



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Sisters' Christmas Tree looked very fine on a chilly, windy winter's eve.

TREE LIGHTING: Event is traditional kick-off to season

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the honors. CPYR is founded on hope, it is a place where broken children, horses and families can find wholeness, belonging and trust. Meeder oversees all CPYR ministry.

Four performers from The Victorian Carolers, a professional a cappella group who performs in period costume from Central Oregon, began the festivities with the classic Christmas song, "Oh Come All Ye Faithful."

Director of the group Steve Osterkamp has been a professional singer for 20 years. He has an extensive

background singing with holiday quartets.

"We have a group of about 12 this season, but I work with about four singers at a time. We are all classical trained singers," Osterkamp said. "We all love singing in Sisters. It has such a close-knit community feel, and you don't find that everywhere."

The ceremony closed with The Victorian Carolers crooning the classic Christmas hymn, "Silent Night," and following a short countdown, the tall live tree at the east side of the park sparkled with lights. The crowd cheered as they walked over to see the glistening bright white lights while taking photos of family in front of the magnificent Sisters community Christmas tree.

TRADITIONS: Cherished ways often come from German heritage

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apple strudel, and — my personal favorite — the Austrian Kaiserschmarrn (hot bran-died cherries with loads of whipping cream served over crepes). With all of the senses in full gear, one can feel how during the Middle Ages these concoctions warmed one up both inside and out, creating much-needed merriment for that dismal era.

Many river cruise and tour companies have now capitalized on this celebration and have packages for the Christmas markets throughout Europe. It is a chilly time

of year to travel, but for those of us in Sisters, it would not be too much different weather than what we experience here. Depending on the country, many of the markets open in mid-November through December 25.

In Germany, Nürnberg is perhaps the most famous market. This walled city is the home of the famous German toy factory as well as the lebkuchen factory, so the numbers of wooden toys, ornaments, and the hand-painted tins filled with the local cookies, are common finds in that market. Many other European cities have their local version of the markets with local delicacies and handcrafts — Vienna, Prague, and Krakow to name just a few.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Nürnberg lebkuchen.

A note to the wise that the river cruises do sell out way in advance for these markets. It is a great way to grab a few friends and take off prior to our Thanksgiving or Christmas to kick off the holiday season. Forget the mall and the online websites, and put seasonal celebrating Old World style on your bucket list.

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