

TRADITION

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In 1991, tribal dancing was held at the Joseph High School gym, Pekarek said, and in 1998 the dancing was moved to the rodeo grounds' encampment. Over the years, there have been several improvements to the encampment facilities, Swinehart said. "We've gone through several

different arbors," Swinehart said. "The first year we had a lodgepole frame with shade tarps and in 1990 the first arbor was constructed." About five years ago, a permanent arbor was constructed with plenty of room for the feast, and after the chairs and tables are picked up, the dancing and drumming begin. While the tribal encampment needed some reinvigoration in the late '80s, Swinehart said tribal members have always been in the

parade. A vintage car collector for more than 30 years, he has driven some of the elder tribal members who no longer ride horseback in his Model A Ford. Today, the chief salmon cook is Joe McCormack and the Stangel Buffalo Ranch donates burgers. Ahead of time, volunteers get together to make patties out of 250 pounds of ground meat, said Shelley Rogers, a rodeo committee member who helps organize the friendship feast and other encamp-

ment details. This year the local Rotaract Club — a Rotary Club for younger adults — are in charge of preparing and freezing the burgers ahead of the feast. Rogers said Brenda Axtell, of Lapwai, is helping organize other aspects of the encampment remotely. "It takes a lot of coordination with phone calls, emails," Rogers said. While Swinehart, Pekarek and

Rogers are dedicated to their labor of love and hospitality, each confessed to being over 70 years old. "We are putting out the word for anyone to get involved, especially young people," Swinehart said. The Chief Joseph Days Rodeo Friendship Feast is held after the grand parade at noon on Saturday, July 30. Those wanting to attend are asked to bring a side dish to share. Dancing and drumming will follow the feast.

EVENT

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The 76th annual Chief Joseph Days Rodeo in Joseph is scheduled for July 27-31, and Joseph resident Vicky Hanigan will be there with her reserved tickets. "When the gates open, I'm there," she said.

Hanigan said last year there was quite a long line of people to get in, which is part of the reason she and her fiancé left early last year. "We normally leave about maybe an hour early," she said, "because we know a lot of people and they're out there packed before they even go in the gate."

Picking out what to wear can be a hassle, but J.D. Clay's outfit is mandated by the PRCA because he helps organize the event. So he must wear appropriate rodeo attire to work at the grounds. "You have to have on jeans, boots and a cowboy hat," Clay said. He prioritizes sunscreen, relaxation and what feels best with their outfit selections for anyone coming.

"Be comfortable and watch the weather because you know it's Northeast Oregon and it can change in a minute," he said. And the cowboy attire obviously isn't something that's uncommon for the rodeo, Hanigan also wears a similar type of get-up. "I usually wear a cowboy hat, I have my gun, I have my Levi's, my cowboy boots. That's how my normal dress is," Hanigan said. "It's summertime. I'm cooling down."

Tickner thinks the weather this year could cause more people to dress differently, but she enjoys the cultural attire of the event. "I think it's supposed to be



Ellen Morris Bishop/Contributed Photo, File Alex Wright scored an 84, good enough for first place in the night's saddle bronc competition at the 2018 Chief Joseph Days Rodeo. He finished in the top spot at the end of the weekend.

pretty hot this year, so maybe just something more comfortable for them. But it is always fun to have spectators enjoying the Western activities in full dress," she said. When it comes to positioning herself within Harley Tucker Memorial Arena, Hanigan and her

fiancé prefer to sit on the south side of the arena up on top to avoid the sun shining directly in their eyes. "Underneath the awning we're covered and we try to get up high. I think we're in the second row (as close to center as possible," Hanigan said.

"I think it's supposed to be pretty hot this year ... but it is always fun to have spectators enjoying the Western activities in full dress."

— Miranda Tickner, Chief Joseph Days office manager

Tickner thinks people tend to prefer a different spot to stay out of the sun when there is general admission to the rodeo on July 27-28.

"Most of the time that's the north side under the covered seating, so they're out of the sun or weather if we have any," she said.

For food, Hanigan doesn't have much preference where she chooses to dine at the event, and likes to mix it up.

"I try a little bit of everything every year, and try to try something different," she said. "So I don't get the same thing all the time."

She also brings a water bottle to make sure she stays hydrated in the hot summertime conditions.

Fair food classics are all the rave at Chief Joseph Days, and Tickner explained that there are a few specific foods people prefer.

"The curly fries and elephant ears ... that's always a fun one to get at rodeos," Tickner said.

