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# A tree is lit in Sisters Country

By Jodi Schneider McNamee, Correspondent

A blast of arctic air plunged into Sisters days ago, bringing the first snow of the season and dropping temperatures at night to below zero. Regardless of the frigid weather, folks gathered among friends and family for the annual Christmas tree lighting ceremony on Friday evening at Fir Street Park.

It's a Sisters tradition.

Folks didn't notice the cold — they felt the warmth from the firepit, crafted by Ponderosa Forge & Ironworks, and the warm savory taste of hot chocolate, coffee and popcorn provided by the Three Sisters Lions Club. Most importantly, it was the warmth of comradeship that this annual tradition brings to everyone who partakes.

In 1923, President Calvin Coolidge went from the White House to the Ellipse (President Park South) to light a 48-foot fir tree as a local choir and quartet from the U.S. Marine Band performed. 92 years later, this American holiday tradition continues to bring folks together to share in a message of hope and peace.

Sisters Area Chamber of Commerce event coordinator, Jeri Buckmann, addressed the large audience and pointed out her thoughts on why this is a unique community.

"If you remember, it was over a year ago that downtown Sisters had many renovations, it was a big undertaking and now it looks amazing. I want to announce that we have been voted number five in the state of Oregon for the main street downtown. And we couldn't have done it without so many people, including the City of Sisters, the city manager, the City Council and the mayor."

Sisters Area Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Judy Trego thanked everyone involved with the building of Fir Street Park.

"It was a risk worth taking, because this beautiful park would have become an empty parking lot."

Singer/songwriter from the Sisters



PHOTO BY JODI SCHNEIDER MCNAMEE

The Community Tree is lit up in Fir Street Park.

Americana Project Megan Ellsworth kicked off the festivities, performing a seasonal favorite, "White Christmas."

Ellsworth is a senior at Sisters High School and she not only performs in the Americana Project, she also teaches younger students guitar.

Sisters City Manager Andrew Gorayeb pointed out that the Christmas tree was a little different from last year.

"We have ornaments on our living tree for the first time," Gorayeb explained, noting that Sisters Public Works Director Paul Bertagna went up on a manlift in the frigid conditions after Tuesday's snowstorm to hang the ornaments. The Christmas ornaments dangled among the branches along with the shimmering white lights, creating a brighter and more festive tree that will continue to shine throughout the holidays.

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Your Store is one of the best places in Sisters Country to put check-marks on your Christmas list — without flattening your wallet.

Everything is priced to please the budget, from souvenir T-shirts and sweatshirts to new Baja Joe's pullovers and warm winter jackets. With a purchase of \$25 you can get a free hat or T-shirt.

There are special sale items for as low as \$5.

Got a skier or snowboarder on your list? Let them fly their winter sports flag with T-shirts or sweatshirts featuring Mt. Bachelor or Hoodoo. Support the local Sisters High School boosters club with purchases of special Outlaw wear.

The selection is huge, the prices are elf-friendly and the shop is conveniently located right on Cascade Avenue. At this time of year, it's great when someone makes it easy — and that's what you'll find at Your Store.

