

Barbecue represents good food and good times at fair

By JADE MCDOWELL
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It wouldn't be a county fair without barbecue, and the savory smell of it was wafting over the Umatilla County fairgrounds on Wednesday.

Some of it came from the food vendors, and the rest was from the annual barbecue contest that gives local aficionados the chance to show off their skills on the grill.

Karlos Oneal of Arizona was working the grill and a spit on Wednesday morning at Piggly's BBQ. The huge cuts of beef rotating gently over an open flame was drawing longing looks from passersby, many of whom seemed to decide regretfully that 10:30 a.m. was too early for lunch.

Oneal said he has been barbecuing since he was a kid, learning from a variety of mentors and a lot of trial and error. When he was 13 he was already having friends over for barbecues where he was doing all of the cooking, so it only seemed natural that he eventually landed a job cooking barbecue dishes at fairs around the country, a job he said he thoroughly enjoys. "I love the people," he said.

This was the first time Piggly's BBQ was a vendor at the Umatilla County Fair. Oneal said great customer service, good taste and quality meat were all important elements in the business, but many of the secrets good barbecuers use happen before the meat and vegetables ever hit the grill.

"The way of preparation is key," he said.

Over at the barbecue competition, Jake Potter of Hermiston agreed that preparation is a key. He and his brother-in-law entered the competition for the first time last year, and Potter said they quickly learned — as they scrambled to finish dishes while other teams relaxed — they should have done more prep work.

"We were busting our butts the entire time," he said.

This year, competing with team Smokin' Hot and Kickin' Ash, Potter made sure to have ingredients measured out ahead of time, and said he was enjoying the slower pace.

"It's a good time," he said. "You get to be at the fair, you



Tyrel Burns of Weston squirts an apple-based concoction on his cuts of meat while taking part in the Umatilla County Fair BBQ Contest on Wednesday in Hermiston.



Cuts of beef rotate on a spit over wood coals at Piggly's BBQ stand at the Umatilla County Fair on Wednesday.

"It's trial and error. I've grilled plenty of things I didn't like."

— Jake Potter, of team Smokin' Hot and Kickin' Ash

get to have fun, you get to cook and it's a day off work."

Like several barbecue contestants, Potter said his first teacher was his father, who taught Potter — the only son in a family with five girls — how to grill a mean dish. Since then he has experimented with technique, often working from scratch rather than a recipe.

"It's trial and error," he said. "I've grilled plenty of things I didn't like."

Tyrel Burns of Weston, competing with 3rd Degree BBQ, said one of the great things about barbecue is "nothing's ever the same."

Burns also grew up watching his dad at the grill and eventually started to branch out into his own recipes.

"It's usually just tweaking

things, taking recipes that are proven and modifying them," he said.

He said he enjoyed the camaraderie of relaxing around the grill as everyone's dishes simmered and smoked. For the competition he was making smoked tri-tip, grilled lamb, potato wedges, blooming onions and a blueberry tart.

Paula Morgan of Hermiston, competing with Grillin N Chillin, said it was her husband that got her into barbecue. She was cooking without him on Wednesday because he was out of town, but the back of her neon orange shirt displayed a long list of awards from previous barbecue competitions the couple had completed together.

"We get recipes off the

2016 competition results

Overall winner:
Die Hard BBQ
Onion first place:
Die Hard BBQ
Onion second place:
3rd Degree BBQ
Onion third place:
Princess Raylee
Potato first place:
Princess JaNessa
Potato second place:
Grillin N Chillin
Potato third place:
3rd Degree BBQ
Beef first place:
Cozy Corner
Beef second place:
Princess Raylee
Beef third place:
Smokin' Hot and Kickin' Ash
Lamb first place:
Die Hard BBQ
Lamb second place:
Princess Raylee
Lamb third place:
Smokin' Hot and Kickin' Ash
Blueberry first place:
3rd Degree BBQ
Blueberry second place:
Die Hard BBQ
Blueberry third place:
Smokin' Hot and Kickin' Ash

internet and then experiment," she said. "We use family and friends as guinea pigs."

The double-blind taste test by judges Wednesday afternoon involved five entries from each team: an onion dish, a potato dish, tri-tip beef, lamb and a blueberry dessert.

