

BMW rally draws about 475 riders

Club raised more than \$20,000 for local groups

By Richard Hanners
Blue Mountain Eagle

About 475 riders showed up in John Day for the BMW Riders of Oregon's 41st Chief Joseph Rally in John Day from June 29 to July 1.

The rally in the past was held in various Eastern Oregon cities, but as the club grew over the years, it settled on John Day, club president Bob Metzger told the Eagle.

"It's a great community with great facilities and phenomenal riding opportunities," he said.

Riders on BMWs as well as other makes traveled from across North America to participate in the rally. Most riders gathered at the Grant County Fairgrounds, where the grassy parkland was dotted with tents.

In addition to activities at the fairgrounds, about 85 riders participated in the Cowboy Lunch Tour on Friday for a lunch and water resource presentation at a ranch near Izee.

Groups headed out to the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument on Friday and Saturday, led by retired park ranger John Fiedor, who has led tours in the past in his 1967 Corvair. About \$1,000 was raised through the geology tour and will be donated to the Juniper Arts Council, Metzger said.

Keynote speeches and seminars were presented at the fairgrounds on various topics, including on-road advanced motorcycle safety training provided by Team Oregon, photography tips headlined as MotoPhoto and exercise suggestions for before, during and after riding called MotoYoga. Celebrated motorcycle writers David Hough and Walt Fulton also spoke.

BMW Riders of Oregon is a nonprofit group that raises money for local charitable and educational groups, Metzger said.



Buyers and sellers meet at the Grant County Fairground during the BMW Riders of Oregon club's annual Chief Joseph Rally on June 29. This sidecar was custom-made from a fiberglass boat body.

Eagle photos/Richard Hanners



Riders at the Grant County Fairgrounds gather for the cowboy lunch tour on June 29 during the BMW Riders of Oregon club's annual Chief Joseph Rally in John Day.

"The Chief Joseph Rally is our main fundraiser," Metzger said.

This year more than \$20,000 was raised at the rally, he said. Ideas were solicited from members and community leaders about which local organizations should receive donations. Metzger said

the club's executive committee will meet in September to make its determination.

Breakfast was served on different days by a group raising money for the Grant County eighth-graders' field trip and by the Juniper Ridge 4-H Club. Three generations of the Johnson

family performed bluegrass music at the rally, raising about \$1,000 for Katie Johnson's Calvary Horse Camp, Metzger said.

"We had a great time and are happy to leave some money behind," Metzger said. "We hope to do it again next year."



Riders depart the Grant County Fairgrounds for the cowboy lunch tour on June 29 during the BMW Riders of Oregon club's annual Chief Joseph Rally in John Day.



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Eagle file photo

Nick Stiner, No. 321, of Mt. Vernon collides with other drivers during the first heat of the annual demolition derby at the Grant County Fairgrounds last year. This year, the event is July 14.

Demolition derby ready to fire up

Blue Mountain Eagle

Drivers are warming up for a smashing good time at the Whiskey Gulch Gang's 29th annual Demolition Derby set for 7 p.m. Saturday at the Grant County Fairgrounds arena.

Organizer Hugh Farrell said in this year's pickup heat they are allowing Broncos and Suburbans, but they can only run on two-wheel drive.

He said they expect a good-sized crowd, as usual.

"It's probably one of the bigger events that happens at the fairgrounds," he said.

Proceeds from the event benefit the Whiskey Gulch Gang's community events, such as the '62 Days Celebration in Canyon City.

At stake in the main event that night are prizes of \$2,000 for first place, \$1,000 for second and \$500 for third. Winners of each heat receive \$200.

Trophies are also given

out to all the winners. Awards are also given for Hard Luck winner and Beauty Contest.

Last year's last man standing was Nick Stiner, with Douglas Hills in second and Cody Frazier in third. The Most Aggressive Driver Award went to Wayne Saul.

Gates open at 6 p.m., and concessions will be available.

The cost for tickets at the gate is \$12 for adults and \$10 for ages 12 and under; presale tickets are \$2 less. Children under 6 are free.

The entry fee for drivers is \$50 per car, which includes the driver and one pit crew person; additional pit passes are \$30 a person.

Presale tickets are available at the fairgrounds office, Les Schwab Tires, Ace Hardware and John Day True Value.

For more information, contact Farrell at 541-575-0329.



Eagle file photo

Cody Frazier of John Day sits in his car after being knocked out of last year's demolition derby.

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