

Junk Barn Girls host 10th event, following last year's hiatus

Two-day event called a success by organizers and vendors

By ERICK PETERSON
HERMISTON HERALD

HERMISTON — A two-day event showcasing the repurposing “junk” for a new life returned to Hermiston.

Junk Barn Girls was Friday and Saturday, Oct. 1 and 2, at the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center in Hermiston. Katie Anderson and Angela Ditchen, members of the Junk Barn Girls, organized the event.

This year was special, Anderson said, because it marked the 10th year of the event. Last year should have been No. 10, but COVID-19 prompted the cancellation.

Junk Barn's comeback included 30 vendors. This is 10 fewer vendors from 2019, but the organizers still felt pretty good about the turnout. The pandemic is continuing, and many vendors are choosing to stay home, Ditchen said.

Ditchen, a Junk Barn Girls founder, started the organization with Shannon Snyder on Golden Valley Farms. Their event, which outgrew the farm and moved to EOTEC, and the Junk Barn grew until the pandemic, Ditchen said.

Anderson has been part of the event, at least helping out, from the beginning, Ditchen said.

The event chooses a charity each year. This year, the charity was Campus Life, a cause Ditchen and Anderson said are close to their hearts. They are both mothers and appreciate charities that look out for children.

Inside Junk Barn, vendors seemed to be doing well. They kept busy most of the time with transactions, and they said they were enjoying themselves.

Kris Bennett, KRISanthemums owner and Hermiston Chamber of Commerce board chair, said she is a



Erick Peterson/Hermiston Herald
Walla Walla resident Neva Gould shows off her vintage tools Saturday, Oct. 2, 2021, at Junk Barn Girls at the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center, Hermiston. The event marked its 10th year.

regular at Junk Barn.

“I’ve always enjoyed coming here,” she said.

She explained she likes supporting an event that supports the community. Many people are able to promote their business through Junk Barn, she said. Also, several charities have benefited, and she likes that, too.

Neva Gould, of Lighthouse, said she does a few shows throughout the year. She sells vintage furniture, tools and hardware.

“This is a great show,” she said, adding the customers are her favorite part because everyone is pleasant.

Alexis McCarthy and Angela Pursel, owners of The Next Chapter Bookstore, took a break from their Hermiston store to sell books and

puzzles at Junk Barn. This was a good event, McCarthy said, because she could sell more home decor books and cookbooks than she could normally sell at her store.

Also, McCarthy enjoyed being a seller at an event she had often attended as a buyer.

“We love Junk Barn,” she said. “When we got the call, we jumped right on it.”

As her store is new, this event served as a good chance for publicity.

Erin Gunesch, Illie owner and Salem resident, said she was disappointed the event did not occur last year. She appeared at it in 2019, and she liked it.

“It’s good to be back,” she said. It gave her a place to market her home décor and clothing.

Travis and Laura Winters, Browne House Coffee Co. owners and Heppner residents, were at Junk Barn to sell coffee and promote their business. They are fixing a Heppner building to house a café.

This was their first year with their own business at Junk Barn. Laura said she has been at the event in previous years but she was with another company then.

Donna Rogers, antique and craft seller, has been a vendor for eight years. A Hermiston resident, she goes to Portland for her inventory. She visits antique stores and estate sales to find treasures to bring back and sell at Junk Barn.

She said she loves the “thrill of the hunt,” an experience she shares with her friend, Rhonda Campbell, with whom she was selling items.

Campbell said she has a good time at Junk Barn. More than the fun of selling goods and the opportunity to make money, she likes spending time with her friend.

“This is a lot of fun,” she said, and Rogers agreed. They hope they can do it again next year.

Shearer's chemical leak hospitalizes three, evacuates others

By ERICK PETERSON
Hermiston Herald

A chemical leak the night of Sept. 27 at Shearer's Foods in Hermiston resulted in three people going to the hospital.

Umatilla County Fire District No. 1 responded to the food processing facility at 8:45 p.m. with three engines, two medics, a hazmat team and more. Division Chief Richard Cearn said around 20 to 25 employees were evacuated.

It is not entirely common to send out a hazmat team, Cearn said, but this was a case for it, as people reported a chemical smell in the warehouse.

The hazmat team triaged five possible patients. Ambulances rushed three

to Good Shepherd Medical Center, Hermiston, and two refused transport, according to Fire Chief Scott Stanton.

Cearn said his team found the cause of the leak and mitigated the problem, though he could not say the exact chemical released. Once the chemical release was stopped, and after affected employees were sent to the hospital, Shearer's was allowed to open at 4 a.m. the following day, Cearn said.

A spokesperson for Good Shepherd said all three patients were treated and released by Sept. 29.

Shearer's has not yet returned calls regarding the incident nor made a statement about the cause of the evacuation.



Umatilla County Fire District No. 1/Contributed Photo
Umatilla County Fire District No. 1 responds Tuesday night, Sept. 27, 2021, with a hazmat truck and more to a chemical leak at Shearer's Foods in Hermiston.

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