



EMILY MENTZER/Itemizer-Observer

Emily Gluckin is working with the Polk County Rural Tourism Studio to help promote the area.

Gluckin RARE works tourism

By Emily Mentzer
The Itemizer-Observer

POLK COUNTY — Emily Gluckin has already started breathing new life and energy into the Polk County Rural Tourism Studio, a project that kicked off in January 2015.

Gluckin, 23, is a volunteer with Resource Assistance for Rural Environment, an Americorps program. She is working with the Rural Tourism Studio focus groups to help further plans and get the gears moving on attracting tourists to Polk County.

She studied environmental studies in college, with a concentration on sustainability and a minor in green building and community design. She was in Montana doing another Americorps program when she heard someone talking about “this

cool-sounding program that focused on planning and was in Oregon,” Gluckin recalled.

She was working at a bike-ped advocacy organization, which will come in handy for the tourism efforts in Polk County.

“It’s kind of like my position last year was a small piece of planning, and my interests are really on a broader scale,” Gluckin said. Gluckin hadn’t thought about the role tourism plays in community planning.

“The more I looked into (this) position and thought about the projects, it seemed like a perfect fit,” she said. “I don’t know why I didn’t think about it before. It’s community development. I really like the process of creating experiences in a community.”

Tourism is creating public

spaces that make people want to visit, or make people who live in a community proud of it, Gluckin said.

“A big factor of this job is working with a lot of different people and different towns and different players in the tourism field,” she said. “I’m really excited to learn how tourism affects a place, how it affects the people who live there, and how it affects people who are visiting.”

With the work done by the Rural Tourism Studio committees, Gluckin has a solid starting point.

“They’ve gotten a lot done since (2015),” Gluckin said. “Our goal is to reboot that effort and get people motivated to be involved and get some projects on the table. One of my main roles will be facilitator of that process — coordinating meetings, creating action steps from

those meetings, hopefully get some fun projects organized.”

Gluckin has the perfect hobbies to coordinate tourism efforts in Polk County — she loves hiking and mountain biking, and is learning quickly about the wine industry — not to mention the potential tourism draw of the 2017 total solar eclipse in August.

“We’re right in the path of totality, and apparently Polk County has the best average weather forecast for that time of year out of anywhere in the country,” Gluckin said. “I think it’s going to be big. I think my main role in that will be coordination — getting businesses involved, starting now, making sure people know it’s happening, and plan accordingly.”

Get involved: egluckin@ci.independence.or.us.

Folk: Festival in its second year

Continued from Page 1A

Want to do more than just listen and watch? The festival’s “jam” area gives musical attendees a chance to join in the fun, led by jam master Truman Price.

“If you are a local artist and you’ve got your guitar or your fiddle, you can bring that,” Johnson said. “There will be an area specified, so you can sit around the room and play and jam.”

If all the listening to music (or playing), dancing and wandering among vendor booths has you hungry and thirsty, Folklife has local cuisine and libations on hand.

Black Rock BBQ, Critelli Sweets & Eats, and the fairgrounds caterer will be serving local favorites. Rogue Ales and Airlie Winery will be pouring in the wine and beer garden.

Johnson said Folklife’s goal for this weekend is to showcase art, especially traditional forms, in all its variety in one place.

“As we all started to come together as a group, our vision is to bring a variety of music and performing arts and food, to see the cultural differences that are here locally that maybe you don’t get to see on a regular basis,” she said. “That is what our main goal is, to bring all of that, so people can see that there still is a tradition in handmade, handcrafted (art).”

Check it out

What: Polk County Folklife Festival.

Where: Polk County Fairgrounds & Event Center.

When: Saturday 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Admission: \$10 per person or \$5 and five cans of food to benefit Willamette Valley Food Assistance Program in Dallas. Children 12 and younger are free.

Of note: Festival organizers are looking for ideas for the festival. Have anything you would like to see in future years? Send suggestions to info@polk-countyfolklife.com.



OREGON VALLEY BOYS/Itemizer-Observer

Oregon Valley Boys will headline Folklife.

Kelly

GABLIKS

Dallas City Council

Committed to the Dallas Community

Problem-Solver, Hard Working & Enthusiastic

Innovative & Bringing New Ideas to Dallas

KELLY GABLIKS FOR DALLAS CITY COUNCIL
For more information please contact me at
gabliks4dallas@gmail.com

TODD WHITLOW

for Polk County Sheriff



EXPERIENCE
TRUST
LEADERSHIP
DEDICATION
COMMITMENT
COMMUNITY
TEAM WORK
PARTNERSHIPS
TRANSPARENT
ACCOUNTABLE

www.Toddwhitlowforsheriff.com

Facebook: Todd Whitlow for Polk County Sheriff

Monmouth-Independence Chamber of Commerce Presents:

SPOOKTACULAR BINGO

October 29th
1 PM - 4 PM

Monmouth Independence Family YMCA
301 S Main Street, Independence

Open sessions:

\$1 per card
or
\$10 for 12 cards

Features:
costume contests
for all ages
&
kids activities.

Family fun with
great prizes!

Go to micc-or.org
for more info.

www.polkio.com

Pencil
us in!

www.polkio.com

Itemizer-Observer