

Great Scots, it's time for Caledonian

Athena hosts athletic, dancing and piping contests

By TAMMY MALGESINI
East Oregonian

ATHENA — A gathering of clans, friends, families, athletes, Highland dancers and pipers will celebrate the Athena Caledonian Games this weekend.

Highlighting all things Scottish, the annual tradition includes professional and amateur athletes who compete alongside one another and have a great time, said Sue Friese, Athena Caledonian Games president. Skills that are based in Scottish history and farm life are now used in athletic competition.

The most famous event is the caber toss, featuring a telephone-like pole that is thrown end-over-end. Other events include throwing objects in the air for height measurements, including hammers, hay bales and the weight toss. Alan Wernsing of Athena is the athletic director, a post he has held for three decades.

Athena Caledonian Games runs Friday through Sunday in and around Athena City Park. There is no admission charge.

After a six-year hiatus, the Highland Dance Competition returns for this year's event. Cassandra Humphrys of Mid-Columbia School of Highland Dance in Richland, Wash., is coordinating the effort. While some of the dancers are local, early registrations indicate competitors are also coming from Portland, Spokane, Boise and beyond.

While the pool of piping competitors is small, it's had a mighty impact



EO File Photo

John Odden of Bend prepares to release a 56-pound weight during the athletic competition at the 2017 Athena Caledonian Games. This year's festival is Friday through Sunday in and around Athena City Park.

on Caledonian Games over the years, Friese said. Piping judge Eric Albert, who hails from Eugene, also will be featured at the Tattoo (an outdoor concert Saturday at 6:30 p.m. in the Athena-Weston High School stadium). He will perform some World War II piping tunes commemorating the 75th anniversary of D-Day. In addition, he will play at the Caledonian Candle Lighting Ceremony, a blessing of the clans and festival, which kicks off the event Friday at 7 p.m. at the park.

Athletes who haven't signed up can register Saturday beginning at 10:30 a.m. An athlete meeting will be held at 11:45 a.m., with the competitions starting at noon. Registration for the kids' athletic contests is from 9-10 a.m., with the competitions running from 10-11:30 a.m.

In addition to a full day of athletic contests, Sat-

urday also features lots of dancing and a variety of other acts — including everything from dramatic poetry reading and storytelling to telling jokes, singing and playing instruments — all with a Scottish flavor.

Sunday's activities include the Kirkin' of the Tartan, a church service at the park at 9:30 a.m. A coffee hour will follow the church service.

"You don't have to wear a kilt to Athena, but it sure is fun if you have one," Friese said.

For more information about Athena Caledonian Games, contact Friese at athenacaledoniangames@gmail.com, 541-566-3880, visit www.athenacaledonian.org or search Facebook.

Contact Community Editor Tammy Malgesini at tmalgesini@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4539

BRIEFLY

'Mary Poppins Returns' for movie night

HEPPNER — The Heppner branch of the Oregon Trail Library District has a sweet deal for you.

Decades after her original appearance, the magical nanny appears in "Mary Poppins Returns." The film is featured during Movie in the Park. The free event is Thursday from 8-10 p.m. at Heppner City Park, 444 N. Main St. There is no admission charge.

People are encouraged to bring a blanket or lawn chair. Snacks will be available from Heppner Market Fresh.

For more information, call 541-676-9964.

Travel club announces upcoming itinerary

PENDLETON — The Pendleton Travel Club recently announced its upcoming gatherings.

The club will host a potluck picnic Thursday, July 18 from 1-3 p.m. at Pendleton Community Park, 1200 S.W. 44th St. Those attending are invited to bring a dish to share and utensils. The club will provide water. New and prospective members are especially welcome.

Also, during the August meeting, the featured speaker is Kathy Rubel, who will discuss future tours. That meeting is Thursday, Aug. 15 from 2-3 p.m. at the Free Methodist Church, 1711 S.W. 44th St., Pendleton. Refreshments will be provided.

