

Hermiston farmers market finds home while Pendleton's looks for a new one

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

After a successful change in venues, the Hermiston's Own Saturday Market is looking to use some positive momentum to its advantage.

Following vendor dissatisfaction and low foot traffic at the market's old location at the Hermiston Conference Center's Parking Lot, Doug Walker called his first go-around as market manager his "failure year."

Now in his third year, Walker and a special committee have since decided to move the market to McKenzie Park, a move that has pleased vendors.

Walker said the market has garnered more interest from vendors this season than the year before.

"The vendors seem to like it because there isn't the hot concrete (from the convention center parking lot) like there was two years ago," he said.

To continue to build on the market's modest success, Walker has experimented with new attractions to draw in customers.

A chili cook-off and peewee rodeo were nonstarters, but the Hermiston's Got Talent event was attended well enough to spawn plans to do it again this year.

Also new to this year's market is a food court.

"The vendors seem to like it because there isn't the hot concrete (from the convention center parking lot) like there was two years ago."

— Doug Walker,
Hermiston farmers market manager

Walker said vendors selling food like hot dogs and biscuits and gravy will be given their own section with tables and chairs for customers.

The market will start the year at Eastern Oregon Arts Festival in downtown Hermiston Saturday at 10 a.m.

The market will return to McKenzie Park for the remainder of the season May 16 through the end of October from 8 a.m. to noon.

While Hermiston's Own Saturday Market is satisfied with its current venue, the Pendleton's Farmers Market is looking for their own off-street location.

Pendleton Farmer's Market manager Cheryl Montgomery said the market board has expressed previous interest in the parking lot on the corner of South Main Street and S.E. Frazier Ave., where they could create a venue

similar to the Walla Walla Farmers Market.

Although that parking lot would be an ideal location, Montgomery said the lot's proximity to the railroad tracks presents a potential issue.

While market staff continue to search for a new location, the market's current venue on Main Street continues to attract crowds into the market's 13th year.

As with past years, crafts and goods vendors will be on the east side of the street and food and produce vendors will be on the west side.

This set-up has caused chagrin amongst some Main Street business owners, including councilman Al Plute, who argue that the vendors' stands and trucks block their storefronts.

Montgomery said they are aware of the conflict and are willing to talk with business owners on a compromise.

Despite an early cold snap and a relatively mild winter, neither Walker nor Montgomery said they have word from vendors about a significant reduction in supply this year.

The Pendleton Farmer's Market opened Friday and will run through October, with regular hours from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Contact Antonio Sierra at asierra@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0836.

BRIEFLY

Listening sessions highlight road concerns

PENDLETON

— Several Listening & Learning Sessions have been set up by the Pendleton city manager and city council.

They would like to gain input about street repairs and funding, as well as providing information about budget concerns.

The upcoming meetings are Wednesday at 7 p.m. in the cafeteria at Washington Elementary School, 1205 S.E. Byers Ave., and Wednesday, May 13 at 7 p.m. in the gymnasium at McKay Creek Elementary School, 1539 S.W. 44th St.

For more information, call Marlene at 541-276-7596.

Plants, plants and more plants

A quartet of organizations have announced they will host upcoming plant sales, including a pair in Hermiston, one in Heppner and one in Pendleton.

The Heppner High School agriculture department and FFA Chapter is hosting its annual plant sale Thursday from 3-6 p.m., Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the school's greenhouse, 710 Morgan St., Heppner. Plants available include herbs, vegetables, strawberries and flowers.

Individuals or couples can apply to be hosts. Hosts should be friendly, flexible and may be subject to a criminal background check. Those who apply will need to supply their own tent, camper or motor home, though the forest will provide a campsite, food allowance, propane and mileage reimbursement.

The Hermiston FFA plant sale is Friday from 3:30-6:30 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Hermiston High School, 600 S. First St. The school's greenhouse is located on the north side of the building. The sale includes hanging baskets, flowers and vegetables.

The Bloomer Girls Garden Club is hosting its annual plant sale during the Eastern Oregon Arts Festival Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the parking lot at Second Street and Gladys Avenue, Hermiston. The club will have lots of flowering plants, veggies and herbs. Profits will benefit Domestic Violence Services. If anyone has plants they would like to donate to the sale, plant and label in clean pots and drop off Saturday by 9 a.m.

And the Dirt Dabblers Garden Club of Pendleton will hold its annual plant sale Saturday, beginning at 9 a.m. until sold out, in the Peace Lutheran Church community room, 210 N.W. Ninth St. Lots of plants proven to thrive in the Pendleton area will be available for purchase.

