

MARKET: New management sought for local event

Continued from page 3

interesting place this was until I moved away,” Nagel admitted. “Meeting people in college I was like, ‘What do you mean you didn’t have a music program at your school? What do you mean, you didn’t go backpacking with your class?’ We wanted to bring some of the things we loved about other places we’ve lived back to Sisters — things like a farmers market and local food culture.”

Nagel and Wilkins started Mahonia Gardens, a farm east of Locust Street, and signed on as co-managers in 2013, when the market was just two years old. Wilkins praised the market for being “the opposite of globalization. There’s the health factor of having food that’s harvested when it’s ready, the factor of not using fossil fuels to get your food to where you are, and the beauty of knowing what grows in your area, at what time of year.”

Nagel said, “To be able to sell stuff right here where it’s grown and produced, as opposed to having to go to Bend or wherever else — it just makes sense. This is our little village. We should be able to sell our goods here.”

Nagel said that a “strong, connected, multigenerational music community” helped draw him back home to Sisters; he enjoyed booking the farmers market shows. He continues to play guitar, slide, and dobro around town with bands like Honey Don’t, and plans to sell produce at Sisters Farmers Market every Friday next summer.



PHOTO BY T. BROWN

Two of Sisters Farmers Market’s three co-managers welcomed a new family member in December. Carys Wilkins and Benji Nagel are stepping down partly to focus on raising newborn Junius Quinn.

Bosco will also maintain a presence at the market. “Last year I hosted a one-week Kid-Made Camp that was a huge success,” she said. “Teaching kids life and entrepreneurial skills was so much fun for me! Local children learned to manage money, set aside revenues for charity, make packaging, and sell their wares. This year the kids will be selling their goods on July 20 at Sisters Farmers Market, with other dates in Bend.”

Community members expressed gratitude for the market. Connie Mitchell, a broker at Coldwell Banker Reed Bros Realty, said that supporting local producers and merchants is “good business.” She loves knowing where the products come from.

“The produce, which is high quality, has no waxes, pesticides or hormones. I love the locally raised beef, and the skincare products are made with plant-based ingredients, all natural,” she said.

Dr. Hapke noted how the market promotes wellbeing in Sisters.

“Healthwise, I think that

besides just the vitamins and minerals in the produce, I am always surprised at how long very fresh fruits and veggies last, and how good they are,” she said. “I never really go crazy eating produce from the grocery store, but berries or asparagus from the farmers market get eaten in copious amounts.”

City Manager Brant Kucera said Sisters Farmers Market is “a vital part of the fabric of our business district. It draws people to the downtown and provides access to fresh, nutritious produce grown locally—meaning it is also environmentally friendly.”

For more information, see related story, page 18.

Co-manager Angelena Bosco is resigning from the Sisters Farmers Market leadership team to devote more time to her new project, a day camp for young entrepreneurs.

The inner workings of a farmers market

By Tiffany Lee Brown
Correspondent

The Sisters Farmers Market charges vendors a modest fee, using revenues to cover administrative, park rental, and marketing costs. Managers share approximately \$1,000 as a stipend in a normal season; the new manager could earn more.

“There’s potential to make money. If you’re self-motivated, you can find funding, apply for grants and sponsorships,” former co-manager Benji Nagel said.

Sisters Farmers Market is run under the auspices of Sisters Park & Recreation District (SPRD). Nagel said, “SPRD has been really helpful. They’re pretty hands-off but also really supportive.” The new market manager can expect to forge a relationship with SPRD while the District itself undergoes major changes, bringing on a new director and a new board member.

Despite its name, SPRD does not run most of the town’s parks; those are managed by the City of Sisters, which charges fees for usage.

Former co-manager Carys Wilkins said, “The City has been the most challenging piece of the whole thing,” even though she and Nagel found their primary contact person at City Hall, Nicole

Abbenhuis, to be friendly and helpful. According to Wilkins, the City requested that the market move across town, then required weeks of negotiations before allowing the market to use adjacent parking spaces for food trucks.

Nagel said, “It’s definitely never felt like the City is thinking, ‘Oh yeah, we would love to have a farmers market!’... We applied for a grant from the City. Eighteen people applied, 15 people received money — not us.”

New City Manager Brant Kucera noted that he hasn’t interacted with the market yet.

“That being said, the City will continue to actively support the farmers market as we have in the past,” he stated. “This is mainly through setting up Fir Street Park for their use, providing them with power at no charge, putting the shade sails up, etcetera.” Abbenhuis clarified that electricity is included in park usage fees for all renters, and that shade sails will remain mounted throughout the summer.

What should a new manager bring to managing the market?

“Time,” Wilkins answered. “The best person for the job would be someone just retired who’s got a lot of energy and would love to put it into community-building.”

For more information visit sistersfarmersmarket.com.

Dr. Thomas R. Rheuben

General, Cosmetic, Implant and Family Dentistry

~ Over 22 years Serving Sisters ~

We are preferred providers for Delta Dental PPO and Premier, MODA, Advantage, Pacific Source, Cigna and the V.A.

541-549-0109 | 304 W. Adams Ave. | Sisters

You didn't count on this...

...but you can count on Fullhart Insurance!

Competitive pricing & great service for over 20 years.

AUTO • HOME • HEALTH • LIFE • BUSINESS

541-549-3172 • 1-800-752-8540 • 704 W. Hood Ave.

A member of Fullhart Insurance Agency, Inc.

YEAR-ROUND
FIREWOOD
SALES

KINDLING

SISTERS
FOREST PRODUCTS

541-410-4509

SistersForestProducts.com

\$50 OFF
Cut & Color

or

1/2 OFF
Haircut

with Morgan Perske,
new stylist from Aveda
in Portland.

hair | massage | nails | facials | makeup

541-549-1784

161-C N. Elm St.

COME IN OR CALL TODAY FOR YOUR
FREE INSURANCE
COMPARISON!

541-588-6245

257 S. Pine St., #101 | farmersagent.com/jrybka

AUTO • HOME • LIFE • BUSINESS

Get Your Book
Published With
page publishing

The most trusted all-in-one
book publisher

- Titles published in print & digital formats
- Exciting cover & interior illustrations
- Books sold at major retailers

Call today for your Free
Author Submission Kit!

1-866-917-2772