For more information about the travel club, call Kathy at 541-276-2244 or Karen at 541-276-0923.

Bowl-A-Thon rolls into seventh year

HERMISTON — The public is invited to strike up some fun during a bowling event to raise money for Domestic Violence Services.

In its seventh year, the annual Bowl-A-Thon

is Saturday, July 27 from 6-8 p.m. at Desert Lanes, 1545 N. First St., Hermiston. The cost is \$30 per bowler or \$120 for a team of four. The registration fee includes three games and shoe rental. It's open to all ages, and prizes will be given. Also, raffle tickets are \$1 each or six for \$5.

The annual fundraiser helps support the nonprofit organization's mission in providing support to victims of stalking and domestic, dating and sexual violence. In addition to shelters in Pendleton and Hermiston, Domestic Violence Services maintains a 24-hour crisis line (800-833-1161) and provides support and advocacy activities for victims of domestic violence or sexual assault in Umatilla and Morrow counties.

For more information or to register for the Bowl-A-Thon, call 541-276-3322 or visit www.dvs-or.org.

HHS class of '99 plans reunion

HERMISTON — The Hermiston High School class of 1999 is seeking fellow Bulldog classmates for its 20-year reunion.

The event is planned for Aug. 9-11. The Friday evening informal meet-and-greet starts at 7 p.m. at Midway Bar & Grill, 1750 N. First St. The Saturday activity is a dinner from 5-7 p.m. at The Gathering Place at Bellinger's, 1823 S. Highway 395. Reunion activities wrap up Sunday with a family-friendly gathering from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at McKenzie Park, 320 S. First St. People are invited to bring a picnic lunch; refreshments will be provided.

There is no fee for the Friday and Sunday events. Tickets are \$25 for the Saturday event, which includes dinner and a drink ticket. And for those who want to continue the party, classmates will gather in Chute 8 after the Farm-City Pro Rodeo (purchase tickets on your own).

For dinner tickets or more information, search www.eventbrite.com. For questions, contact Tina Hanson at tina.hanson22@yahoo.com or 509-713-6900.

COMING EVENTS

TUESDAY, JULY 9

PENDLETON SENIOR MEAL SERVICE, 12-1 p.m., Pendleton Senior Center, 510 S.W. 10th St., Pendleton. Costs \$3.50 or \$6 for those under 60. Pool, puzzles, crafts, snacks, Second Time Around thrift store 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. For Meals On Wheels, call 541-276-1926. (Tori Bowman 541-276-5073)

BOARDMAN SENIOR MEAL SERVICE, 12 p.m., Boardman Senior Center, 100 Tatone St., Boardman. Cost is \$4 for seniors 55 and over or \$5 for

adults. (541-481-3257)

HERMISTON SENIOR MEAL SERVICE, 12 p.m., Harkner Center, 255 N.E. Second St., Hermiston. Cost is \$4 for adults, free for children 10 and under, \$4 for Meals on Wheels. Extra 50 cents for utensils/dishes. Bus service available by donation. (541-567-3582)

SKILLS FOR LIFE, 3 p.m., Pendleton Recreation Center, 510 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton. Gym activities at 3 p.m., life skills at 4 p.m. for middle and high school students. Reg-

istration requested. (Suzanne

Moore 541-276-3987)

ATHENA WEEKLY MARKET, 4-7 p.m., Dugger Park, Main Street, Athena. Handcrafted goods, garden produce, fundraiser booths and informational booths. Vendor space available on first-come, first-served basis. (541-969-4810)

CRAFTERNOONS, 4:15 p.m., Pendleton Public Library, 502 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton. Drop in for a group or individual craft project. All ages. (541-966-0380)

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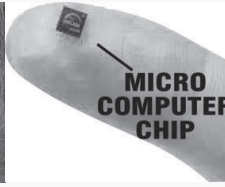
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