

'Carousel of Smiles' to be unveiled Saturday



By Lyndsie Kiebert
Reader Staff Writer

The mission to bring the magic of a carousel to Sandpoint is one step closer to completion this weekend as the Carousel of Smiles project reveals their assembled but unrestored carousel at the Bonner County Fairgrounds.

Saturday, Dec. 16, will feature the unveiling at 2 p.m., with doors opening at

1 p.m. Attendees can see the carousel up close, browse exhibits, enjoy hot cocoa and cookies and learn more about the Carousel of Smiles project, including how to get involved. Saturday's festivities end at 6 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 17, is an open house from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

This is the first time the 1920s carousel will be on display since 1952, and proj-

ect founder Reno Hutchison said unloading the carousel after its journey from New York to Idaho was a "thrill."

"I expect that seeing this beautiful machine assembled, even in its somewhat rough unrestored condition, will be pretty exciting and an even greater thrill," she said.

Events at the fairgrounds on both Saturday and Sunday are free to attend.



Left: Sandpoint artist Gabe Gabel works on the restoration of a miniature carousel horse. **Right:** Monroe Kurri, who was 10 months at the time of the photo in 2016, has earned the distinction as "First Rider." Photos courtesy Clay Hutchison.