



Volunteers pay tribute to coordinator Teddi Wade

By CLEVE TWITCHELL

The person who takes your ticket at the gate when you attend a Britt concert is a volunteer. So is the person who helps you find your seat, greets you on the trolley or sells you ice cream.

The Britt Music Festivals would find it much more difficult to operate and exist financially were it not for the help of volunteers – several hundred of them all told.

And much of the success of the volunteer program can be attributed to the efforts of Volunteer Coordinator Teddi Wade, who has been with Britt for two decades.

“She is just a marvelous person,” says Donna McKee, a Britt volunteer also for two decades and now in charge of the gift booth. “She is our Britt mom,” adds Marc Bayliss, a Britt volunteer since the early 1990s.

Wade began at Britt in 1986 when David Shaw was the general manager. She was hired as a result of an Oregon Lottery grant to do public relations work, assisting Art’s wife Mary Shaw in that area. Next she became assistant development director, working with Ron McUone, who would later succeed Shaw as general manager. One thing led to another, she says, and she’s been heading the volunteer program for 18 years.

Britt attracts 60 to 100 applicants for the volunteer positions each year, and last year’s pool was about 400, Wade says. Between 50 to 100 are needed for each concert.

They staff many of the concession booths, take tickets, serve as ushers, handle security, work as parking lot attendants and perform cleanup chores after the concerts. One serves as a trolley host, and there’s always a volunteer EMT on duty, usually someone from a fire department.

“Our volunteers go above and beyond excellent service,” says Wade. “We are so lucky to have them.”

The volunteers feel rewarded as well. Bayliss says he volunteers to help “improve the quality of life in our

area.” McKee does it because she loves music.

These folks do also enjoy a major perk. They get to see and hear the concert for free. But it pays to stick around for a few years, because plum assignments are given on the basis of seniority. Some people have been volunteering for 20 years or more. Newcomers should

not expect to get the best shows.

“It’s the only fair thing to do,” says Wade. So, if you are new this year, don’t expect to get the Linda Ronstadt or Donna Summer concerts.

In earlier days, Wade used to just hand out assignments. Then, about six years ago, she realized it might be better to interview each new candidate for a


few minutes to sense what he or she might be best suited for. A shy, mild-manned person might not be so good at security.

Bayliss, who often handles security, applauds the interview system. “Teddi has the skill to make each volunteer feel appreciated,” he says. “She takes the time to match each person’s skills to the jobs that need to be filled.”

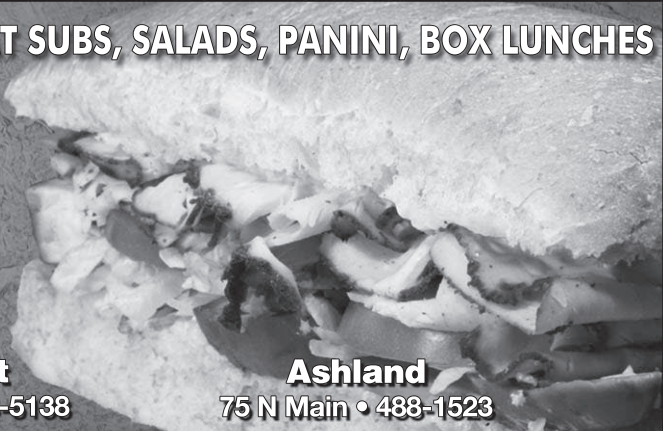
“She’s wonderful to work with,” says McKee of Wade. “She cares about the volunteers and their safety.”

If you’d like to be considered for a spot as a Britt volunteer, mark this fall or early next year on your calendar. This year’s deadline has already passed. Wade usually completes her interviews and selection by the end of March.





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