

2005 St. Paddy's Day has something for everyone

Luck O' the Irish Casino Night



The leprechaun has been spotted trying out his card dealing abilities.

Games galore will entertain the Irish and the Irish-for-a-day who feel lucky on Friday evening, March 18. Held at the local Elks Club, the event will offer card games (Twenty-one, Texas Hold'em), the roll of the dice (4-5-6), and a wheel of fortune, all played with specially designed script instead of money.

Paddy Wagon to appear in Great Green Parade



The leprechaun was found testing out the Paddy Wagon.

Another descendent of an Irish original will lead the "Wee Bit O' Ireland" Green Parade this year and following close behind will be the Paddy Wagon, familiar since the early days of this celebration. The expertise of a recent returnee-retiree, Gary Jones, has brought the green vehicle back to life, with his guarantee that it can easily complete the parade route.

Youngsters who participate in the Parade this year might think that the Celebration Committee found the leprechauns' pot of gold. They will each receive a \$1 "gold" coin. All participants have an opportunity to win special recognition, as judges will be looking for the best entry in each category: Irish floats and groups; Irish bicycle/golf cart; antique vehicles and custom vehicles; Irish character and family; musical and dance groups; parade special vehicles; and miscellaneous.

The parade begins at 1 p.m., so entrants need to be signed in at Green Feed at the north end of Heppner by noon. Entry forms and additional information may be requested by calling 676-9961 or 676-5536.

O'Ducky Race



Being ever helpful, the leprechaun works at training a rubber ducky.

Rub a dub dub, no duckys in the tub... at least not on Saturday, March 19. They will surely all be in the water of Willow Creek.

The O'Ducky Race starts at the May Street

Vendors' Square

Local and visiting vendors will offer a variety of crafts and treasures daily during the three-day celebration. The Neighborhood Center hosts the group in its parking lot on Main Street, across from the library-museum building and City Park. More information about the Vendors' Square is available at 676-5024.

Casino night event needs donations

The Heppner St. Patrick's Day Weekend Celebration is just around the corner and one of the events remains in need of strong donor support.

The Luck O' the Irish Casino Night will offer games of chance on Friday evening, March 18. This event, which replaces the long-running auction as the major fundraiser for next year's celebration, requires a large store of items that participants can purchase with their script after enjoying the play at the tables.

To begin their evening of play, participants can purchase special-script packets valued at 30,000 for \$10 each. The script, not currency, is then used at the gaming tables. Participants may also use their script to purchase items at the adjoining "store." Organizers of the Casino Night expect a high demand for donated items as players end their evening by spending their remaining script in the store.

Many local merchants have responded to a solicitation letter and several have indicated intentions to donate items. The committee greatly appreciates these responses, but the need for help is huge and continues. "Donations small and large will be perfect for the evening," says co-chair Sharon Harrison. Private citizens who wish to support the effort are also encouraged to provide donations.

"We need items for the lucky players who will have tons of script to spend. And we need items for the not-so-lucky players who will have a few script left, maybe enough to buy a candy bar or a bottle of soda pop," says co-chair Diana Ball. "We would like to have some large-ticket items, like the two TVs and the two trip packages we have received so far and we hope to receive many small- and medium-priced items for the players to buy."

Donors are invited to take items to the Bank of Eastern Oregon or to the Wheatland Insurance Office. For pick-up of donations, Diana Ball, at 676-5306, is the person to call.

KUMA Coffee Hour

The original St. Pat's weekend event consisted of Pendleton's radio station KUMA's Coffee Hour's broadcasting from the showroom of Jim Farley's car dealership in Heppner. From that simple format of the host's visiting with some of Heppner's first Irish families' representatives, the weekend celebration has grown to include a wide variety of events for all ages. Still, however, KUMA returns each year to broadcast live from Heppner. Now a one-hour-plus variety show hosted by Tom Melton and a sidekick, the program begins at 10 A.M., broadcasting from the Elks building.

In keeping with the emphasis on Heppner's Irish heritage, the Grand Marshall of this year's parade will be one of the first introductions on the Coffee Hour. Other introductions, interspersed with toe-tapping music and some joke telling, will include visiting dignitaries and the Morrow County Fair and Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo Court.

Before a standing-room-only crowd, the Irish and the Irish-for-a-day will entertain with music and humor. Scheduling of all performers for the KUMA Coffee Hour is yet to be completed, but a staple of the show is John Doherty and the Irish Singers. This sometimes-rowdy group can move the crowd to tears, to hand clapping, and to laughter with their renditions of Irish ballads, other songs, and stories. Joining them on stage will be a talented local writer and singer, Joe Lindsay, who has written some energetic Irish-Heppner-related songs for the weekend events. The strings of Mulligan Stew will impress the audience, as these fiddle students of Peg Willis of Pendleton contribute their talents to the hour's entertainment. One segment the audience looks forward to is the brogue contest. Anyone who wishes to compete simply recites a poem, sings a song, or tells a story in his or her best Irish-sounding voice. The audience decides the winners of the cash prizes for first, second, and third place.

