memorial Center, 203 E. 14th St. A DJ will be on hand to play dance and hip-hop music; other activities include a game room with Wii Rock Band and board games as well as a snack bar. City dances are supervised by city staff and there are no in-and-out privileges. Tickets are \$10 in advance or \$12 at the door. For information, call 530-757-5626.

### Saturday

■ All ages are welcome for a matinee performance of **"Jack and the Beanstalk"** by the Davis High School Symphony Orchestra beginning at 2 p.m. in the Brunelle Performance Hall at DHS, 315 W. 14th St. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children and students, and may be purchased at the box office beginning at 1 p.m. The annual concert, conducted by Angelo Moreno, is sponsored by the Davis Schools Orchestral Music Association with funding provided by the Tandem Foundation, the Davis School Arts Foundation and DSOMA. This year's performance will feature DHS alumni violinist Nicholas Weis.

### Wednesday

■ **Holmes Junior High** hosts a parent information meeting on student planning for incoming ninth-graders, 6-7:30 p.m. in the Holmes MPR, 1220 Drexel Drive.

### Feb. 27-28

■ Learn the information and skills necessary to be the best baby-sitter on the block during a weekend **baby-sitter training** offered by the city of Davis. Participants will learn child and infant CPR, rescue breathing, choking rescue and more. Participants must be between the ages of 11 and 15 and the cost is \$150. Hours are 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. both Saturday and Sunday at the Davis Senior Center, 646 A St.

### Wednesday, March 2

■ **Holmes Junior High** hosts a parent information meeting on student planning for incoming eighth-graders, 6-7:30 p.m. in the Holmes MPR, 1220 Drexel Drive.

### Monday, March 7

■ **Emerson Junior High** hosts a parent information meeting on

# City hands out Golden Hearts

By ANNE TERNUS-BELLAMY

Enterprise staff writer

There are many in Davis who do their part to help the homeless.

Some prepare and serve food through Davis Community Meals, launder sleeping bags for the Interfaith Rotating Winter Shelter, provide toiletries and other little necessities to those in need and, of course, donate money to help keep all of those programs going.

And then there are those people like Genevieve "Vivi" Kirsch.

Kirsch has served the homeless in Davis for 10 of her 17 years. She knows them and greets them by name during the course of her regular activities in town and has never stopped advocating for their needs.

For her efforts, Kirsch received the Golden Heart Award for community service during a ceremony before the City Council this week.

The awards were created in the wake of the horrific murder of Andrew Mockus 24 years ago.

A 14-year-old Holmes Junior High School student at the time, Mockus was killed by a group of Davis teens who beat him, robbed him and pushed him into the path of a moving train.

Stunned, the city responded by holding public forums to discuss the issues facing the community's youth and ways the city could do more to help. In the end, the Davis City Council adopted seven recommendations that grew out of the forums, including the creation of the Golden Heart Awards, which would honor local teens for the good that they do. The awards would be given annually in two categories: overcoming personal challenges and community service.

"It's one of my favorite days on the City Council," Mayor Dan Wolk said during Tuesday's award ceremony, where Kirsch and Holmes ninth-grader Ethan Patterson were recognized as this

year's honorees.

Kirsch became a volunteer at the Interfaith Rotating Winter Shelter not long after her grandmother, Mary Anne Kirsch, and a group of other local residents founded it. She was just 8 years old when she started helping.

"She used to sit at the desk and check people in," her grandmother recalled.

Before she was even in high school, Kirsch had become a high school intern helping to run the shelter and was serving as a senior mentor to new interns by the time she was a junior. She's now a senior at Da Vinci Charter Academy.

It was Kirsch's relationships with shelter guests that family friend Jan Garrison particularly admired and that prompted her to nominate Kirsch for a Golden Heart award.

Garrison was going through training to work at the shelter overnight and saw how Kirsch didn't just sit and supervise the homeless there. She talked with them, ate with them, developed friendships with them.

"That's really hard," Garrison noted. "You don't just sit there. You go make the guests feel welcome. And I was so impressed with how she did that."

For her part, Kirsch calls the experience rewarding.

"Some of the guests have been coming for years," Kirsch said, "and they literally watched me grow up."

"It's not your average experience for a (pre-teen and teen)," she laughed. "But it's been very rewarding."

Her work with the homeless has



**Vivi Kirsch has served the homeless in Davis for 10 of her 17 years. She knows them and greets them by name, and has never stopped advocating for their needs. For her efforts, the city honored Kirsch with a Golden Heart Award on Tuesday at City Hall.**

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ENTERPRISE PHOTOS

inspired her to pursue political science in college, with the goal of elevating understanding and policy related to homelessness.

In the meantime, she will continue doing what she does, which includes not only working at the shelter but also serving as a student ambassador for Da Vinci as well as a Friendship Day leader at the school.

"Inclusive community-building is part of her character," noted Davis Mayor Pro Tem Robb Davis, who presented Kirsch with her award this week.

Holmes math teacher Pat King, meanwhile, nominated Patterson for a Golden Heart award for overcoming personal challenges.

Patterson was in her math class for two years at Holmes, King

said, "and he's a pretty amazing guy."

In the sixth grade, Patterson faced severe physical challenges that caused him to miss a significant amount of school over time.

"His illness made it a challenge to keep up with his studies and I admire the fact that he had to work extra hard to maintain his coursework throughout his recovery over the next several years," King said in her nomination. "His perseverance and resilience is admirable."

But even more than that, she said, is the exceptional kindness he extends to other students even while dealing with his own challenges.

When he sees another student who needs help, King said, Patterson always reaches out.

"He takes the initiative in helping people and that kind of empathy in a teen is remarkable," she said.

Patterson, now a ninth-grader, was surprised to be nominated for the award, and in modest fashion said simply, "With the help of a lot of people, I was able to get through it."

In addition to Patterson and Kirsch, four other Davis teens received honorable mentions for their community service: Sierra Marie, Leah Pinto, Hailey Shapiro and Isabelle Shapiro.

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**Holmes Junior High student Ethan Patterson saves his Golden Heart moment for posterity on Tuesday. Holmes math teacher Pat King nominated him for overcoming personal challenges.**

