

Camp: 'You don't even have to play music to be involved in music'

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The focus was on creativity, he said, rather than, for example, having students learn a Led Zeppelin solo note for note.

"We wanted to encourage kids to be original and creative, whether that's silly and simple, or deep and personal," Walters said.

The creativity was evident throughout the Pendleton Center for the Arts, from workshops where camp participants could create their own band logos and merchandise to discussions on the nature of the music industry itself.

"We wanted something that proved to kids that you don't have to want to play in a band to be involved in music," Walters explained. "You don't even have to play music to be involved in music. There's a place for everyone, whether center stage, running lights or taking pictures. There's so much more to music than the people playing, and there's no class for that in school."

Lilo Lese, 17 and a Pendleton native, has been attending Rock & Roll Camp since she was 12, getting past the camp's age requirement of 13 years on account of her birthday being so close to the camp's start date.

"I highly recommend this camp for everyone, it's one of the best things in town," Lese said. "As a kid, Rock & Roll Camp was my absolute favorite part of summer."

Lese is a singer, songwriter and has been playing the ukulele since last year. This year she's doing something different. Instead of only singing, she's playing the ukulele with her band, and she also wrote the song



Yasser Marte/East Oregonian
Arin Velho, 16, shreds the guitar Thursday, Aug. 11, 2022, during Rock & Roll Camp at the Pendleton Center for the Arts. Velho is a member of the band Make It Nuclear.



Yasser Marte/East Oregonian
Marilla McClelland-Holden, 15, plays drums Thursday, Aug. 11, 2022, during Rock & Roll Camp at the First Christian Church in Pendleton. She is a member of the band Popcornado.

they intend to play at the camp's showcase Aug. 12.

"Our band this year is

called Knives and Dandelions." Lese said. "I wrote our song for this year's



Yasser Marte/East Oregonian
Dustin Hamman, 44, gives advice on drum rhythm Thursday, Aug. 11, 2022, during Rock & Roll Camp at the Pendleton Center for the Arts. Hamman traveled from New Mexico to be a part of the camp.

show. It's still untitled, but I started writing it over a year ago. It sat around, I wasn't

sure what to do with it, until now."

Lese said she is "really

into" musical theater and likes pop and jazz.

"I'm hoping to become a musician on Broadway or sing pop music. I'm a music and theater kid," Lese said. "I'll be attending Eastern Oregon University and studying music and theater arts."

As the camp goes broke up from a morning of classes and discussions, they began forming their bands, with counselors joining in to help where they could. The counselors always are trying to keep up with the speed of the attendees, Walters said.

"If you're a counselor in this camp it'll definitely bite you in the butt if you underestimate the kids," he said.

Walters said he likes seeing young people in Pendleton get involved in music, be fans of music and make music.

"Not just music, but art in general," he said, "Every music scene or community needs people who are making the art, but also the people engineering it, promoting it. There's so much music."

Walters still plays with James Dean Kindle and the Eastern Oregon Playboys when he can, but finds it more and more difficult as he gets older to find the time. He emphasized this is why it's so important to engage young people in the music making process.

"It's at its purest form when you're just a young person getting together with your peers and throwing stuff at the wall. You'll never be as artistically free as you are at this age, as a teenager," he said. "It's a good time to find those traits that are going to define you, and find the things they're going to define themselves with."



Yasser Marte/East Oregonian
Smoke continues to rise Wednesday, Aug. 10, 2022, from the Grain Craft flour mill as the sun sets in Pendleton.

Fire:

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"A lot of farmers don't have home storage, and they can't store that grain on their farm," he said. "For this heartbreaking event to happen today, it puts the community and a lot of the farmers in a tough situation. It hits the community hard."

Jeremy Bunch, CEO of Shepherd's Grain, a farmer-owned flour company, sent an email to customers about the fire.

"We are working on a contingency plan now and getting wheat staged for movement to another Grain Craft mill," Bunch said. "Unfortunately, there will be an interruption in flour supply as we work through these details. We apologize for the inconvenience this causes. We are working hard to minimize this flour supply interruption and will provide a timeline update very soon."

The cause of the fire was "mechanical failure," Byram, the police chief, told the Capital Press.

On Aug. 9, dispatchers received a report of

black smoke coming from the mills, "with no visible flames," according to a police department press release. The fire department responded, extinguished the small fire and remained on fire watch.

The fire subsequently reignited at about 4 a.m. Aug. 10 and the mill became fully engulfed due to the dry grain and the wooden structure, Byram said.

Employees identified the source of the fire, Byram said.