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Staff photo by Jade McDowell

Umatilla County Fair Princess Raylee Lehnert throws candy during the Umatilla County Fair Kick-Off Parade on Saturday.

Fair announces parade winners

Walchli Farms won the overall sweepstakes award and the best business float during the Umatilla County Fair parade.

The event, which was held Aug. 6, kicked off fair week in Hermiston. Also, Hermiston Drug & Gift won the fair theme award, which depicts Traditions and Transitions.

The parade drew 145 entries and 11 received first place ribbons in different categories. Those included:

Youth Band: **Hermiston High School Marching Band**; Youth Dance Group: **All American Gymnastics and Cheer**; Adult Equestrian Group: **Ixtapa Family Mexican Restaurant**; Youth Equestrian Group: **Contreras Family**; Non-Profit Float: **Umatilla & Morrow County Child Welfare Program**; Motorized Group: **Cub Scouts Pack No. 645**; Single Motorized: **Don Waters**; Business Non-Float: **First Community Credit Union**; Non-Profit Non-Float: **OSU HAREC 1942 Dodge**; and Royalty: **Happy Canyon Princesses**.

The Umatilla County Fair runs through Saturday. Gates open daily at 9 a.m. and admission is \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors, \$6 for ages 6-12 and free for those 5 and under.

For more information, visit www.co.umatilla.or.us/fair or call 541-567-6121.

ANIMALS: 'Those goats and lambs are pretty naughty'

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Her friend had to tackle Lenny to bring him back, she said, and now the lamb seemed a bit spooked.

She said she had seen two other sheep escape so far.

Not all the sheep were eager to escape, however. Madeline White, 12, of Pendleton, said she isn't worried about her lamb jumping the fence.

"Marvin is the king of laziness," she said. "He doesn't like to exercise. I think he's too fat."

He does cause problems by eating things he's not supposed to, however, including paper, fake flowers and decorations.

At the fairgrounds, White pointed out where the white paint on Marvin's panels had been stripped away in chunks as he gnawed on the bars.

GiGi Follett, 10, of Hermiston, said it's not just sheep that escape their confines on a regular basis.

At her grandparents' house, her pig joined forces with her cousin Cadence Cool-ey's pig to escape. The girls had to brave a snake-infested field to round them up again.

"We started crying because we were scared," she said.

Their pigs haven't escaped yet at the fair, but another pig used its snout to push up the latch on its pen, and they watched someone else's pig take off from the weighing station, knocking its owner over as it went.

"I feel bad I started laughing, but it was kind of funny," Follett said.

She said they were also reminded by their 4-H leaders that they needed to keep their feed bags rolled up tight after a goat escaped its pen to come visit the pigs and steal some of their food.

"Those goats and lambs are pretty naughty," she said.

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CAMP: Also offers rock journalism workshops

Continued from 1A

outreach and education coordinator Bonnie Day. The ultimate goal of the camp, director Peter Walters said, is to foster a "free-form way of getting kids to be creative."

The camp, free for teens, allows them the freedom to follow their interests.

Most campers form bands at the beginning of the week and set out to write their own songs for a grand finale concert Friday on Main Street. Some of these bands incorporate non-traditional rock instruments to create a unique sound.

A three-person band features Madison Feller on guitar, Noelle Texidor alternating between horn and string instruments, and Britany Mendel playing ukulele. The trio are still kicking around band names, though all three are part of a larger band outside of camp called "The Hopeless Romantics." None of them had attended Rock & Roll Camp prior to this year, but all three are enjoying it thus far.

"I just like being with people who like music," Feller, 15, said. "Not specifically the same genre of music, but we all kind of connect through it."

Addison Schulberg, who has never missed a day of the program in 11 years as either a camper or counselor, offered his studio, located at 320 S.E. Emigrant Ave, for the camp to use this year. He and his band, Misty Mouth,

recently converted the space.

Campers have also picked up tidbits on production engineering. Schulberg led a Tuesday class at the studio in which several campers sat in the control room during a recording and told bands afterward what they liked and what needed to be improved.

Those who aren't interested in creating music find plenty of ways to keep busy during the week, too.

