

FOURTH Events planned throughout Gorge

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com/parade. This year's parade is sponsored by Gorge Reality Group due to Lions Club International COVID restrictions. For updates, visit their website or facebook.com/hoodriverfireworks.

Hood River Eyeopeners Lions Club is again sponsoring the fireworks show, beginning at 10 p.m. at the Hood River Event Site. Admission is free, but parking is subject to parking fees by the Port of Hood River.

This event is completely financed through community donations; contributions may be made by mailing a check to Eyeopeners Lions Fireworks, 1767 12th St. No. 136, Hood River, OR 97031, online at hoodriverfireworks.com or at the retail booth located at the Rite Aid parking lot.

There will be limited access to several Port of Hood River waterfront properties beginning Saturday, July 3, when the Lions Club will begin setting up its fireworks display just west of the mouth of the Hood River. Parking will be free on the Fourth of July at all port-owned streets

and Lot 1 (the vacant lot located south of the Event Site) The Event Site parking lot will be open to 2021 season pass holders and pay to park as usual.

The following areas will be closed or have limited access:

■ **The Spit:** The port will close the Spit area at noon on Saturday, July 3 until noon on Monday, July 5.

■ **Event Site Access to Sandbar:** Access to the Sandbar from the Event Site will be closed at 7 p.m. on July 4 to all access. Kiteboard launching and landing from the Event Site grass and beach is prohibited.

■ **Marina Beach and Marina Park:** The sandy area of the Marina Beach will be closed at 7 p.m. on July 4 and closed to kiteboarding launching and landing, due to the fireworks safety parameter. Once the Marina Park parking areas are full, "Closed" signs will be posted at the entrance and additional vehicles will not be allowed into Marina Park.

Fireworks of any kind are prohibited on all port properties, including the Marina and Waterfront areas. This policy is strictly enforced. People planning on watching the fireworks from the Marina and the Waterfront are reminded that the show's conclusion usually brings very heavy traffic congestion and there will be significant

delays in exiting the area. The port urges patience and cooperation to help ease the pressure created by the large number of vehicles attempting to exit the area at the same time. Dark conditions and heavy pedestrian traffic during this time make it all the more important to use caution and take your time driving in the area. There is no overnight parking or camping allowed anywhere on port property.

For more information, contact the Port of Hood River at 541-386-1645 or via email to porthr@gorge.net for more information.

The Kollas Cranmer Fourth of July Run has been canceled again this year.

The Dalles

The day's events begin at 7 a.m. with the FD4 3K, 5K and 10K Rocket Run by the Dufur Track Team — registration opens at 6:30 a.m. — followed by a community breakfast sponsored by McDonald's at 8 a.m., additionally sponsored by Cochenour Builders. Yoga sponsored by Pure Yoga begins at 9 a.m. All three events happen at Bargeway Pub.

A Fourth of July parade begins at 10 a.m., with a viewing celebration at Sorosis Park beginning at 9 a.m. — beginning at 6th and Webber Street

and ending on Second Street by The Dalles Chamber. To participate, download the parade application at thedalleschamber.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Parade-2021-4th-of-July.pdf. For more information, email Events@TheDallesChamber.com. The annual fireworks show begins at 10 p.m. at Lewis & Clark Festival Park.

"We are excited to bring back a full schedule of events for the Fourth of July this year," said Matt Herriges, Fort Dalles Fourth committee president, in a press release. "... All of this would not be possible without our generous local sponsors, community partners, and support of our Veteran Banner fundraiser. A special thank you to all of those that have supported Fort Dalles Fourth the last eight years."

More information and updates can be found at www.facebook.com/fortdallesfourth or www.fireworksinthedalles.com, or call the chamber at 541-296-2231.

Bingen/White Salmon

The Mt. Adams Chamber of Commerce is hosting the Fourth of July Parade through downtown, followed by a free concert in Rheingarten Park, located at the intersection of Washington and Main Streets from 1-4 p.m. The parade begins on Grandview to Jewett

to Main Street, where it will end at the park. The concert begins at 2 p.m. There will be prizes awarded for the most patriotic entries. Everyone is welcome.

"It's time to shine up your wheels, dust off your walking shoes, dress up your dog or decorate your bike," said a chamber press release.

"Join us for this small-town celebration of the Fourth of July. Beginning with a parade led by Grand Marshall Carol DeLay starting at 1 p.m., this perfect afternoon festival creates an ideal mid-summer day's trip to the north shore of the Columbia River Gorge."

