

# McDaniel set to take over blues festival

# Police chief search attracts deep pool of applicants

By Steve Tool

Wallowa County Chieftain



McDaniel

The Bronze Blues and Brews Festival has a new face in the director's chair as secretary/treasurer Wendy McDaniel moved up to co-direct the festival with current director Chuck Garrett, who is retiring after the 2016 event.

McDaniel is a native of Wallowa County who attended the University of Oregon to obtain an accounting degree before returning to this area. She didn't grow up as a huge blues fan; she credits her son Jesse for sparking her interest in the genre.

The new director started out just attending the festival for the good times before joining its board.

"I've attended the festival for years. In fact, my husband and I had our wedding party here," she said.

McDaniel decided to step up her involvement in 2010, when organizers were unable to put on the festival.

"If you want something to happen, you need to step in and help with it," she said. "Since I do accounting for a living, guess where I started."

Once Garrett decided to ease his way out of the directorship, McDaniel was eager to step in.

"Chuck's given a lot of work to the county between the car show and the blues fest. It's time for someone else to step in and take these roles so they can continue."

McDaniel already served a stint as 2014 festival director, an event that prepared her well for possible calamities.

"We had the fires that year and got kicked out of the Thunder Room at the rodeo grounds. We had to move to the community center at the last minute and almost didn't get that."

"It was one thing after another, but we always pull it off

you find a more gorgeous setting?"

Challenges on the horizon include getting an infusion of youth.

"We have a good solid board that is really committed, but as life goes on and changes, we move on to different things. I think it's important we get younger people involved so we can continue."

Besides working on the festival's 20th anniversary, McDaniel is encouraging local sponsors and citizens to get involved.

"Become a part of it. Whether you want to become a volunteer or a board member, we're always looking for help. People need to get behind us if they want to see it continue."

McDaniel isn't planning any major changes in the near future.

"Why fix what ain't broken? I think it's an amazing festival, and we're just going to continue to bring good music acts into the community. I take things I'm involved with pretty personally and I just want it to go well."

Longtime festival board member Pearl Sturm thinks McDaniel is just right for the position.

"I've worked with Wendy for nearly 10 years, and she's a real workhorse," Sturm said. "She's done it before, and she'll be a great leader."

Garrett also is pleased with his eventual replacement.

one way or the other, no matter who's sweating what."

Garrett's laid-back style of Garrett is something McDaniel intends to continue.

"Chuck is an amazing people person," she said. "He's very grounded and pretty mellow. He handles people diplomatically."

"Chuck is a magician at handling pressure situations, and he thinks quickly off the top of his head. I've always admired that about him."

McDaniel's current strengths are her ability to handle money and write grants — she recently helped secure a grant that allowed the festival to finish a fence that encircles the park.

"When my kids were little, I was always fearful of taking them to the park because of the river," she said. "Kids are always drawn to water."

McDaniel is writing another grant to help with band fees for the upcoming 20th anniversary of the festival.

"We're trying to get some of our favorite bands from the past back. It'll bump up our budget a little bit," she said.

Getting some of the local businesses and citizens to get involved is also a McDaniel priority.

"This is an amazing event. People are fascinated with the event and where we have it. We have a natural amphitheater in the park, and where else can

By Kathleen Ellyn  
Wallowa County Chieftain

It's Round 2 in the search for a police chief for Enterprise, and according to reports made at the Monday's City Council meeting, the process is proceeding in a satisfactory manner.

The council recently passed along a thick stack of applications to three Eastern Oregon police chiefs for review — Stuart Roberts of Pendleton, Brian Harvey of La Grande and Wyn Lohner of Baker City. Those chiefs made up the Oregon Association Chiefs of Police Agency Review Team whose services were requested by the city following the resignation of former Chief Wes Kilgore on March 23, 2015.

The city initiated an outside review to assess the strengths and weaknesses of its police force. The three chiefs who conducted that review have remained closely involved in the entire search and hiring process.

Chief Harvey further assisted the city by being part of the interview process in the last round, which resulted in a conditional offer being made to Lt. James Episcopo of Brookfield Village, Ill. Episcopo eventually declined the position and the hiring process began again in November.

This time around the city received approximately 30 applications, according to

City Administrator Michelle Young, but some did not meet basic criteria and were quickly eliminated. Nevertheless, the number of individuals potentially in the running was significant, and Councilor Jenni Word, reporting for the Police Committee expressed satisfaction in the process.

"Now that we've done this before we understand the process and hopefully it will move smoothly," Word said. "There were quite a few (applicants) from the Northwest. More than last time, and that's encouraging."

Councilor Stacey Karvoski, reporting for the Policy Committee, also advised that the city have a performance evaluation system in place for department heads and staff. This is a procedural improvement the city has been working to update and refine for some time. An assessment for the new system will continue in coming months.

The city also voted unanimously to offer a three-year contract to Wyatt Baum of

Baum Smith, LLC Law Office of La Grande as city attorney. Baum is president of the Union County Bar Association and is active in the Oregon City Attorney's Association, League of Oregon Cities and Association of Counties. He also works very closely with Citycounty Insurance Service and currently represents the cities of Joseph, Elgin and others.

"Our firm has very extensive municipal experience," said Baum. "We're very honored and privileged that city decided to go with a local firm and we're excited to serve the needs of the residents of Enterprise."

Attorney Sadie Kennedy, a member of the same firm, assists Baum. Kennedy has worked with current city attorney Roland Johnson and is familiar with city issues.

City Attorney Roland Johnson has served the city since 1977 and will continue to represent the city on an ongoing case. He also represents the city of Wallowa.

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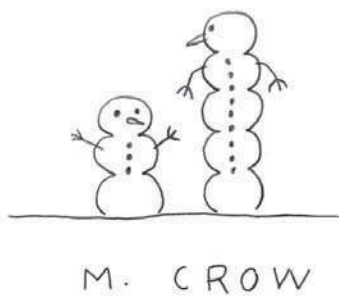
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