

Jackalope Jamboree hops into third year

By Tammy Malgesini
Go! Magazine

PENDLETON — Tickets are now on sale for the Jackalope Jamboree, which is gearing up for a three-day country and Americana music festival in June at the Happy Canyon Arena in Pendleton.

The event features headliners each night. Reckless Kelly will kick things off Thursday, June 23, Turnpike Troubadours will travel to the stage Friday, June 24, and closing out the event on Saturday, June 25, is Mike & The Moonpies. Nearly 20 musical acts will perform throughout the festival.

Chad Colwell, one of the event's organizers, said if early ticket sales are any indication, this could be the best year yet. Landing Turnpike Troubadours, he said, "is kind of a big draw for us." In less than a month, Colwell said the festival had more than doubled tickets sales as compared to all of 2021.

Running on adrenaline from a successful inaugural event in



EO Media Group, File
Concertgoers dance as Jesse Daniel performs June 26, 2021, during Jackalope Jamboree at the Happy Canyon Arena in Pendleton. The country singer-songwriter returns for the 2022 musical festival, slated for June 23-25.

2019, Colwell and fellow organizers Rian Beach and Daren Lequerica announced in early 2020 plans to expand to two days for the second year.

However, the global pandemic pulled the plug, forcing the trio to wait until 2021 for their sophomore event. Even with

some lingering restrictions and the sweltering heat, Colwell said more than 1,000 attended the Jackalope Jamboree's first day and a tick below that showed up for Saturday's performances.

Colwell said early out of the chute, the idea was to move beyond a one-day event. And in just its third year, the 2022 festival has expanded to three days.

"We wanted to see this thing grow," he said. "It was a goal at some point to expand and get bigger."

Festival organizers are pleased to return to the Happy Canyon Arena. The festival has been held at the venue since its beginning.

"Not only is the space historic and a fixture of the community, it also allows for an intimate experience for patrons of the festival," Beach said. "Happy Canyon is big enough to have thousands of spectators, but still small enough that you can truly experience what the festival is all about: music."

Another big draw, Colwell said, is mixing up the lineup. In addition to national touring and traveling acts, he said it's important to include local musicians or those with ties to the region — that includes such talent as James Dean Kindle, Elwood and Tylor & the Train Robbers.

"Pendleton and Eastern

Oregon has a tremendous music scene," he said. "There's a lot of great music and we want to showcase them."

Festival options include two- and three-day packages (\$105-\$165), as well as single-day tickets (\$25-\$85). For a link to ticket information, visit www.jackalopejamboree.com.

"Every day offers a great day of music at Jackalope Jamboree," Colwell said.

Festival-goers hoping to secure RV/trailer or vehicle (car, van, truck) camping are encouraged to make reservations early. Also, Colwell advises people to visit the event website and social media pages for updates.

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