The parade will feature the 204th Army Marching Band from Vancouver. Local group Harmony of the Gorge will be singing in the parade and also at the park, where there will be VIP tented seating for military veterans and their guest. Veterans are additionally invited to ride in the parade. If you need a vehicle/driver, the chamber will coordinate and drop you off at the park; call by July 1.

For more information, contact Mt. Adams Chamber of Commerce at 509-493-3630, or visit the webpage mtadamschamber.com.

The Port of Klickitat invites local Washington communities to safely discharge fireworks from 8-11 p.m. at Bingen Point. The City

of Bingen Municipal Code 8.16.020 prohibits fireworks within city limits. It is possible to legally purchase certain fireworks on federal or tribal lands which are in violation of Washington law (RCW 70.77) and will be confiscated at the event.

For the enjoyment and safety of all:

- Minors must be accompanied by an adult
- Use of fireworks is strictly limited to the hours of 8-11 p.m. on July 4 in the designated area
- No pets, alcohol, drugs, or weapons. Illegal fireworks are prohibited and will be confiscated.

The port could not host this event without the assistance and cooperation of the cities of Bingen and White Salmon, the Klickitat County Sheriff's Office, Fire District 13, and several other volunteers, said a press release.

For links to more information on the event, legal and illegal fireworks in Washington, and state law regarding the use of fireworks, visit the port's web site at www.portofklickitat.com.

Husum

The annual Husum July 4 parade and fun run has been canceled due to the heat wave.

LETTER Oath to 'Supreme Judge' referenced

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however, we cannot choose what parts of the Constitution we are going to follow on any given day," the letter continued. "Our founders wrote the first, second, and third articles dealing with separation of powers. In doing so, they gave the power to determine what is or is not constitutional to the courts and whether we personally like a particular law, mandate, governor's declaration, or if we personally think that it is unconstitutional, it is the courts that decide what is or is not constitutional."

There was not much debate on the language used in the response letter as the board informally agreed to have staff revise and put forward a final version for approval. The commissioners were all in agreement that they needed to address the issue.

That the letter was peppered with flattery directed towards the official who tacitly threatened the authors of the letter as well as county employees and other elected officials with arrest was explained by Commissioner Dan Christopher, who wrote the first draft of the response. He said there were several reasons for the language: "1. (It) is out of respect for the office of the sheriff; 2. It does not do the citizens of the county any good to start a war ... between elected officials; 3. The way it was written was respectful, yet provided our stance while trying to make sure (egos) did not get (too) hurt so that there was less possibility of retaliation or escalation; 4. It showed respect to the department and staff."

The statement

Songer's June 17 statement claims that the founding of the country was based in Christianity, and by that measure, "I have taken an

oath before the 'Supreme Judge of the Universe' to keep the peace and to secure, defend and protect the people of this jurisdiction from threats to their liberties, their livelihoods, and the peaceable enjoyment of their property."

The statement goes on to condemn Washington Governor Jay Inslee's issuing of executive orders relating to the COVID-19 emergency, which closed down businesses, churches, schools, and denied "the people of this state their God-given and constitutionally protected rights to travel, to worship, to assemble, and to exercise personal autonomy respecting wearing face masks or other medical devices."

Songer called such actions by the governor unconstitutional, and vowed to implement policies and procedures in place barring his office from enforcing or assisting "in the enforcement of any order, edict, mandate, proclamation, directive, regulation, etc., that violates the rights of the people," including certain First and Second Amendment rights, as well as the right to travel and "the right to lawfully engage in business activities without interference by representatives of any government, or agency or agent thereof, when such interference is based (sic)."

It further puts any governmental official on notice that he may choose to arrest and detain them for performing duties prescribed to them under what he considers "unconstitutional orders, edicts, mandates, proclamations, directives, regulations, etc."

"Fidelity to my oath requires that I abstain from enforcing any edict or order from a governor, or an executive, which lacks constitutional authority," Songer wrote. That point was rebutted by Prosecuting Attorney David Quesnel, who, during Tuesday's discussion, pulled from the Washington state Constitution and state code to argue that the sheriff does not have the authority to determine the constitutional validity of a law, and that it

forbids sheriffs from practicing law.

'What you say has meaning'

While the sheriff often releases statements in platitudes, some county officials are worried that a literal interpretation of his letter could mean consequences for those who operate under orders handed down by the state, should the sheriff or his deputies choose to execute the policies laid out in the statement.

