

Latino music moves to Friday night

Latino music is moving to a new night at Umatilla County Fair.

In years past, Latino musical acts were generally slated for earlier in the fair week, either on Wednesday or Thursday night. This year, Umatilla County Fair board chairman Lucas Wagner opted to move the event to the more popular Friday, August 12 slot. Domador de la Sierra and Tormenta de Durango will be the opening acts before the headliner, Chicago-based band Montez de Durango, takes the main stage.

The move was made in part for scheduling purposes — Creedence Clearwater Revisited worked best as Saturday's musical finale — but also as a way to increase attendance from Hermiston's Latino and Hispanic community, which makes up approximately 35 percent of the town's population. Wagner and a local Hispanic committee have wanted to move the event to Friday for years.

"We believe that it will be an



Montez De Durango will perform Friday, Aug. 12.

opportunity to be more inclusive to the Hispanic population in our community," Wagner said.

But rather than packing all the Latino

entertainment and events into one day, Wagner hopes those elements will be continuous for the duration of the fair.

"I'd like to get away from 'Latino

night' because we'd like to make it more inclusive throughout the week," Wagner said.

Wagner is hoping to add a mariachi band as strolling entertainment earlier in the week. The jalapeño eating contest will also return after last year's successful debut.

Still, the centerpiece will be Friday night's trio of musical acts. Wagner said people were impressed by last year's Latino night, in particular, the fair's ability to book a nationally recognized headliner in La Mar-K de Tierra Caliente. Wagner hopes people feel the same way about Montez de Durango, a lively duranguense group that will bring the audience to their feet. Fair organizers typically remove seating around the Wildhorse Main Stage during Latino night that would otherwise be there, because so few spectators stay seated.

"There's so many people up dancing and milling around," Wagner said. "It's just a whole different vibe."

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