

Festival of Trees sprouts holiday spirit

Revamped event offers festive fun

By TAMMY MALGESINI
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — A reimagined Festival of Trees 2021 is planned in Hermiston. The event is Saturday, Dec. 4, at the Hermiston Community Center, 415 S. Highway 395.

“It’s an important part of kicking off the holiday season,” said Liz Marvin, event co-chair. “I’m excited about it because we’re finding a way to have Festival of Trees this year where we couldn’t have it last year.”

Festival organizers were riding high in 2019 — tickets for the 25th annual gala dinner and auction sold out within three days. And then things went dark in 2020 because of COVID-19 restrictions. As ideas were pondered for the 2021 event, plans focused on providing a safe event for many to enjoy.

Julie Puzey, publicity chair, said overall attendance in previous years was limited due to the number of tables available. This year, with time slots for the viewing of trees and holiday items, shopping and placing bids, they are able to increase the number of people who can come through the doors. In addition, by dropping the ticket price, it makes attending more affordable.

Ticket costs and time slots include: 2-3 p.m., family hour, \$25/per family; 3-4 p.m., individuals, \$20/per person; and 4-5 p.m., 5-6 p.m. or 6-7 p.m., adults 21 and older, \$20/per person (includes wine tasting). Tickets are available at the Hermiston Chamber of



A large tree features an outdoor theme during the 2019 Hermiston Festival of Trees. This year’s event is Dec. 4, 2021, at the Hermiston Community Center.

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Commerce, 630 S. Highway 395, or by calling 541-567-6151.

Puzey is especially optimistic about this year’s festival. While it’s different, she said those in attendance will be amazed to see what people in the community have created.

“The trees and wreaths and stockings are exquisite,

creative and fun,” she said. “There is so much creativity and imagination and artistic skill, plus the generosity of the sponsors and those in the community who donate stuff that goes under the trees.”

Cathy Wamsley, large tree coordinator, said the displays will appeal to a wide audience. Men, women and children all will find something

fun with themes such as the outdoors, fishing, Christmas at home and Bohemian rhapsody. In addition, there will be smaller table top trees, as well as wreaths, stockings and holiday gift baskets.

Also, guests will have the opportunity to win with the Day of 100 Gifts. Every 15 minutes, winners will be announced — gifts include

everything from coffee from Honduras and See’s Candies to wine and Christmas decor.

Bids also accepted online, via text

“We want people to come and see all the hard work of the decorators and sponsors but people can bid without attending the event,” Marvin said.

Items can be purchased

with either an online winning bid or with the “buy it now” feature. A computer link will be available on the event Facebook page or text “Joy” to 71760.

In addition to browsing, people can read a description of items and place bids. Online/text bidders will be notified right away if they are outbid and may click to bid again, or they can set an “auto bid” with a maximum amount.

A special Giving Tree, Wamsley said, will benefit the Hermiston School District and Hermiston Parks and Recreation second grade swim program. Toys beneath the tree, which are donated by Hapo Community Credit Union, will be distributed through the Hermiston Police Christmas Express program. And this year’s Caring Community donation will help support the bicycle helmet program at Good Shepherd Health Care System.

While this year’s event won’t include a catered meal, organizers are working with restaurants in the community to offer special Festival of Trees discounts. People are encouraged to make plans to eat out before or after the event in support of local businesses. Information about participating eateries will be posted on the event’s Facebook and Instagram pages.

Event organizers — Good Shepherd Community Health Foundation and the Hermiston Kiwanis Club — have provided funding support to more than 150 programs and projects in the community. For more information, search Instagram @festivaloftreeshermiston or visit www.facebook.com/HermistonFestivalofTrees.

Pendleton to hold virtual Festival of Trees

East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The 2021 Pendleton Festival of Trees will be held virtually on Saturday, Dec. 4. The event serves as a fundraiser for the CHI St. Anthony Hospital Foundation.

Pictures and descriptions of items up for bid may be available for viewing the evening prior, said Emily Smith, the hospital’s director of marketing and communications. People are encouraged to visit the website to set up an account or they may use their existing “Greater Giving”

account, if they have one. Shoppers can utilize a computer, smartphone or tablet to make online bids.

To register, visit sahfot2021.ggo.bid/bidding/package-browse and click on “Get Started.” Bidding will close Dec. 4 at 8 p.m.

In addition to six large trees, which will be beautifully decorated with an array of gifts underneath, there will be 10 smaller trees, 10 wreaths and numerous gift baskets.

For more information, call 541-278-2627 or visit www.www.sahpendleton.org and click “Foundation.”



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian, File

Two fluffy owls peer from a wreath created by Janeen Reding, which was auctioned off virtually during the 2020 Pendleton Festival of Trees. A fundraiser for the CHI St. Anthony Hospital Foundation, people can register for this year’s virtual event, which is Dec. 4, 2021.

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