



HAPPY

Fourth of July

WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN



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Shake the Lake on shaky ground

Fireworks show needs funds to continue next year

By Ellen Morris Bishop
Wallowa County Chieftain

The traditional Shake the Lake fireworks show is primed to explode into the skies over Wallowa Lake at its customary time — dusk, or about 9 p.m.—on Thursday, July 4.

Spectators in the county park and along the lake shore will be treated to almost two hours of multi-intensity and multi-color pyrotechnics, including crossettes (large stars that then break into smaller stars), chrysanthemums (a spherical burst that leaves a visible burst of sparks) and bouquet shells, which scatter a number of smaller shells across the sky before they explode. The colors of the fireworks come from a variety of metallic compounds that include copper (blue), calcium (orange), barium (green) lithium and strontium (red) and antimony and titanium (bright silver colors.)

If you don't want to watch the fireworks, but would rather just listen, you can hear them more than 10 miles north of Enterprise along USFS Road 46 (the Charolais Road) and many other locations in the county.

But unless donors step up to the plate soon, next year there may be no 4th of July Shake the Lake fireworks, said Wallowa County Chamber of Commerce director Vicki Searles. "To sustain the program, we need to pull together," she said. "The cost of this year's fireworks is \$14,500. Right now, we are about \$6,400 short of that amount."

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Vicki Searles, Wallowa County Chamber of Commerce director

"The Chamber can pay for this year's show by tapping into its limited contingency fund," Searles said. "But the problem is assuring that we can do this next year, and the year after, and continue the celebration into the future."

The cost of the Shake the Lake 4th of July fireworks has increased an average of about \$1000 each year, according to Chamber figures. In 2003, when the Independence Day show began, the fireworks bill was just \$4000. Last year the show cost about \$13,000. "Part of the expenses are the restrooms and cleanup," Searles said. "But

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Photos by Ellen Morris Bishop

The Crossland Cattle team works on getting their steer heeled in the pasture roping competition.

RANCH RODEO ROPES IN A CROWD

By Ellen Morris Bishop
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This is rodeo without fanfare that brings ranch families together and offers friendly competition between ranch teams. This year, 13 ranches were represented, including Yost Quarter Horses, Intermountain Livestock, Smiling M Ranch, J Arrow Livestock, Morgan family cattle, Sliding M Ranch, Quail Run Ranch, and Callin' the Schottos.

Team-based competitions included Team Sorting, Team Doctoring, Team Branding, and Pasture Roping. And there was also bronc riding, ladies steer-stopping, and the always popular stick horse races for kids, with two classes: ages 2-4 and ages 5-7. There's not much competition in these two events. Just loping your stick horse across the finish line is a win for most of the young participants.

This year's rodeo featured modified rules that enlivened the event, and also made things run more smoothly. For example, the Team Branding event allowed each team of three buckaroos

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A roper catches his steer in the Team doctoring competition

McKee begins exterior upgrades to Litch Building

By Ellen Morris Bishop
Wallowa County Chieftain

Andy McKee is set to begin with the exterior upgrades on the Litch Building. On Monday, July 1st, McKee's project partner, Dave Morse, began work removing old metal siding, jackhammering stone and concrete siding off the River Street side of building, and uncovering long-forgotten features. Those included small windows along the bottom of the building front that probably served to provide extra ventilation and a little bit of extra light and style. Although the thick wavy glass in the windows includes a chicken-wire-like reinforcement, Morse is taking special

care to keep them intact. The building's siding is made of thick, heavy galvanized sheeting, and most of the paint is flaking off. Beneath the metal, there are wide boards that provided much of the original siding. "You can see right through the gaps in the boards into the building and the apartments upstairs," Morse said. "There was no insulation in the building what-so-ever."

The \$200,000 Main Street grant from Oregon's State Historic Preservation Grant only funds restoration of the Litch Building's exterior, Morse noted. There's no specific timeline to complete the exterior project, though Morse and McKee want to finish it this

summer. Design to upgrade the structure of the interior is not yet complete, and neither McKee nor Morse could provide a specific timeline for the second, interior phase of their project. Upstairs apartments, with most planned as homes for professionals, with two as Air B'n'B rentals, need to be designed carefully with building structure in mind, McKee said. "Some of the new apartments might be a little non-traditional in their shapes. This one," he said pointing to a space bounded simply by air and empty joists, "has to be long and narrow because the walls here are bearing walls. We can't



Ellen Morris Bishop

Andy McKee is set to begin structural work to stabilize the Litch Building and begin serious renovations.

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