

Plans are in full swing for Fair Lights 2021

By ANN BLOOM
For the Wallowa County
Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — The plans for Fair Lights 2021 are in full swing, with the same number of exhibits expected this year as last — 23. However, according to new Wallowa County Fair Board Manager Annett Connor, the fair board is, “just starting to recruit,” for exhibits, so there could be more, she said.

The opening night for Fair Lights is 5 p.m. Friday, Dec. 17. The displays will be located at the fairgrounds. Cars enter through a gate off Medical Parkway near Les Schwab, drive around the track to view the lighted, holiday-themed displays, provided by area businesses and organizations, and exit near the indoor arena off Lyle Street. The event runs from 5-8 p.m. each night through Dec. 26. Fair Lights 2021 is free though donations are appreciated. The first 100 attendees on opening night will receive a bag of



Wallowa County Chieftain, File

A message of hope from the Enterprise Seventh-day Adventist Church was the theme of a Christmas display Friday, Dec. 18, 2020, at the Wallowa County Fairgrounds for the opening night of Fair Lights 2020. A similar series of displays at the fairgrounds opens Friday, Dec. 17, 2021.

donated merchandise.

Details are still being finalized, but according to Connor some things being considered for inclusion in this year’s event are a pop-

corn stand and roasted chestnuts. Last year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a local provider had some chestnuts left over from a canceled order and was able

to provide the chestnuts. It is unknown if that is the case this year. Santa Claus also will be on hand the first night.

There is a contingency

plan for inclement weather.

“If the weather is bad, we will have walk throughs, if we can’t drive through,” she said.

Connor, who is new to the position of fair board office manager (she started Sept. 21), said she wants people to, “just come and enjoy.” And added, “the fair board enjoyed meeting the community when they were there passing out goody bags last year.”

She came to the fair board position from the Education Service District in Pendleton, working as an internet technology server analyst. She said she wanted to get out of IT, had relatives in Wallowa County, “and it (the job) seemed like a perfect fit for me.” She said she had been the secretary for the Oregon Hunters’ Association and, “it seemed like a lot of what I was doing for them. It was me getting back to my roots.”

She admits the biggest challenge of the job has been, “wrapping my head

around all the fair activities and what’s involved in it. It’s a lot in a part time job.” She said what she has enjoyed the most is, “getting to know the OSU Extension people. They’re so welcoming. They’re fun and I’m enjoying every minute.”

Connor is quick to give kudos to her predecessor, Tera Elliott, who accepted a position at the Wallowa County Courthouse. “Tera has been amazing,” said Connor. Elliott has been available for training and questions during the transition. Connor said she has big shoes to fill, and it will take her awhile to fill them. “She’ll be missed,” Connor said of Elliott, “the courthouse is lucky to have her.”

Applications for display space for Fair Lights 2021 are still being accepted and can be picked up at the fair office located at 668 NW 1st St. in Enterprise. For more information contact Connor at 541-426-4097. Applications will be accepted as long as space is available.

Wallowa School Board backs bike park

Still to finalize location on school property

By BILL BRADSHAW
Wallowa County Chieftain

WALLOWA — The Wallowa School Board expressed its full support Monday, Dec. 6, for a Bicycle Playground proposed by Ron Pickens to be constructed on school property.

“They were totally supportive,” Superintendent Tammy Jones said Tuesday. “They passed a motion to support it on the grounds of we will talk further of its location.”

Pickens, who teaches at the Alternative School at Building Healthy Families in Enterprise, spearheaded the refurbishment of the Enterprise Skate Park this summer and is now proposing something similar for his home community of Wallowa.

“My hope with it is that when a kiddo pulls up and sees it that it’s friendly, fun and inviting, very much like a playground,” he said in September. “(Kids can) utilize bikes, scooters, roller blades and skateboards. It’s this colorful space that kids

can play in.”

He approached the Wallowa City Council and received its support — and a donation of \$1,000 — Nov. 16.

But the playground is planned for a site owned by the Wallowa School District. So Pickens took his proposal to the school board Monday.

Initially, he had proposed to have it constructed in an unused field behind the school next to the school’s greenhouse. But the school board suggested a field by the current tennis courts also might be a possibility.

Jones said there also have been suggestions of resurfacing the courts for use for pickle ball, but a site will be decided upon over the next couple of months or sometime in the spring.

“We’ll be looking where the best place will be,” she said.

Pickens said Tuesday he’s not particular about the location, though he thinks the original site is a “great location.”

“I’m open to anything as to the location as long as it’s on the school grounds,” he said.

Jones said most youths in Wallowa have not been to the

Enterprise Skate Park, given the distance they would have to travel.

“We need more stuff here in Wallowa for our youths and families,” she said.

For now, Pickens is still working on raising funds for the estimated \$202,500 project. He told the Wallowa City Council he has secured \$100,000 both in cash and in-kind donations. He’s currently in the process of applying for grants to finish raising funds. He said Tuesday he’s now at about \$101,500 adding the city donation and miscellaneous donations.

Pickens said anyone interested in donating to the Bicycle Playground project can go online to oregon-bhf.org and click on the “get involved” link, which leads to a “donate now” hyperlink. Donors also can send a check to Building Healthy Families at 207 E Park St, Enterprise, OR 97828 or call 541-426-9411.

Both the school and the city have expressed unqualified support for the project.

“Our kids need something positive and healthy to do,” Jones said. “There’s been a lot of concern here in the community of kids not having things to do. ... Here’s

something positive they can be engaged with.”

“It’s something we need down here and if there’s anything we can do to help you out later, keep us informed,” Mayor Gary Hulse told Pickens in November.

As for the board’s reaction, Jones said, it was entirely positive.

“Definitely we’re a go,” she said.

Pickens, too, was encouraged by the board’s support.

“It made me happy that everybody seems excited a project of this sort and sees value of project of this nature,” he said. “We’re very excited to have that stamp of approval from the school board.”

In other business Monday, the board:

- Approved a resolution to authorize Jones as superintendent to dispose of surplus district property. This largely involves books and equipment that are declared surplus, she said.

- Approved the district’s audit.

- Discussed contracts with Architects West. Jones said they will likely be approved at the board’s next meeting after they’re reviewed by the district’s attorney.

Ready for Fergie



Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

Scott Miller and Anette Christoffersen size up some skis Saturday, Dec. 4, 2021, at a ski swap held at the Enterprise Odd Fellows Hall in preparation for ski season. They said they’re still waiting for snow to fall at Ferguson Ridge Ski Area.

GABBY DELAPENA

Gabby Delapena started her Enterprise wrestling career in style on Friday, Dec. 3, at the Enterprise Kickoff. The sophomore not only won all four of her matches in the girls 135-pound division, she took it a step further by pinning all of her opponents, including three in the first round.

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ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

Small tree, smaller hunters



Devin Patton holds up a small Christmas tree for his small Christmas tree hunters, from left, Caroline, Levi and Joanna Patton on Sunday, Dec. 5, 2021, at a fundraiser for the Liberty Grange. The trees were donated by Matt and Jane Harshman.
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