

# Tamkaliks powwow, feast returns after 2-year hiatus

By Jeff Peterson

Go! Magazine

WALLOWA — The land of winding waters will again reverberate with drumbeats and songs this summer.

After two years of being canceled because of the COVID-19 pandemic and concern for community safety, the Tamkaliks Celebration and Friendship Feast in Wallowa returns July 22-24 for its 30th anniversary. About 500 people including 200 dancers and 10 drum groups are expected.

The reunion is not only for descendants of the original inhabitants of Wallowa country. Area residents and visitors are also welcome.

The event, culminating Sunday, July 24, with the Walasit Service and Friendship Potluck, will take place at the Nez Perce Wallowa Homeland, 70956 Whiskey Creek Road.

Emcees are Fred Hill Sr. and Thomas Morningowl.

"We're looking forward to having an enjoyable time of rekindling old friendships and making new ones," Hill said.

While high gas prices may discourage some travel, Hill expects to see friends from Nevada, the Boise area, Yakima and Nespelem, Washington, Lapwai, Idaho, and Warm Springs.

The gathering offers the opportunity to honor family members who have passed in the pandemic, Hill said.

Another highlight is Slick dancing, a style reflecting dressing for battle, with head-




Wallowa County Chieftain/File

**Mary Harris performs the Shawl Dance at the 2016 Tamkaliks Celebration at the Nez Perce Wallowa Homeland, Wallowa. The event returns in 2022 on July 22-24.**

dress, loin cloth, weaponry and bells.

An orange dress special will honor the memory of missing children who attended residential and boarding schools and were discovered in mass graves throughout the U.S. and Canada, Hill said.

"It's to bring awareness to that issue," he said. "It's a contest special but also a way to raise awareness."

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Friday, July 22, includes 7 p.m. roll call and then social dancing, including the Circle Dance of friendship.

Saturday, July 23, begins with a 9 a.m. horse procession. Grand entries are at 1 p.m. and 7 p.m.

"An eagle feather staff is carried out front to represent all the native nations. Sometimes we'll elaborate on how at one time staffs were representative of individual warriors and feats they accomplished," Hill said. "Then comes Old Glory representing the U.S. with stars and stripes. Many Indian people enlisted or were drafted in earlier wars and left families behind to defend not only reservation lands but their country as a whole."

Contests and social dancing follow. The categories include men's and boy's traditional, women's and girls' traditional, men's fast and fancy, grass dance, women's fancy shawl and women's jingle dress. Winners in

2019 came from as close as Pendleton and as far away as Peshastin, Washington, and Chiloquin in Southern Oregon.

On Saturday night, veterans will be honored.

"Instead of playing the national anthem, we have our own renditions of flag songs that were once called smoke songs and pipe songs," Hill said. "It will be a time of reflection and remembrance of veterans of long ago and contemporary veterans of today."

Sunday, July 24, starts at 9 a.m. with the Walasit Service at the longhouse. People are asked to bring a dish to share for the noon Friendship Potluck featuring barbecued salmon at the dance arbor.

The grand entry at 2 p.m. will be followed by contest and social dancing and the contest dance finale.

Free camping is offered, with RVs and tents welcome. Dancer registration is free.

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