"Under the literal interpretation of his letter, I could be arrested and detained for prosecuting a felon or domestic abuser for having a firearm, because that interferes with his right to bear arms ... I could be arrested and detained for prosecuting someone for driving on a suspended license or under the influence of alcohol because that interferes with their right to travel," Quesnel said during Tuesday's discussion.

The sheriff's statements also impacted county operations of the health department, who for the past 15 months has been working to alleviate the county of public health issues relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Health Director Erinn Quinn informed the board, the prosecutor, and the county human resources department of impacts of the sheriff's language in an email, the day after he published his statement. Upon reading the statement multiple times, she said, "I developed a genuine concern for both my own personal safety and security as well as that of my staff and brought this Facebook post to the attention of my department."

"Because I take the safety of my staff very seriously, I have already made decisions which will alter our normal business duties due to my inability to assure my staff of their safety within the community," Quinn wrote.

Quinn continued, saying that for the past 15 months, her office has had to deal with threats and harassment

from members of the public, and "while I feel my staff have been admirable in their ability to brush off these threats, threats of this nature coming from the sheriff himself are creating an environment where staff fear for their livelihood as public health employees."

The prosecutor himself informed the board that his family has taken measures to install additional security provisions, and "I now have an attorney on retainer in case I'm arrested and detained by the sheriff," Quesnel said. "I don't take well to threats."

Christopher, who prepared a first draft of the response letter, wrote in an email that he fears that he'll be spending a night in county jail "just for writing my public statement. But I am willing to do just that. When someone fears using their first amendment rights, that's a real travesty."

White Salmon Mayor Marla Keethler told *Columbia Gorge News* that she was aware of Songer's statement, but that the impacts did not extend out to city business, and that enforcement of state mandates were still in place at the municipal level.

The statement also spurred a response from Klickitat School District Superintendent Brian Freeman, who wrote to the sheriff, asking to either arrest and detain him, or to rescind his public statement. Freeman noted the school district will continue wearing masks and abiding by state mandates through the summer, a point which Songer called out as potentially illegal.

Discussing the letter, Commissioner Jacob Anderson said, "I want the sheriff to recognize that what you say has meaning and it impacts the people that you work with on a daily basis."

Constitutional Sheriff

This was not the first time Songer has been lectured by the board on constitutional processes.

The self-proclaimed



Klickitat County Sheriff Bob Songer speaks at an event in July, 2020. Columbia Gorge News photo/file

Constitutional Sheriff had lobbied for approval of a county resolution earlier this year that would have, in effect, made Klickitat County a sanctuary county for gun rights. The resolution would have barred county law enforcement from enforcing various gun regulations.

Similar comments were directed towards the sheriff during testimony before the board at their May 4 meeting when discussing the proposed resolution. Then, commissioners told Songer that the proposal usurps the state's authority, and that the proper way to invalidate a state mandate is to try it in court.

Songer has made headlines in the past for calling Governor Inslee an "idiot" and publicly stating he would not enforce state gun regulations or any of the COVID-19 mandates.

"Most everyone knows that our sheriff loves a mic and an audience. I'm fine with that," Christopher said. "I also understand that the sheriff has the authority to not enforce any order, proclamation, or mandate that he sees fit. Again, I am fine with that. Where the sheriff doesn't have the authority is to legally deem any order, proclamation or mandate 'unconstitutional' and threaten to make an arrest using his personal opinion of that constitutionality. If we allow any elected official and not the courts to judge law, and then threaten to act on that we allow tyranny."

Asked if the letter goes far enough, Commissioners Anderson and Christopher both told *Columbia Gorge News* that their job does not authorize them to control the sheriff's actions and views. Commissioner Sauter could not be reached for comment as he was out of town last week.

That said, "If he creates legal liability for the county, it is up to us commissioners to find the funds necessary to protect the country's interests," Anderson wrote in an email conversation.

Additionally, Songer is currently being sued in Benton County Superior Court for using his 140-member posse to hunt cougars with hounds.

Anderson and Christopher both mentioned they have no knowledge of any county official being placed under arrest relating to his latest statement.

Anderson noted that the sheriff has used his platform to announce he will not be enforcing COVID-19 mandates, but "the statements in his letter seem to indicate he is considering taking a more active roll with regards to his ability to arrest our residents, elected officials, and hard working members of the county and/or state departments."

Sheriff Songer declined to comment on the commissioner's statement.

Editor's Note — *Klickitat County Sheriff Bob Songer's letter can be found in full on the Columbia Gorge News website, gorgenews.com.*

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