Casey Jarman, Michael Heald and first-year counselor Jack Lewis — all from Portland — lead the rock journalism workshops that incorporate art, writing, interviewing, band promotion, branding and podcast creation. As the camp has grown over the years, an increasing number of campers have gravitated toward these courses during the week.

"The first year they just had music and some kids realized after a day or two they didn't want to be in a band," said Jarman, a former *Willamette Week* music editor. "We tried to offer them something else to get involved with."

Regardless of their roles, counselors encourage campers to create rather than cover. While other camps may repurpose the work of others, Rock & Roll Camp's concert at the end of the week almost always features freshly-written material.

"I was never a big cover guy — I always wanted to write my own songs," Schulberg said. "I think we all try to push that pretty heavily."

SERVICES: Budget could change if Measure 97 passes

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System.

The projections are based on the state's June economic and revenue forecast and could change with the September and subsequent forecasts.

A DAS spokesperson emphasized in a tweet that

Wednesday's projection is only a "starting point."

The state's budget picture could change dramatically if voters in November approve Measure 97, a controversial corporate sales tax measure. The 2.5 percent tax on the Oregon sales of certain corporations exceeding \$25 million would yield an

estimated \$3 billion per year in additional state revenue.

Sen. Richard Devlin, D-Tualatin, a co-chairperson of the Ways and Means Committee, has said state services likely will face cuts if the ballot measure fails. But he also has warned that the rising costs of the state's pension plan in the

next several years and the Affordable Care Act would quickly eat up that supplemental revenue.

With those expenses, "the money is gone from that measure, so you should quit thinking about all these other programs you would like to expand," Devlin said earlier this month.

WATER: Pipeline construction expected to cost \$14.4M

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Mike Wick said more water for irrigation means farmers can extend their growing season later into the summer — a point he drove home by emphasizing how early supplies dried up during last year's intense drought.

"You either sit back and do nothing, or you look for opportunities to benefit the district," Wick said.

Building the pipeline is expected to cost \$14.4 million, which means farmers must sign up for at least 8,000 acre-feet of water to finance the infrastructure. The district already assessed patrons \$30 per acre a year ago to pay for engineering studies.

Gibb Evans, vice president and general manager of IRZ Consulting in Hermiston, said the next step is to secure easements for the pipe through private property. Water would be pumped from an existing station owned by Amstad Farms, which the company

voluntarily upgraded to accommodate the increased flows.

"All of the in-river work is done," Evans said.

By using Amstad's station, Evans said the project can avoid the time and money it would take to permit an entirely new pump in the river. The system would be capable of delivering 45 cubic feet of water per second.

Of course, there must be water available to fill the pipe, which is where the Northeast Oregon Water Association comes in. The nonprofit organization, founded by J.R. Cook in 2012, has been involved in lengthy negotiations with environmental groups in Salem on a multi-phase plan to draw additional Columbia River water for Eastern Oregon farmers.

Cook said those negotiations are ongoing. Pumping from the Columbia River requires bucket-for-bucket mitigation to protect threatened and endangered fish, which NOWA will

accomplish by certifying municipal water rights and leaving them in stream.

"First, we have to get the mitigation water in hand," Cook said.

One of those municipal rights — 100 cfs from the Port of Umatilla — is in the process of certification. NOWA proposes to deliver water to critical ground-water areas in three project areas, known as the East, West and Central projects. The Westland Irrigation District falls under the Central Project area, but is not obligated by anything NOWA does.

"NOWA and the region is bigger than any one specific project," Cook said. "If Westland doesn't want to participate, there's another entity out there that will."

Future phases of the NOWA project also account for mitigation by rehabilitating badly stressed groundwater aquifers, and upstream restoration projects as funding is available. A water funding

package did pass the 2015 Legislature that includes \$11 million earmarked for the basin.

NOWA's membership is supported by local cities, counties and ports, Cook said.

"This is a monumental effort that benefits the region long-term," he said.

Questions still linger about how Westland will proceed with the project, given a recent lawsuit filed by senior water rights holders accusing the district of cheating them out of their existing water supplies. Bob Levy, the district board's chairman, said he couldn't answer legal questions, but did say patrons' water bills will only go up if they order more water than they normally receive.

The next Westland Irrigation District board meeting will be held Monday, Aug. 15.

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