

The Lure of Lake Chelan

It has been said more wedding rings have been lost in Lake Chelan than any lake in Washington state. Could be. The Wedding Ring, signature lure of Mack's Lures, was developed 35 miles down the road in Wenatchee. This petite, little spinner has probably accounted for catching more trout and kokanee than any other lure.

Want to fish the same lake for: kokanee, lake trout, rainbow trout, burbot (fresh water lingcod), bass, or even triploid landlocked Chinook salmon? The state record lake trout, 35.63 pounds, was caught in Lake Chelan in 2013. Lake trout average 5 to 7 pounds, with fish in the 15 to 20 pound class fairly common.

It gets better. How about a lake so big it shouldn't ever get crowded. Troll along shorelines, lined with manicured orchards and vineyards while being serenaded by coveys of quail that overflow onto boat ramps and parking lots. You can see them sitting on boat trailers and feeding under vehicles.

In May you can enjoy all this, as you bask in warm sun, looking up at peaks still tipped with snow.

Want a change of scenery. Something more rugged? Choose one of the state parks and launches further up the lake and be surrounded by towering peaks rising more than 8,000 feet, draped in snow. Snow fed



On the Wild Side

by G.I. Wilson

streams come cascading out of Cascade Range glaciers.

Still not interested? Lake Chelan is much more than a big lake with hungry fish. It is a destination site. A high desert gem. A place you will want to visit again.

Hands down, the *must do* while visiting Lake Chelan is the Lady of the Lake boat trip to Stehekin and the North Cascades National Park. It has been in *National Geographic*, *Sunset*, *New York Times* and others.

Volumes have been written about Stehekin and the trip. For the sake of brevity—and this column—take the 55-mile trip aboard either the 100-foot Lady of the Lake II, or the 65-foot Lady Express. The trip up takes four hours with two stops for passengers and cargo. There will be a 90-minute stay at Stehekin. Suggestion; when both boats are running, if you take the faster Lady Express up and the slower Lady of the Lake back, you will have longer to stay in Stehekin.

How about, for starters, as they say; you leave the arid desert area of Chelan and cruise into the deepest gorge in North America, peaks over 8,000 feet

complete with glaciers, glide over icy blue waters 1,500 feet deep—in places—but less than a mile wide at times.

At about 30 miles you enter an area only accessible by foot, boat, or float plane. Arrive at the small village of Stehekin for food, a museum, a great bakery, or board a bus for a trip to 325-foot, Rainbow Falls. The area is popular for hiking and backpacking. Forest service maps detail a network of trails. Talked to a middle age guy that had hiked most of them. When asked if he sees any critters on his trips. "See that trail right there? Bears, ticks and rattlesnakes guaranteed," he adds with a big grin.

A bonus on the boat was to visit with workers on their way to an old copper mine deep in the mountains. The mine closed in the 1950s. Years of out-of-control pollution has to be remedied. They off-loaded at the bustling Lucerne landing. We were amazed at all the heavy equipment that had previously been brought in by barge.

Time to bring in the Lake Chelan closer. Food and wine.

Now that fishing and a ferry ride have aroused your thirst for

the area, how about some fine wine and food. It's all there to be discovered, except fast foods. No McDonalds or Taco Bells here.

Want to taste fine wines at wineries with spectacular views? This is the place. You can even take a float plane to one. Land on the Columbia River and be serenaded by quail while enjoying the spectacular view. Talk about the ultimate designated driver.

One dining experience stands out above all—Blueberry Hills Farms. This is another must experience. When we told the ladies at both the hotel and visitor's center we were going, their eyes rolled skyward. "You absolutely can not go there without taking me."

I could easily write a column about Blueberry Hills, the menu, food, and fifth generation owner history. Since it would be obvious I am not a culinary writer, it would be best to say, try the blueberry blintz and you will be back. When the *Seattle Times* gives it four stars for its breakfasts, you know it's good. And, it is more than just a great place for breakfast. How about selling 100 fruit pies a day during the summer?

I'm not encouraging you to take a three-day weekend and make the seven hour drive to catch a bunch of fish, I'm urging you to plan a vacation to a place you could fall in love with. And, who knows, while you're there? Not many lakes around with all those species to be chased.

For more information, contact: Lake Chelan Chamber of Commerce, www.LakeChelan.com; Lady of the Lake, www.ladyofthelake.com; Blueberry Hills Farms, www.wildaboutberries.com.

DUST, continued from Page A8

on base in the game, Gresham stranded 11.

Strong base running and a couple of doubles and a triple by Kelsi Christensen kept the game moving at a swift pace.

"We really focused that inning and had a lot of runners with clutch hits," said Oliver.

Even though the offense was making waves, McNary's defense played tough with a pair of double plays. In the top of the first, Kinsey McNaught made a running catch in center field and an eagle-eyed throw to second to catch a runner trying to advance.

"Every catch in the outfield, every throw in the outfield, every single one was spot on," said Ulrey. Ulrey threw a complete game with three strikeouts after struggling to find her zone in the first inning.

With bases loaded and one out, Ulrey was part of the second double play in the sixth inning when she scooped up a grounder and threw to catcher Kiana Villarreal who got an out at home plate. Villarreal threw to first for the second out to end the Gopher's inning.

As far as the contest with North Medford, the Celtics were hoping their own win streak outlasted North Medford's.

Ulrey said she wanted to see the team strike first in the second round.

"We need to start sooner and not let them score first. We need to work on that because it's a big part of how we play," she said.

McNary sports banquet set for Saturday

McNary High School's Athletic Booster Club will hold its fourth annual dinner and auction on Saturday, May 30, at the McNary Restaurant & Golf Course.

This year, the club will also be having a golf and foot golf, described as a combination of soccer and golf, tournament before the evening's events. The last three athletic benefits raised enough to renovate the athletic training room, which serves to rehabilitate injured athletes and help prevent future injuries, purchase needed equipment for teams and create a fund to help support athletes with monetary needs and would not otherwise be able to afford to participate.

This time around, the boosters are raising money in hope of supplying OSAA-sanctioned and club teams with needed equipment.

"The big thing is you don't have to have a student attending McNary to get involved. My son is a seventh grader at Whiteaker Middle School and this group is about forming the relationships and finding ways to get involved," Danielle Bethell said.

Banquet tickets are \$35 each. Registration and ticket orders can be completed online at mcnaryabc.com.

puzzle answers

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CERT COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM

Keizer CERT is seeking items for its garage sale fundraiser on Saturday and Sunday, June 20-21 starting at 8 a.m.

4575 River Rd N, Keizer (next to Faith Lutheran Church)

Sale proceeds will be used for supplies and equipment, and to further the training of Keizer CERT members and others in our community.

We are looking for donations of items that can be used in our sale. We are a nonprofit organization so all donations are tax deductible.

If you have items you'd like to donate, please contact Bonnie at (503) 931-1450 or Trish at (503) 930-7318.

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills.

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