Submit information to: community@eastoregonian.com or drop off to the attention of Tammy Malgesini at 333 E. Main St., Hermiston or Renee Struthers at 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton. Call 541-564-4539 or 541-966-0818 with questions.

AAUW meeting features drone presentation

PENDLETON — Eric Smidt will present a program about drone technology during the upcoming American Association of University Women meeting.

The gathering, which is open to the public, is Thursday at 7 p.m. in the Vert Club Room, 345 S.W.

SHORT STOP

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Like Us On 

HERMISTON

Arts festival accepts entries

Event opens Friday with evening reception

By TAMMY MALGESINI
East Oregonian

An art show within the art show is featured during this year's Eastern Oregon Arts Festival.

Local artists are invited to enter their work, which will be judged with \$1,500 in prizes awarded to participating artists. People may enter up to two pieces of art in all mediums.

There is a \$5 entry fee for each entry. Entries need to be submitted Thursday from 4-7 p.m. or Friday from 9 a.m. to noon at 201 E. Main St., Hermiston. Lori Sams, curator of the Betty Feves Memorial Gallery in Pendleton, is the juror during the Eastern Oregon Arts Festival.

The festival also added another new activity during the event. A pair of metal artists — Chris Huffman of Hermiston and Karsten Boysen of Port Orchard, Washington — will create sculptures Saturday during the festival. Both artists have their own unique approach to creating, said Mary Corp, president of the Desert Arts Council.

The Eastern Oregon Arts Festival kicks off Friday with an artists' reception at 5:30 p.m. with music and light refreshments in the Big Tent in front of Hermiston City Hall, 180 N.E. Second St. The evening event costs \$10 per person. In addition, beverages will be available for purchase.

The main festival event, which is free of charge, begins Saturday at 10 a.m. in downtown Hermiston. It features a full day of entertainment, including music, dancing and fine arts. Artist booths will be packed with handmade jewelry, ceramics, photograph, prints and paintings for sale and for viewing.

Fun hands-on activities for children of all ages will be available in the Victory Baptist Church building and the Student Art Show for middle school and high school students from across the region will be in the former RoeMarks building. In addition, Two Rivers Correctional Institution will have a group show of inmate artwork on display at Grace and Mercy Lutheran Church. All three are located on Main Street.

Many professional artists from around the region and from as far away as the Seattle will showcase their artistic creations in hosting businesses in the 100-200 blocks of East Main Street and in the festival area near city hall. Visitors will find a mix of artistic styles. Artists will be available to share about their creative vision and processes.

Another new festival feature includes the OSU



Children participate in a mural project during the 2014 Eastern Oregon Arts Festival in downtown Hermiston. This year's event kicks off Friday with an artists' reception.

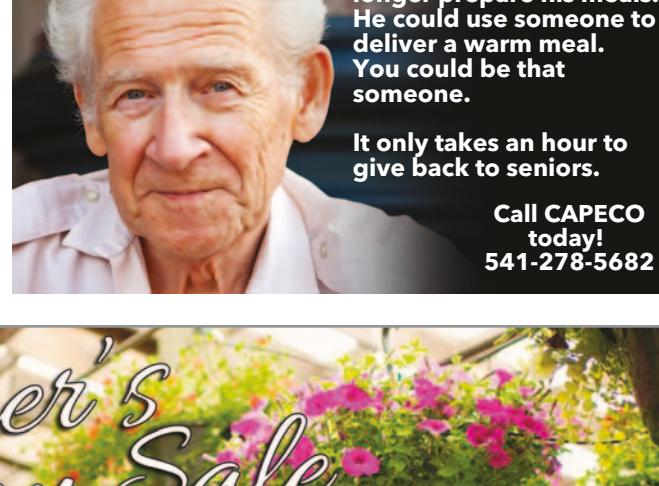


Katy Kimbrow and Irma Rodriguez view artwork while artist Brandi Dayton looks on during the 2014 Eastern Oregon Arts Festival in downtown Hermiston.

Eastern Oregon Arts Festival co-chair. "It is the goal of the Arts Festival and its sponsoring organization, Deserts Arts Council, to create more involvement in the arts and to help build a vibrant arts community in the region.

For information, including the schedule and artist lineup, visit www.desertartsCouncil.com or www.facebook.com/desertarts. Questions can be directed to Heather LaBeau at hlaabeau@hermiston.or.us or 541-667-5010.

Contact Tammy Malgesini at tmalgesini@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4539



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