

Rotary Hoedown offered family fun at its best

By Jodi Schneider
Correspondent

Hundreds of folks came to enjoy live entertainment, great food, a silent auction, live auction, and raffle drawings on Saturday evening for the third annual Sisters Rotary Hoedown.

Folks dressed to impress in their Western best for the family-friendly event and were ready to kick up their heels to live music by Dry Canyon Stampede.

The huge indoor horse arena located on Cloverdale Road was donated for the evening by Julie and Vito Bartolotta.

Rotarians Kathryn Godsiff and past president Rand Reitmann joined forces as co-coordinators for this year's event.

"We played each other's strengths," Reitmann said.

Reitmann, being a two-time past president, has experience with fundraising and handled sponsorships and details, while Godsiff took the reins in the public relations arena.

Sisters Rotary had several committees that handled the auction, set up the arena, and served food and beverage.

"This is a fun, large event that only works because every Rotarian and our nonprofit partners pitch in to get it done," Godsiff said. "We are so appreciative of the arena owners, the Bartolotta family, and their managers, Kelly and Alicia Lettenmaier. It truly is a community event."

There was a wide variety in the silent auctions. Art, hospitality packages, hours in the flight simulator, gift baskets and more.

And the live auctions ranged from multi-night stays at a couple of beach homes to two nights locally at Lake Creek Lodge to a western saddle.

The event was a bulk fundraiser for the four nonprofit organizations that were invited to partner with Sisters Rotary for the event. They were Seed to Table, Sisters Band of Brothers, Circle of Friends, and Sisters High School Flight Science Class. Each nonprofit had an information table and a color-coded silent auction table with items donated from artists and businesses around Sisters.

Sisters Band of Brothers replaced Harmony Farm Sanctuary.

"Band of Brothers have been great partners for us, very proactive in promoting the event and organizing raffles for their organization," Godsiff added.

Sisters Band of Brothers member Jerry Johnson noted that the event is a very good means for them to raise money for the deserving veterans that need it. This year the event hired a professional auctioneer for the live auction items — Ramona Hulick from Turman Auction Services.

Sisters Flight Science instructor Sheryl Yeager was on hand to answer questions about Sisters High School Flight Science Program, while the Flight Science students shared the responsibility of selling cupcakes made by Sisters Bakery.

Executive director for Circle of Friends, Nicky Merritt, staffed their table selling bricks.

"We are advocating for our new building," Merritt told *The Nugget*.

Circle of Friends recently purchased a permanent clubhouse in Sisters for the mentors and their children.

The Sisters Park & Recreation District Zumba class practiced a few dance steps before coming to the event, getting ready to line dance with Sisters Zumba instructor Carol Ast, who has



PHOTO BY JODI SCHNEIDER

The Sisters Rotary Hoedown raised funds — and the barn roof — on Saturday night.

been teaching the aerobic fitness program for 10 years.

"This year we wanted to get more people up and dancing, so I learned some line dancing by watching a video," Ast said, laughing. "I checked with my Zumba class and asked who was going to the Hoedown and some agreed to come and do the line dancing with me. I also called Kurt Silva of Dry Canyon Stampede and asked if they could play some songs that would go along with my line dances and he agreed."

The group learned the "Electric Slide" and "Any Man of Mine" and some brave folks of all ages two-stepped out on the dance floor and joined them.

Prineville Band of

Brothers presented the colors with member James Taylor in the lead. Audrey Tehan, director of Seed to Table, serenaded the crowd with a beautiful rendition of the national anthem.

Seed to Table is in its fifth year of operation serving the Sisters community and is in transition waiting for their nonprofit status.

"We've become a really established organization and we are really excited about that," Tehan said. "We are really expanding our foundation that we can keep growing from."

"We've grown about 30,000 pounds of produce this year on our acre-and-a-half. And within that program we started Harvest Fresh Meal

Kits with High Desert Food & Farm Alliance for Food Bank recipients. It's one of the first programs of its kind in the nation. We are taking fresh produce and combining it with meal kits that have other staple items like pastas and canned soup, so we are incorporating more fresh ingredients into the kit. This is its first year, so it's been about three months."

This year, the event also featured a Kids' Corner, with games and activities for youngsters and a Wine Wall for the big folk.

After a little food, a little dancing and a lot of fun, folks were ready for the live auction. Each nonprofit donated a couple of items that were up for bid.



Congratulations to **Jamie McLeod-Skinner** on your victory in the Democratic primary. You are on your way to becoming our next representative to U.S. Congress for Oregon District 2! **Thank you** for coming to Sisters library, answering our questions, and really listening to our concerns.

Yours truly,

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