

Organizers say rain won't dampen Rose Festival

PORTLAND (AP) — From auto racing to a duck derby, from spectacular parades to colorful hot-air balloons, the Portland Rose Festival, the annual June celebration in Oregon's largest city, begins this week.

Despite the forecast of a wet start for the festivities, officials were expecting 2 million people to participate in or observe the 73 festival-sanctioned events.

"The funny thing is that the rain really does not have a dramatic negative impact on attendance, and I think that says something about the spirit of Oregonians," festival spokeswoman Marie Dodds said.

A fireworks display is planned, weather permitting, for Friday night over the festival center on the downtown Portland waterfront.

The center, which features a carnival, three entertainment stages and the Made in Oregon Pavilion, operates Friday through June 13. Festival officials and police have succeeded in reducing the

unruly behavior that has sometimes marred the carnival.

"We've been really pleased with the steps to improve the festival center," Dodds said. "What we wanted to do is turn it into a place where the people could go with their young children, a real family place."

Butler Amusement, the California-based company hired to provide the carnival rides since 1990, will do so again. The company is moving its headquarters to Beaverton.

The Starlight Parade winds through downtown Portland Saturday night, with 91 units scheduled to participate.

On June 12, 500,000 people are expected to line the streets for the Grand Floral Parade. With 104 units, it is the second-largest all-floral parade in the nation. Only the Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, Calif., is bigger.

Ahmad Rashad, NBC sportscaster and former University of Oregon football star,

and his wife, Phylcia, who played Bill Cosby's attorney wife on the Cosby Show, will serve as grand marshals.

"Among My Souvenirs" is the theme of the parade. It will be televised to a potential audience of 30 million households.

The Junior Rose Parade, featuring hundreds of youngsters from throughout the region, is set for Wednesday.

The number of visiting ships from the Navy, Coast Guard and Canadian Navy has been reduced to nine this year, down from a record 21 last year. Only two U.S. Navy ships will be on hand.

Dodds said the Navy cutback is due to budget constraints and the fact that many vessels are committed to the relief effort in Somalia.

A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dredge will be the 10th ship tying up at the downtown waterfront. The ships begin arriving Tuesday.

A newly sanctioned event is the Pay Less Celebrity Golf Classic, scheduled for

Friday and Saturday.

Thirty hot air balloons are to lift off daily June 18 through June 20 in Tigard.

On June 19, 30,000 rubber ducks will be dropped in the Willamette River for the De Paul Ducky Derby.

The Budweiser-G.I. Joe's Indy-car race wraps up the June portion of the festival on June 27, with preliminary events scheduled the preceding Friday and Saturday.

As an experiment, the Festival Airshow at Hillsboro Airport has been moved back to July 16-18. The move was made, Dodds said, so the "Snow Birds," the Canadian armed forces precision flying team, could take part. Attendance at the airshow last year totaled 122,000.

Other events include the Oregon Truck Driving Championships Saturday and Sunday, Dragon Boat Races June 12, the Oregon Open bowling tournament June 21-26 and the Cascade Run Off road race June 27.

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Legislators up ante for vehicular murder

SALEM (AP) — The Oregon House voted Thursday to toughen penalties for using an automobile to kill someone.

State law now allows for a five-year revocation of driving privileges of people convicted of intentionally using a motor vehicle to commit murder or manslaughter.

But if the people convicted are incarcerated during that period, they would be eligible to have their driver's license reinstated after release from prison.

The bill, HB 2479, passed on a 50-9 vote and says offenders

could not seek to have their driver's licenses reinstated for at least 10 years after being released on parole or placed on probation.

Rep. Bob Tiernan, R-Lake Oswego, said the measure is a result of the 1992 killing of a Lake Oswego student who was intentionally run over.

"I have a very difficult time... that when somebody uses an automobile to intentionally kill somebody that the very first thing you're going to do when they get out of prison is to give them their driver's license back," he said.

KENNEDY

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Two courses lay open: I could stay and record history or break away and report the news. For a wire service reporter, the latter course was obvious. I jumped down and ran to the press room. The telephones were dead. I found a phone booth in the lobby and dialed the AP office.

"Kennedy has been shot!" "Are you sure?" the editor asked.

"I'm serious! Kennedy has been shot!"

"Did you see it happen?"

"No, but I saw him lying on the floor."

After a few more questions, he was convinced, and I dictated a bulletin. The story was clattering on the teletypes while television reporters who had live

cameras at the hotel were still scrambling to figure out what had happened.

As I was speaking, I heard a commotion in the lobby. Still holding the phone I leaned around a pillar and saw a phalanx of police rushing a swarthy young man down the marble steps directly in front of me. Now I had a description of the presumed assassin, who turned out to be Sirhan Sirhan.

I hitched a ride to the office and wrote the story. It was dawn before I returned to the Ambassador to claim my car. First, I went to the Embassy Room to gaze once more at the kitchen.

"No admittance, crime scene," said the cop guarding the entrance. Suddenly dazed with shock and fatigue, I stared at the spot. Then I turned and headed home.

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