When deciding which days to attend, it can really depend on what excites you the most about the festivities. Some families might prefer July 29 for the Grand Parade, and those who are more focused on the rodeo action might want to prioritize the

Harley Tucker Rodeo Series award up for grabs

JOSEPH — The Harley Tucker Rodeo Series award is named in honor of the late Harley Tucker, who was a rodeo producer and stock contractor from Joseph. He helped found Chief Joseph Days and provided stock for all four of the rodeos that sponsor the series.

The cowboy with the most points after competing in the Eastern Oregon Livestock Show in Union, St. Paul Rodeo, the Elgin Stampede and Chief Joseph Days wins the award. The contestants must enter all four rodeos, and the winner is announced at the final performance of Chief Joseph Days Rodeo.

The winner receives \$3,000 and a silver belt buckle. Any cowboy winning the award three times wins a cumulative fund that is increased \$1,000 each year and currently stands at \$11,000. Previous three-time winners are Heppner's Butch Knowles, Irriagon's Rocky Steagall and Hermiston's Brad Goodrich.

This year's standings entering Chief Joseph Days are Caleb McMillian with 15.5 points, Dylan Riggs with 11, Derek Kolbaba with 7.5 and Jared Parke with 6.5.

— Jack Parry, Wallowa County Chieftain

PRCA rodeo on July 30.

For an event that's fun for everyone, Tickner recommends the Bucking Horse Stampede on July 26, in which they run the horses that take part in the parade down Main Street.

"People can watch them come all the way down," she said. "It's pretty fun, it can get a little wild sometimes, but it is fun to watch." Hanigan said she'll go on July 27 for a reason that's close to her heart.

"My fiancé's grandson rides the sheep (that night), and they come all the way from Idaho to do just that," Hanigan said.

SUSPECTS

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on two counts of possession of a controlled substance, two counts of possession of methamphetamine, two counts of third-degree assault and one count of first-degree burglary.

While Montez's first conviction in Oregon occurred in 2005, his arrests date back much earlier.

His arrest record began in 1998 in Washington, when he was arrested as a juvenile for driving without a license in May and second-degree arson in August, according to Washington court records. His earliest Oregon arrest took place in 2003, when he was brought in on charges of careless driving, driving without car insurance, failure to display license plates and for having an open container of alcohol in the car, according to Oregon court records.

Since his first arrest for use of drug paraphernalia in 2000 in Washington, Montez has been arrested on 17 drug-related charges across the two states, with one count of a controlled substance violation, two counts of drug paraphernalia, three counts of delivery and 11 counts of possession.



Dick Mason/The Observer, File Bullseye Muzzleloader's and More, a store on First Street in Island City, was the site of an attempted burglary on Sunday, July 17, 2022, that turned into a high-speed chase and a manhunt for three suspects on foot outside of Elgin.

Montez also has been arrested on previous theft and burglary charges. In 2008 he was convicted on charges of first-degree burglary in Oregon and in 2014 he was sen-

tenced to 10 months in jail for second-degree theft in Washington.

Like Montez, Romine, 26, is in his first custody cycle in Oregon, according to Umatilla County Com-

munity Corrections.

He became a felon in 2018 when he was found guilty of possession of a controlled substance without a prescription in Walla Walla, Washington. He was sentenced to 30 days in jail and 12 months of probation. In January 2020, Romine was arrested for possession of methamphetamine in Oregon. The following month he was arrested for felon in possession of a weapon, which resulted in 13 months of incarceration in the Oregon Department of Corrections.

Then in 2021, Romine was convicted on misde-

meanor charges of second-degree criminal trespass and second-degree criminal mischief. He was sentenced to 180 days in county jail. Just days prior to the events in Island City and Elgin, Romine was due to appear in Umatilla County court for probation violations. When he failed to appear on July 11, the court issued a warrant for his arrest.

Spalinger, 31, in Oregon has only a single arrest earlier this year for driving without insurance for which she was fined.

She does, however, have a criminal history in Wash-

ington, according to state court records. She was arrested in 2019 in Walla Walla County for having a controlled substance without a prescription and unlawful use of drug paraphernalia, which was eventually dismissed in March 2021.

Also in 2019, she was arrested for possession of a stolen vehicle, intent to manufacture or deliver amphetamine or methamphetamine and two counts of unlawful use of drug paraphernalia. The trial was delayed a number of times, but had a new date set for Sept. 21.

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