

La Grande's Festival of Trees set for Dec. 3-4

Go! staff

LA GRANDE — The La Grande Soroptimists are busy planning the 35th annual Festival of Trees set for Dec. 3-4 at the Blue Mountain Conference Center, 404 12th St.

"Last year's festival and live tree auction was canceled due to the pandemic, but we adapted our event to offer a virtual online auction that was very successful," said the festival's co-chair Di Lyn Larsen-Hill. "But we all missed the live auction, gala and Family Fun Day so we are forging ahead with plans for their return."

The two-day event begins Friday, Dec. 3, with the gala dinner and live tree auction. Guests who have pre-purchased gala tickets will be treated to a gourmet dinner prepared by Island City Deli and Catering followed with the live auction of trees and gift items. Auctioneer Jake Seavert will team up again with emcee Kevin Loveland.

The Raise Your Paddle event will be held again with proceeds benefitting scholarships for Union County students.

The Festival of Trees continues Saturday, Dec. 4, with Family Fun Day from 9 a.m.-noon at the conference center. Admission is one can of food, which will be donated to the local food bank, or a pair of new socks for the Soroptimist Boots and Socks Program.

Santa Claus will be there to visit with children and pose for photographs. Mrs. Claus will open her kitchen to assist youngsters in decorating their own Christmas cookies.

One part of the festival will remain virtual.

"We were so pleased with our online auction last year that we are going to do it that way again," said co-chair Shayla Rollins. "It gives everyone in the community, and even beyond, a chance to bid on some really great Christmas gifts."

The online auction begins Thursday, Dec. 2, at 8 a.m. and runs through Saturday, Dec. 4, at 6 p.m. Access it here:



Dick Mason/The Observer, File

People check out Christmas trees Dec. 7, 2019, at the Blue Mountain Conference Center, La Grande, during the annual Festival of Trees. The 2020 festival was virtual, but the fundraising event for 2021 will be mostly in person.

<https://charityauction.bid/-FestivalofTrees2021>.

Raffle tickets are on sale from any Soroptimist member and will be sold at the festival, with lucky winners of the three prizes to be announced

Dec. 4. This year's prizes are a half beef cut and wrapped donated by Granite View Foot and Ankle, a \$500 OTECC credit, and one year of free car washes from Island Express Lube & Car Wash.

For more information, or to inquire about gala tickets, contact Larsen-Hill at 541-963-5341 or dilarsenhill@gmail.com or Shayla Rollins at 541-910-5511 or srollins@otec.coop.

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