



Ellen Morris Bishop

Dragon boat racers make waves in the 2018 races.

Dragon boats roar the last weekend of August

New boats, events to be featured

By Steve Tool
Wallowa County Chieftain

Waves are rippling at Wallowa Lake. Not just because of the late stormy weather and winds — it's dragons — dragon boats, that is. Locals are practicing for the upcoming Dragons in the Wallowas 7 Wonders Cup dragon boat races coming up on Aug. 24-25. In its fourth year, the event has proved successful at luring plenty of participants from other parts of the state.

Race director and sponsor, Mike Lockhart, said local team, Dragons in the Wallowas, is making a hard run at the races this year. The team is competing with four new boats. The team added 10-paddler boats although the traditional 20-paddler boats are

still a race fixture. The 20-paddler boats are about 40 feet in length while the 10-paddler boats are about 34-feet long.

"A lot of the teams are smaller now, and the 10-paddler boats work well for them," Lockhart explained. "It's going to be pretty active with a lot of racing between the two boats." Lockhart added that team members will be interchangeable between the two boats.

Many of the teams are coming from the Willamette Valley, with many from Portland and Vancouver, in addition to at least two teams from Salem. Lockhart couldn't yet give a number on the amount of teams competing because some are still in the process of signing up.

"It's going to be a bigger race," he said. "We're going to be running three or four lanes rather than just two, which will be more exciting." The races

are run at the head of Wallowa Lake, near the marina.

Lockhart noted that the Wallowa Lake event is difficult to promote because it is competing with other prestigious events in the sport. Victoria, British Columbia hosted a large race on Aug. 9-10, and the week before, Vancouver hosted a 60-team race to determine who will qualify for the international championships in France later this year.

"There a lot of activities we're competing with," he said. "I'm pleased we're holding our own here. We get a lot of return teams."

One of the events particular to this race is a slalom event, similar to slalom events in skiing. "If you wanted to get technical about it, it's really like a giant slalom, trying to get 40-foot boats through the gates," Lockhart said. "It's really popular, and one of the major draws to this race."

As with the previous three races, Joseph will have a temporary Main Street closure in order to bestow an "awakening ceremony" for the boats. Lockhart said the ceremony harkens back to a Chinese semi-religious tradition of painting the eye of the dragon open to awaken it. He added it is also considered a blessing for the people participating in the race.

"It's kind of enjoyable," Lockhart said with a smile. "We turn out a few people."

A number of vendors will also set up in the marina parking lot and on Sunday, Aug. 25, the race committee will provide live music and a beer garden in the tramway area during the award ceremony.

According to Lockhart, the event can always use a few more volunteers. He said it can be fun to work down on the docks, meeting new people and helping the teams

load the boats. He also said he needed a volunteer safety boat in case of accidents.

Although the race does not offer cash prizes, the "Wallowa Lake Seven Wonders Cup", will be awarded to the team with the best overall performance in all events. Additionally, 24 medals will be awarded to the teams finishing 1st through 3rd for each class and for each of the race events.

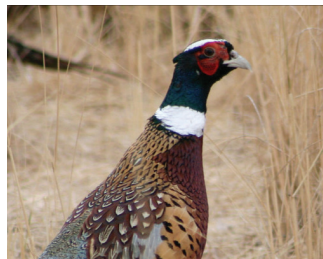
Even with the slalom races and the addition of the smaller boats to this year's event, Lockhart knows what really gets competitors here.

"The venue is the big draw," he said. "It's Wallowa Lake that brings them in. They want to get done with racing early enough to roam around and enjoy it."

Registration deadline for the races is Aug. 15. To volunteer, call Lockhart at (503) 781-4321.

Free youth pheasant hunts scheduled for September

ODFW



SALEM, Ore.—Youth hunters (age 17 and under) can sign up now for ODFW's free pheasant hunts happening around the state in September.

The events are being held in Central Point, Corvallis, Eugene, Irrigon/Umatilla, John Day, Klamath Falls, La Grande, Madras, Ontario, Portland/Sauvie Island and The Dalles (Tygh Valley).

