

Wee Bit o' Ireland features fun o' plenty

By Tammy Malgesini

Go! Magazine

HEPPIER — After a two-year hiatus, Heppner is gearing up for more than a wee bit o' fun.

The Wee Bit o' Ireland festival returns for bookend weekends, March 11-13 and 18-19, including a full day of food, fun and family-friendly activities on Saturday, March 12.

"We have several benefit breakfasts, an Irish dinner, four food vendors and all our restaurants will be open. Everyone loves to eat," said JoAnna Lamb, Heppner Chamber of Commerce's executive director. "We have lots of music, and the Great Green Parade is on and growing."

And you won't want to miss the two-day Creative Arts & Craft Show, on Friday, March 11, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., and Saturday, March 12, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. After being cooped up because of pandemic restrictions, all types of handiwork from residents here and yonder will be on display and available for purchase in the conference room at Heppner City Hall.

In addition, the Morrow County Museum will be open 1-5 p.m. March 11 and 10 a.m.-1 p.m. March 12. Also on Friday, there's a 3-on-3 basketball tournament



Tammy Malgesini/EO Media Group, File
A Welly Toss participant prepares to launch a Wellington boot during a past contest at the Wee Bit o' Ireland festival in Heppner. This year's toss is slated for Saturday, March 12.

at 5 p.m. at the high school, and the play "The Little Way of St. Therese" is at 7 p.m. at the Gilliam and Bisbee Building.

MARCH 12-13

The "Saturday o' Brunch" kicks things off at 8 a.m. at St. Patrick's Senior Center. And an hour later, other fundraisers start ramping up throughout the town, including Ewe-Do Bingo, the O'Ducky Race and the Heppner St. Patrick's Day Remembrance Walk and 5K run.

Other activities include the St. Pat's Polar Plunge, Welly Toss, Leprechaun Race, bed races and the O'Planky team relay race. Also, the Cruz-In Car Show returns for its 20th year. The Great Green Parade gets rolling at 1 p.m.

Be on the lookout for gold nuggets scattered on Main Street on Saturday. If you're lucky as a leprechaun and find one between Baltimore and May streets, take it to the information booth for a prize.

The Heppner Elks Lodge turns into Irish Central with the Irish Coffee Hour beginning at 10 a.m. Host Tom Melton will trade barbs and blarney with special guests. It includes an Irish Brogue Contest with cash prizes. The afternoon Ceili features Whiskey for Breakfast from 2-4 p.m. and a traditional Irish buffet is in the evening.

"We aren't actually having whiskey for breakfast but we don't judge," Lamb said. "They are a musical group out of Pendleton."

In addition, Flood Town Books is hosting Celtic crafts for kids 1:30-2:30 p.m. Also, 4-6 p.m., the bookstore welcomes Endalos, a new band from the coast, playing Celtic folk music. And to lure you to linger awhile, Burnt Field Brewery is hosting a beer garden.

Other March 12 entertainment high-

lights include a local talent show (6 p.m., Gilliam and Bisbee Building), the Blue Mountain Old-Time Fiddlers (6:30 p.m., Morrow County Fairgrounds) and the Gothard Sisters (7:30-9:30 p.m., Gilliam and Bisbee).

If you wake up bleary-eyed on Sunday, March 13, Gateway Cafe has you covered with a noon Sunday brunch. After getting your fill, head to Balm Fork Road for road bowling.

MARCH 18-19

Be sure to return the following weekend for Murray's Irish Beer and Wine Festival. It is Friday, March 18, 7-11 p.m. at the Gilliam and Bisbee Building. The live DJ show includes music, lights and fog with Dan Burns 3D Productions. There is a \$5 cover charge with additional drink tokens and food available for purchase from Upper Place Concessions.

And closing out the celebrations is the 2022 Coastal Farm & Ranch Challenge of Champions Bull Riding. Tour Stop No. 3 is Saturday, March 19, 4 p.m. at the Morrow County Fairgrounds. For tickets, go to www.cctbullriding.com.

For a full schedule of events and activity registration forms, visit www.heppner-chamber.com. If you have questions, call 541-676-5536.



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FIRST FRIDAY AT CROSSROADS

Studio Art Quilt Associates Regional Show

Habitat



Exhibition on display Friday, March 4 through Friday, March 25
Crossroads is open Monday through Saturday from 10:00am to 5:00pm