"It happened in the mill itself, with one of the pieces of equipment, with a rubber bushing or housing that obviously got too hot and started the fire," he said.

There were no injuries, he said.

It's the middle of harvest, Byram said, so the mill was processing a lot of flour. He didn't have an exact figure, but said Grain Craft employees estimated there were "hundreds of thousands of pounds of processed flour in the bins."

There is no estimated cost of damage yet, he said.

"We can't even get into the building, we can't do anything right now, this is strictly defensive ... right

now. They're just trying to keep (the fire) away from other structures," he said the afternoon of Aug. 10.

Some surrounding buildings have been damaged by water and smoke, Byram said.

The Pendleton Fire Department, Umatilla Tribal Fire Department, Umatilla County Fire District No. 1 and other agencies responded to the scene, at 501 S.E. Emigrant Ave.

Firefighters were still extinguishing hot spots and battling the fire the afternoon of Aug. 10, Byram said.

The mill plays a "huge" role in the Pendleton community, he said.

"They're a major employer; we are obviously an agricultural community that does a lot of dryland wheat farming," he said. "Wheat farmers from the surrounding area bring their wheat in here to the Pendleton flour mill. It's yet to be determined what the impact is, but I can gauge it's going to be significant."

Pendleton Assistant Fire Chief Tony Pierotti told the East Oregonian newspaper the silos were full of finished grain, so the fuel load was "extreme."

Fair:

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The beef showings took place Wednesday, Aug. 10, and Thursday, Aug. 11, but Perez and other FFA members had been at the fairgrounds since Aug. 8. Perez and Rebel placed fifth in showmanship earlier, marking the end of a long journey for the two friends.

"It's always an enjoyable experience," Perez said. "I work for this all year."

Avian flu stifles bird showings

Over at the small animal barn, things seemed a bit quieter. With a recent avian flu outbreak in Oregon, the fair limited 4-H and FFA avian entries to market chickens and turkeys. This meant many cages sat empty in the small animals' section of the barn.

Alice Dyer, fair barn superintendent, said the decision slowly snowballed throughout weeks as cases grew. Initially, it was only waterfowl excluded from the fair. Days later, Dyer said the decision was made for all non-market birds to stay home.

"It was better to keep all non-market at home," Dyer said. "With avian flu, once one gets it, (the flu) spreads."

The decision, while understandable, "devastated" a lot of the young exhibitors, she said. With so many birds unable to come, the fair staff decided to let them bring stuffed animals to fill the space.

Several stuffed animals sat in the birdcages, allowing many exhibitors to bring a bird in. Many children even brought their stuffed birds into the showing competition just so they could take part in the activity, Dyer said, giving



Mackenzie Whaley/East Oregonian
Annika Holden prepares her sheep May for the upcoming sheep showcase Thursday, Aug. 11, 2022, at the Umatilla County Fair in Hermiston.

them a bright spot to look forward to.

Business as usual elsewhere in the barn

Next to the avian sections, rabbits and guinea pigs occupied their usual space. Two barns over, the pigs attracted a bit of a crowd as well. While Dyer said participation numbers have been down the past year due to the pandemic, they are creeping back to usual.

One barn over, the sheep were showing on the afternoon of Aug. 11. Swarms of owners pulled their sheep for their showmanship presentations in front of a judging panel and crowd. Many exhibitors were washing and prepping their animals as the time ticked down, some frantic and some calm.

Watching the action was Arthur Golightly of Hermiston and his prize pygmy goat, Brownie. The 10-year-old was recently named grand champion in showmanship. for his presentation of the 4-month-old goat.

"It felt really good," Golightly said.

For Golightly and many others, it was their first time working with the animals. Kaitlyn Crouther and Dallin

Smith, both of Hermiston, are first-time fair participants. Both said they have loved their time working with the animals. Crouther's show with her goat, Rolo, placed fifth in showmanship earlier in the week.

Royal connections

Following their showings, two Umatilla County Fair Court princesses, Kylie Temple and Ashlynn Cutburth, greeted each participant. The two presented competitors with a ribbon during award ceremonies.

The competitions are something Temple, who has been part of FFA showings since her freshman year of high school, knows well. Cutburth, meanwhile, has been involved in 4-H since before she could have an animal. Both of them expressed their appreciation for the programs.

And while many may come to Umatilla County for the elephant ears, Temple said what makes the fair special is the entire community's support of both FFA and 4-H.

"The people make (the fair) special," Temple said. "They show up for the livestock kids. The community puts in so much."

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