



Fireworks restrictions take excitement out of having facial hair

Ned Hickson

First, the good news: According to the National Council on Fireworks Safety, fireworks-related injuries have dropped by 75 percent in the past decade.

The bad news, as anyone over the age of 30 can tell you, is that today's fireworks are about as exciting to watch as a pile of smoldering pencil shavings. For example, it used to be that "sparklers" actually sparkled. They showered the air with tiny crackling embers so bright you could see them through your eyelids.

The bravest kids would spin them like propellers, knowing full well their eyebrows would grow back by mid summer.

My kids don't believe me when I tell them this. That's because, each July Fourth, they are handed "sparklers" that are basically sticks of incense that smell like sulfur.

No crackle. No shower of sparks. Just a momentary flame as the paper wick ignites then — upon reaching its climactic flash point — fizzles into a puff of flatulent-smelling smoke.

Note: In the event you happen to purchase a defective sparkler, and find yourself the unwitting victim of actual

spark-spitting action, DO NOT PANIC.

Call the NCFS hotline immediately so your rogue sparkler can be safely deposited in a special, undisclosed location three miles beneath the Mojave Desert. If there's no time to drive to the desert because, say, you live in Michigan, you will be instructed on how to disarm the sparkler yourself.

This will mean transporting it to an unpopulated area and, utilizing protective gear and the most extreme caution, dipping it into a glass of water.

Several times if necessary.

Those of you who live in Alabama or Tennessee have no idea what I'm talking

about. That's because you have real fireworks. The kind that childhood memories (and a good portion of our nation's first-strike capabilities) are made of. In addition, the only real restrictions you have are as follows:

1) If a skyrocket is longer than your boat trailer, it must be flagged during transport.

2) You must, by law, inform neighbors when using any fireworks that require a dynamite plunger.

3) Though there is no limit to the number of M-80s you can join together with a single fuse, the Department of Homeland Security warns it can't be held responsible should your area, as a precautionary measure, be swept

with heat-seeking missiles.

4) If you have studded tires, you must remove them. This has nothing to do with fireworks; it's just a friendly reminder from the folks at the Highway Department.

And lastly,

5) Any and all skyrockets capable of leaving southern air space must be pointed north.

The fact is, even though I whine about having wimpy fireworks here in Oregon, at least we have them. In Georgia, they are illegal. This means watching public fireworks displays or, as many Georgians do, going outside and facing Alabama. Even

though these displays are beautiful, it's still not the same as being knocked unconscious by a runaway ground flower.

Being as I lived in Atlanta for six years, I can tell you illegal fireworks do make their way across the Alabama border.

This, of course, is a huge problem.

Especially if your boat trailer isn't big enough.

Ned is a syndicated columnist with News Media Corporation. His book, "Humor at the Speed of Life," is available online at Port Hole Publications, Amazon Books and Barnes & Noble. Write to him at nedhickson@icloud.com

Singer-songwriter Nakoa performs Sunday in Yachats

On Sunday, at 4 p.m., singer-songwriter Matt Nakoa will perform at Yachats Community Presbyterian Church.

Nakoa grew up on a small goat farm in central New York and began composing music as a teenager.

Following a formative stint as a concert pianist, he won a scholarship to attend Berklee College of Music in Boston Massachusetts.

While there, Nakoa worked alongside a veritable "who's who" of soon-to-be industry darlings, including St. Vincent,

Esperanza Spaulding and members of the bands Karmin and Lucius.

After school, Nakoa wrote music and toured with his Berklee-bred band, The Fens.

His first solo release, 2012's "Light in the Dark," was received by fans as an eclectic pop-rock masterpiece, while Nakoa's latest studio album, "A Dozen Other Loves," (2014), explores a mainly acoustic palette.

This acoustic avenue has led to steady folk radio airplay and performances with veteran

songsmiths Patty Larkin, Ellis Paul and Tom Rush.

Nakoa has also collaborated with Grammy award winner Kathy Mattea.

An engaging performer, Nakoa tours internationally; recently giving concerts at The White House and throughout India. He is a 2014 Kerrville Folk Festival New Folk Winner and The Falcon Ridge Folk Festival Most Wanted Artist.

Additionally, Nakoa's piano music has received favorable reviews in publications includ-

ing The New York Times.

WFUV Radio called Nakoa "The discovery of the year: a supremely gifted singer-songwriter-guitarist-pianist..."

Yachats Community Presbyterian Church is featuring the musician, performer and songwriter.

The show will be held in the church sanctuary. Doors open at 3:30 p.m.

Admission is free and refreshments will be served during intermission.

The church is located at: 360 W Seventh St. in Yachats.

IN BRIEF

Summer hours begin at LCC

Lane Community College Florence Center will close on Mondays and Fridays for the summer through Friday, Aug. 13.

The Center is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Van Fans to meet at Shorewood today

The next monthly meeting and luncheon for the Van Fans will be today, July 1, at The Shorewood on Spruce Street at 11:45 a.m.

For more information or to volunteer, contact Karen Lee at 541-997-9669.

Habitat is seeking yard-sale donations

Habitat for Humanity's Faith Relations Committee is holding a sale to raise money for home construction and repair.

Donations of all types (except clothing) are needed.

Contact Florence Habitat at 541-902-9227 or Shirley Kilmer at 541-997-4010 to arrange a time to deliver your donations. The sale will be tomorrow through Saturday, July 2-4, at 2075 40th St., from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., daily.

Ride with Councilor Lyddon July 7

Hop aboard and talk to Councilor George Lyddon on the next Ride with a Councilor Day, July 7, from 1:10 to 3:10 p.m., on the Rhody Express.

Fares for the Rhody Express are \$1 per trip or \$2 per day.

Coastal Women Vets to lunch July 10

The Coastal Women Veterans will be holding its July luncheon at Morgan's Country Kitchen, 85020 Highway 101, on Friday, July 10, at 11:30 a.m.

All military women are invited and encouraged to attend.

RSVP to Nancy Coughlan at 541-997-4403 or email ncoughlan@aol.com.

Colorado Picnic

returns in July

The third semiannual Colorado Picnic is being planned for Sunday, July 19, from noon to 6 p.m., at the Woahink Lake picnic meeting place on Canary road

Bring a dish to share and your favorite Colorado stories.

Anyone with a Colorado connection is invited.

For more information, call Donna Dobson at 541-997-7383.

SHS Class of 1975 planning reunion

Siuslaw High School Class of 1975's 40th reunion will be Saturday, Aug. 15.

There will be a potluck

lunch at the boat ramp area between the second and third bridge at noon. Dinner will be at 7:30 p.m. at Pier Point Inn. It will be buffet style.

For more information, contact Bill Libby at broncos.7@live.com.

Boardwalk Market now open

The Florence Boardwalk Market is now open. The market is located adjacent to the Port of Siuslaw Boardwalk at Bay and Nopal streets.

Local and regional vendors sell produce, handmade crafts, pottery, baskets, Oregon-specialty products, gemstones, rocks and minerals, jewelry, plants, clothing, art, photography, blown glass,

face painting, and more.

Hours are Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sundays, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The market runs weekends through Oct. 4.

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