New this year, ODFW has also added a youth pheasant hunt at the new Coquille Valley Wildlife Area in Coquille.

See dates below and register online (see Register for a Class/Youth Upland Hunts) or at an ODFW office that sells licenses. (Registration is not available at license sale agents.) The youth hunter or their parent will need to be logged in to the youth's account to register online. The deadline to register is the Thursday before the hunt.

ODFW and partners stock pheasants at these special hunts that give youth a head

start on regular pheasant seasons, which don't begin until October. Quail and dove also can be hunted. Some events begin with a shotgun skills clinic, so participants can practice clay target shooting before hunting.

These events are open only to youth who have passed hunter education. (ODFW has hunter education classes and field days available before the events.) An adult 21 years of age or older must accompany the youth to supervise but may not hunt.

"Youth pheasant hunts are a great chance for young hunters to find early success and put the lessons learned in hunter education classes to work in the field," says Brandon Harper, ODFW hunter

education coordinator.

ODFW stresses safety during the hunts. Both hunter and supervisor must wear a hunter orange hat, eye protection and a hunter orange vest—equipment provided at the clinics by ODFW to anyone who doesn't have it. Hunters also need to check in and out of the hunt.

The hunts are free, though participants need a valid hunting license (\$10 for youth 12 and older, free for age 11 and under) to hunt. Youth hunters age 12-17 also need an upland game bird validation (\$4). Purchase online or at a license sales agent or ODFW office that sells licenses. Licenses and validations will not be sold at the events.

While most areas have a hunt both Saturday and Sunday, youth hunters may sign up for only one hunt. They are welcome to hunt stand by on the other day.

See page 26-27 of the Oregon Game Bird Regulations for more information, or see myodfw.com/workshops-and-

events for the local contact for each hunt. For help signing up, contact Myrna Britton, (503) 947-6028, Myrna.B.Britton@state.or.us

Eastern Oregon pheasant hunts are at the following locations:

- Irrigon Wildlife Area (between Irrigon and Umatilla), Sept. 21 and Sept. 22. Sign up for morning or evening hunt (morning only on Sunday).

- Klamath Falls, Klamath Wildlife Area, Sept. 14 and Sept. 15. Additional hunt on Oct. 19 when Miller Island Unit open to youth hunters only on a first-come, first-serve basis beginning at 10 a.m. Call 541-883-5732 from more information.

- John Day Valley, Sept. 14 and Sept. 15.

- La Grande, Ladd Marsh Wildlife Area, Sept. 14 and Sept. 15. Registration not necessary but appreciated.

- Madras, private lands, Sept. 14 and Sept. 15.

- Ontario, Oct. 12 and Oct. 13

Wallowa Lake triathlon offers fun for athletes, funds for shelter

By Steve Tool
Wallowa County Chieftain

The annual Wallowa Lake Triathlon Race to End Abuse fundraiser was held on Saturday, Aug. 3. The triathlon included a 250-meter swim, a 13-mile bike ride and 5-kilometer run. It raised funds for Safe Harbors, a local non-profit that provides crisis intervention and advocacy services to survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence, dating violence, and stalking.

"We've never had anyone get fussy," said Paige Sully, a representative of the organization. "Everyone had a great time and was truly supportive of each other. We get lots of really fun folks." With a successful race this year, Safe Harbors will focus on publicizing the event and attracting more

participants.

Two teams of three persons each competed in the triathlon and competed for victory as well as individuals who participated for the triathlon and the 5-K run as they were run as separate events.

Paige Hunting, a Safe Harbors team member, said that all triathlon proceeds go to Safe Harbors. This year's funds are specifically targeted toward purchasing land to build new shelter spaces that provide more private and inclusive space for survivors while also maintaining some community setting.

Triathlon placing: 1. Michael Rushon 54:53.8; 2. Mahroni Rushton 1:03:24.2; 3. Eugene Yates 1:05:20.7. 5-k placing: 1. Brandon Moore 21:43.8; 2. Jeff Leavitt 25:11.7; 3. Kacie Sams 25:19.2.

CONGRATULATIONS

to ALL the 2019 Wallowa County Fair Participants!

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