

‘Homer Days’ brings festive atmosphere to Silverton



The Homer Davenport Days celebration in Silverton in 2016.

JUSTIN MUCH
STAYTON MAIL

Given its Silver Creek setting and emphasis on civic ornamentation, such as the town's 22 murals, Silverton can radiate a festive setting pretty much any given day of the week.

But when the first weekend of August rolls around, that festal environment ratchets up several fold, for that is the weekend of the Homer Davenport Community Festival, Silverton's high-lighted celebration of more than three decades.

Event planners have been working tirelessly to fine tune the gala that celebrates the city's favorite son. Initial plans included a return of the international cartoon contest, with hopes of an enhanced version in that the winner stood to fetch a \$750 grand prize.

Initially, it appeared that may fall through.

"It looks like the Cartoon Contest is a wash due to a lack of entries," contest promoter Gus Frederick said as the deadline neared. But things changed as the July 28 deadline rolled around.

"We had a last-minute surge of cartoon entries, so the Contest is back on," Frederick updated, noting there will also be a historical cartoon presence.

"Yes, we're going to have a display of original Davenport Cartoons in the (Silverton) Council Chambers during the festival — a dozen or so."

Also on tap is a full slate of entertainment that begins with Sonny Hess and Lady Cat 7 to 9 p.m. at the kick-off party Thursday, Aug. 3, held at Coolidge McClaine Park and hosted by the Wooden Nickel.

The music strikes up again at 3:30 p.m. Friday afternoon as nine different bands are scheduled to play through the weekend, with genres varied from classic rock to folk and western to alternative country.

With that backdrop, festival goers can pick and choose from a spectrum of features, including an arts and crafts fair, charity dime toss, inter-



PHOTOS BY ANNA REED / STATESMAN JOURNAL FILE

The Barb's Hair Etc., team competes in the Davenport Races during the Homer Davenport Community Festival in Silverton in 2015.

Homer Davenport Days

What: Silverton is celebrating its famed political cartoonist with entertainment, food court, Sunday couch races, arts and crafts fair, cruise-in and more

Where: Coolidge McClaine Park, Silverton

When: Aug. 4-6; 3:30 to 10 p.m. Friday, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday and 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday

Online: homerdavenport.com

national food court, tennis tournament, fun run, classic-car cruise in, ping-pong ball float, Lions harvest breakfast and, ever popular with participants and spectators alike, the davenport races.

Organizer Cindy Jones said the arts and crafts portion will be wide ranging within itself.

"We have a variety of arts and crafts vendors this year, including a glass blower, lots of jewelry vendors, homemade jerky, caramel corn, ha-



Sanford Webb of Portland carries a Homer Davenport drawing he found at the thrift store during the Homer Davenport Days celebration in Silverton in 2016.

zelnuts and honey," Jones said.

At 10 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 5, the Homer Parade gets underway, beginning at the old high school's Schlador Street campus. Floats, antique autos, bands, dancers and assorted rigs will proceed through Silverton's historic downtown.

The festival is coordinated by the Silverton Rotary Club, which states its

aim to put "Homer" back into the Homer Days. Event coordinators posted: "To that end, we are reaching into the Homer archives of writings, photos and illustrations to bring our community's past to life. We plan to celebrate and honor our heritage!"

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Oregon officials, veterans respond to Trump's transgender military ban

LAUREN E HERNANDEZ
STATESMAN JOURNAL

Oregon agencies are analyzing how President Donald Trump's proposed ban of transgender Americans in the United States military will affect state service members.

Trump shared the potential policy through a series of tweets, stating that allowing transgender service members is a financial burden and a disruption to "decisive and overwhelming victory."

"After consultation with my generals and military experts, please be advised that the United States Government will not accept or allow transgender individuals to serve in any capacity in the U.S. military," said Trump on Twitter.

The announcement comes a year after Defense Secretary Ashton Carter said military agencies had six months to determine how to integrate transgender troops into the armed forces. The move allowed transgender troops to openly serve in the military, receive medical care and change to their preferred gender.

Diane Goodwin, the communications director for Basic Rights Oregon, a nonprofit LGBTQ advocacy group, said the Trump's plan is discriminatory and a disgrace to tens of thousands transgender members of the armed forces.

"Changing the direction of the Department of Defense is a disgrace and shows Trump doesn't recognize the immense contribution that they are making and have made for decades," Goodwin said.

There are roughly 15,500 actively serving transgender members of the U.S. military, according to statistics compiled by the Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law. There are roughly 134,000 living transgender veterans in the United States.

One of those transgender veter-

ans, Shannon Scott, of Portland, said she feels betrayed by Trump's announcement.

Scott spent 12 years in the U.S. Air Force, which included two combat tours in Iraq. At that point, she said, she hadn't transitioned yet and was still presenting herself as a man.

"In the Air Force, our motto is 'integrity first and service before self,' but I felt like I was betraying that first part because I wasn't living authentically and I was hiding in the closet," Scott said.

She secretly started hormone replacement therapy nine years after she joined the Air Force, but she said her secret quickly sparked rumors among her fellow service members.

In 2011, she said a commander called her into his office and slid a discharge paper across the desk and threatened her with dishonorable discharge if she failed to keep her therapy and gender identity a secret.

"After literally putting my life on the line, I felt betrayed," Scott said. "You would think that your most genuine self is your best self, but I still was presenting as male in a lot of ways in order to avoid the consequences of being genuine."

Scott soon requested to be discharged from the service and was honorably discharged. She is now the president of Portland-based United Equality Consulting, a company focusing on bringing transgender professionals into the workplace. She also serves on the National Board of Governors for the Human Rights Campaign.

"Service members were told by Obama that they could be who they are, and now one year later they're being threatened," Scott said.

The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs released a statement Wednesday stating its officials honor the contributions of all veterans

who have served in the military.

"Unequivocally, we proudly stand behind all veterans and service members who served with honor, regardless of gender identity, and we will continue to do so," the statement read.

Stephen Bomar, the director of public affairs for the Oregon Military Department, said they operate within the framework of the Department of Defense's regulations and standards and are awaiting guidance.

"Once a policy gets put into place, it will take time to implement and establish guidelines," Bomar said.

He said less than one percent of the Oregon National Guard identifies as transgender.

The Pentagon relayed all questions regarding Trump's tweets to the White House, but Navy Captain Jeff Davis said the Pentagon will provide updated information on the policy in the "near future" but did not specify when.

"We will continue to work closely with the White House to address the new guidance provided by the Commander-in-Chief on transgender individuals serving the military," Davis said.

Oregon Senator Jeff Merkley called Trump's plan an example of discrimination and backward thinking.

"Today's Twitter announcement is a disgraceful attack on the thousands of transgender Americans who have served our nation with honor and dignity, and sends a troubling message to those who want to serve in the future — you're not welcome," said Merkley, a Democrat.

Merkley said Trump will face push back from the Senate if his administration does not reverse the decision to ban transgender troops from serving in the armed forces.

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