



A bareback bronc rider gets some air at the 2019 Saturday's evening performance at Chief Joseph Days rodeo. The 75th CJD rodeo will have to wait until 2021.

EO Media Group file photo

COVID-19 bucks off Chief Joseph Days

By Ellen Morris Bishop
EO Media Group

JOSEPH — In what was “probably the most difficult decision the board has ever made,” Chief Joseph Days president Terry Jones and the CJD Rodeo board announced Monday night that they were canceling the rodeo for 2020, and instead would hold their 75th rodeo next summer, in 2021.

“The COVID-19 restriction to not more than 250 people in the best case scenario, maybe, by the end of July, and maybe not even that, made it impossible to put on a Chief Joseph Days that anyone would recognize,” Jones said. “It’s just not economically feasible. We’re better off to not have the rodeo than to have it and lose money.”

Jones said that the cost of putting on the rodeo included around \$200,000 in contract expense for acts, scoreboards, announcers and other basics.

“Once we say we are going to have the rodeo, we’ve got to make the money to cover it all,” he said. “It’s just not there.”

Not only was the rodeo facing restrictions imposed by the state of Oregon’s phased openings, but they also would have to deal with the Professional Rodeo Cowboys of America rules, which were almost equally daunting.

“The PRCA issued a 30-page set of ground rules that we would have to follow,” Jones said. “They included things like testing everyone who goes into the arena including the audience, and sterilizing the bleachers, the bucking chutes, the timed event chutes, the boxes, and the flagpole every day. Even with an extra 300 volunteers, we couldn’t get it all done.”

“We hung on thinking that by now or the first of July things would be open and you could hold events. And you can’t,” Jones said.

With the rodeo office fielding calls from tourists

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Terry Jones, Chief Joseph Days president

and families wanting to know if the rodeo was on or not, Jones and the board decided they had to make a decision now. The Walla Walla Rodeo also was canceled today, leaving the Lakeview Rodeo in August as one of the few still scheduled.

The three rodeo court members will remain the rodeo court for the 75th rodeo on the last weekend of July 2021. And they’ll all be queens, too.

“The board decided to just have three equal court members,” Jones said. “They were all tickled to death with that.”

In a joint statement, the CJD board of directors said that in early March they started meeting every other week to discuss the options of having a rodeo like always in the last week of July.

“In the beginning, we felt very positive about our chances that the 75th annual Chief Joseph Days celebration would happen. As we got into April, our meetings became weekly. We talked about the pros and cons of holding Chief Joseph Days this year while trying to keep our community safe. We discussed the impact that canceling Chief Joseph Days would have not only on our community, our businesses, our supporters, our sponsors, and our loyal fans, but also on stock contractors, bull fighters, and many others including the vendors, contestants, and judges. The one thing that was always the top priority and concern to our board was keeping our community, as well as our visitors, our Nez Perce encampment and their families safe from the spread of the virus. And so the directors have had to make one of the toughest decisions that any of the

past 74 years of the Chief Joseph Days Rodeo boards ever had to make. That is to cancel this year’s Chief Joseph Days Rodeo. We still plan to have a 75th Chief Joseph Days Rodeo, only it will be on the last weekend of July, in 2021.”

“Our sincere wishes go out to our fans, sponsors, contestants, vendors, volunteers, support staff, and everyone involved in Chief Joseph Days Rodeo family,” Jones said. “May you all remain safe and healthy. We will get through this together and come back even stronger in 2021.”

Refunds will be issued soon to those who bought tickets for this year’s rodeo, Jones said.

Baker City’s annual rodeo event also canceled due to coronavirus limits

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BAKER CITY — The annual Baker City Bronc and Bull Riding, planned for July 17-18, will not happen due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The rodeo competitions have been a mainstay of Miners Jubilee weekend for 25 years.

In a press release Monday, Jason Mattox, who runs the Coastal Farm & Ranch Challenge of

Champions Tour, a series of rodeos that this year was slated to include the Baker City event for the first time, announced that “it is with deep sadness and heavy hearts that we announce the cancellation of this year’s Baker City Bronc & Bull Riding.”

He said the bronc and bull riding event was canceled in part because “the state of Oregon has called for the ban on events until

a minimum time frame of September 2020.”

Baker County began Phase 2 of the state’s reopening plan on Saturday. In that phase, gatherings of up to 250 people are possible, as long as social distancing guidelines are maintained. The bronc and bull riding events draw larger crowds to the fairgrounds, which has a capacity of about 1,000 people.

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Grande Ronde Hospital and Clinics proudly welcomes: Tracey Tracy, MD

To the GRH Regional Medical Clinic team as a Primary Care Provider (PCP)

Tracey Tracy, MD, joins the GRH Regional Medical Clinic primary care team from a family medicine clinic in Clackamas, Oregon. She attended medical school at Oregon Health & Sciences University in Portland, and completed her residency with Providence Milwaukie Family Medicine. Dr. Tracy welcomes patients of all ages and gender identities from infants to seniors, and enjoys taking care of multi-generational families. Her goal is to partner with each patient to achieve optimal management of their chronic health conditions and focus on preventive medicine. In her free time, you'll find Dr. Tracy outdoors. She loves cycling, hiking, golfing, snowshoeing, travel, and exercises daily as well. She spent her childhood in eastern Oregon, then lived in Europe and in the Midwest. After spending over 20 years in the Portland metro area, Dr. Tracy is excited to be back on the sunnier and drier side of the state. Join us in welcoming Dr. Tracy to the Grande Ronde Valley!



Tracey Tracy, MD

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