



Eagle file photo
Grant Union boy's basketball head coach RC Huerta during a home game in April. Community members are planning to raise money for Huerta, who was injured in an ATV crash in May, and his family online in a Facebook auction through July 18.

Fundraiser planned for Huerta, basketball coach injured in ATV crash

By Steven Mitchell
Blue Mountain Eagle

Grant County plans to virtually rally around Grant Union boy's basketball head coach RC Huerta in a Facebook auction through July 18.

Huerta, who is recovering from an ATV accident in May, faces a financial burden, co-organizer and family friend Erin Gosnell said.

Averie Wenger, an organizer and friend, said she checked in with Huerta's wife and their four kids after the accident and told her she was there for her and praying for them. But then she decided she wanted to do more.

"We just felt like we needed to do something more than just pray for her, and that's why we decided to do the auction," Wenger said.

Wenger said she's had health problems in the past and has been airlifted to another hospital — like Huerta, who had to be flown from John Day to Bend twice — and said she knows the financial hardship.

It has been especially difficult for the family, Gosnell said, since Huerta's wife, Jessie, a hairstylist, has been mostly out of work because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We knew we had to do something," Wenger said.

Gosnell, who coordinated fundraisers when she worked in hospice care, said businesses jumped at the chance to donate items to the auction. She said companies are typically more selec-

tive and want information about the fundraiser before committing.

"It was really easy," she said. "All I had to say was RC Huerta, and they said, 'Oh, yes, what do I need to do.'"

She said people have donated from outside of the area as well.

Gosnell, along with her husband, Jesse, assistant boy's basketball coach and pastor of First Baptist Church in John Day, moved to Grant County three years ago. They have grown close to the Huertas, who moved to the area from Redmond about two years ago.

She said the Huertas have become a second family for them.

Gosnell said it's impressive how much of an impact the Huertas have made on the community in a short time.

"You have to live in a small community before you get the backing of a small community," she said. "It usually takes you a long time to get their support, but not then."

People have accepted the Huerta family as their own, she said.

Wenger said those interested in bidding on items throughout the week can request to join the Facebook group "Huerta Family online auction."

A by-donation drive-through lunch will be held at the First Baptist Church in John Day from noon to 2 p.m. Saturday.

Gosnell said direct donations can be made to the family at [paypal.me/jessiehuerta](https://www.paypal.me/jessiehuerta).

Volunteers sought for Prairie City Fiber Fest July 25-26

By Rudy Diaz
Blue Mountain Eagle

Public health is a big part of the planning for the second annual Prairie City Fiber Fest.

Ginger Shive, the festival director, said organizers have been collaborating with state, county and Prairie City officials to be compliant with the governor's executive orders regarding the COVID-19 pandemic for the event that features woolen wears. Demonstrations on cleaning wool, spinning and creating useful and decorative items such as rugs, slipper, blankets and socks, are planned.

Shive said they purchased 350 masks to hand out to the general public and vendors that might have forgotten to bring their own. They have gallons of hand sanitizer. Volunteer positions were added to monitor the traffic of people at the three stations.

"The reason we can do this is because we're spread into three small locations," Shive said.

Other fiber shows in Oregon were in big convention centers, which hampered their ability to have an event this year, but being spread out into three separate locations in Prairie City made this festival possible. Shive is expecting more people to come to Prairie City this year.

Fiber Fest is divided into the Prairie Baptist Teen Center, the Community Center and the park across from city hall.

"We have got volunteers that will sit outside at those entrances with a box of mask and sanitizer and asking people to use the sanitizer," Shive said. "They will also limit the number of people that go into the two buildings."

The park will be completely fenced with a north and south entrance, limited to 100 people. There will be volunteers at both ends to monitor the amount of traffic going in and out.

"This is the way we're trying to learn to live with COVID safely, and it's a lot of work, but it's safety first, and economically, we need the fiber fest," Shive said. "We're doing it safe. Regardless of what we're trying to do with the kids, we're doing it safe."

The need for volunteers has also gone up with the pandemic requirements.



Eagle file photo
Teresa Southworth demonstrates how she 'skirts' the wool before she bags it for sale at last year's Fiber Fest in Prairie City. Skirting, which removes any vegetable matter from the wool, is done on the mesh skirting table.



Eagle file photo
Gary White of Socks of Fun in Oregon City owns an antique sock machine. The machine, made in Pennsylvania about 100 years ago, was used to make socks for soldiers during World War I and World War II.



Eagle file photo
Roseanne Anderson of Cheney, Washington, held a workshop at the Fiber Fest called 'Fabulous Locker Hooking and Exquisite Weavlings.' Here she spins wool at the Prairie City Park on Saturday.

"There's so much to do during this COVID time that every volunteer is a precious commodity," Shive said.

Shive said the plan is to give volunteers a gift and a social event with vendors and instructors from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. on July 25.

All proceeds from this year's event and future events will go toward Grant County 4-H and FFA programs. Shive is looking for additional help from these organizations.

"I know because of

COVID, 4-H and FFA are handled through the Extension service of Oregon State University, and they say kids can't participate ... and I understand that, but that does not preclude a parent or an adult to volunteer," she said.

Volunteers are needed to monitor traffic at the venues, provide masks, hand out materials, answer questions and set up and take down tables and chairs.

The Fiber Fest will be a two-day festival on July

25-26. A variety of workshops begin July 24 that will focus on traditional rug hooking, hand felted slippers, locker hooking, pine needle basketry and more.

The registration cost varies per workshop, but people will have the chance to sign up for a class until the day the workshop is held. People interested in registering for a workshop or looking to volunteer can visit prairiecityfiberfest.com for more information.

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Grab Your Mask and Join Us!

Prairie City

FIBER FEST

Visit Vendors featuring rugs, fleeces, yarns, socks and more!

July 25 & 26, 2020

Prairie City, Eastern Oregon

Join us for a Fiber Workshop! Register online.

Fri 7/24

Traditional Rug Hooking

\$70

Exquisite Weavlings/Pin Loom Weaving

\$100

Pine Needle Baskets

\$100

Sat 7/25

Fabulous Locker Hook Rugs

\$105

Felted Slippers

\$110

Sun 7/26

Intro to Needle Felting/Best Friends Sheep

\$40

for up-to-date information visit:

www.PrairieCityFiberFest.com