And speaking of prizes during the coffee hour, the second drawing for a \$100 pot o' gold will make another commemorative button owner very happy. And it will surely mean a leprechaun is close by.

Weekend Food comes in variety

There is always room for one more at an Irish table and there is always room for one more at the many tables set in Heppner on the March 17-20 weekend.

The Heppner eateries are eager to serve from their menus, each featuring special entrees for the weekend and some vendors will be open on Main Street. Local restaurants include the Pot O' Gold Café on Chase Street and John's, GD's, Willow Creek Diner and Bucknum's on Main Street. The delicatessen foods at Central Market and at the Chevron station offer variety and options, as well.

Setting the atmosphere for the Irish weekend and the camaraderie that goes with that is Mrs. O'Leary's Stew Feed at the St. Patrick's O' Senior Center on Friday. The Methodist Church congregation will be serving from 5-7 p.m.

The Elks Club also offers a buffet on Friday evening and after Saturday's corned beef and cabbage buffet, they provide music.

Saturday morning begins for the hungry early risers at the O' Senior Center, where those volunteers will serve breakfast from 7-9:30 a.m. They will then shift gears and cooking ware, to prepare their homemade soup, bread and pie for the lunch crowd.

Serving up the o'barbecue of chicken and ribs is Kessler's Katering on Saturday, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the City Park.

The St. Patrick Church congregation will start serving their ham dinner Saturday at 4 p.m. at their parish hall. The diners will have the pleasure of music by the Lindsay family.

Into the wee hours of Sunday morning, the volunteer fire department will be ready to serve its Wee Hours O' the Mornin' Breakfast. At the fire hall on Willow Street, the volunteers will begin serving at 10 p.m. on Saturday and stand by with food for the hungry until 3 a.m.

The Nazarene Church congregation will begin the Sunday morning fare at 8 a.m. Their church hall is at 335 North Gilmore, and the cooks will be serving up a hearty breakfast until 10:30 a.m.

Ceili

From 2-4 p.m., on Saturday, March 19, celebrants can experience more things Irish by sitting in at the Ceili (pronounced "kay-lee"). This variety show, held in the warmth of the Elks building, is emceed by Mike Duffy, of the Irish Singers and offers a fast-paced two hours of entertainment.

If it is Irish, it can be humorous and John Doherty and the Irish Singers will be on hand to guarantee laughter. They will continue their repertoire of traditional Irish songs, with their signature sound.

Joe Lindsay will return to the stage to delight the audience with his original songs and renditions of other Irish tunes. Shenanigans and Mulligan Stew have delighted audiences with their fiddle music for several years now and these two groups seem to enjoy their playing as much as or more than the listeners do. Another local group looking forward to strutting their stuff during the Ceili is the Shamrockettes. This will be their first St. Pat's Weekend performance of their routines set to Irish music. A fairly new singing group on the local scene will also be debuting on the Ceili stage this year. The Wannabe's will sing Irish and then maybe answer the question, "Wannabe what?"

Shuttle Service

More than a wee distance exists among some weekend events, so St. Pat's Saturday shuttle service will surely prove useful. Volunteer leprechauns will be making their stops throughout the day, at one-hour intervals, from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m., Saturday, March 19.

Brightly colored sidewalk signs will mark the stops, from the Willow Creek RV Park south of Heppner to the Sheep Dog Trials north of town. The service is free and the drivers are eager to get celebrants where they want to be. They also stress that they will make every effort to maintain the schedule, though unforeseen circumstances might create brief delays from time to time.

The stops include: Willow Creek RV Park, Heppner Hardware (Southeast Main and May Streets), Morrow County Fairgrounds, Sheep Dog Trials at the Thompson Ranch, Riverside Street near the Agricultural Exhibition and parking, Main Street across from the library/museum/city park and the Forest Service Building (west corner of Main and May Streets.)

On Saturday evening, if details can be worked out, the shuttle will also provide transportation to the 7:30 p.m. Campbell Road concert at the elementary school.

Irish Hoop Shoot

What makes a hoop shoot Irish? Maybe its the lineage of the participants, the spirit of competition, or just the fact that it is part of the Wee Bit O' Ireland celebration in Heppner. The shoot is free, sponsored by the Colts basketball program. Organizer Rod Wilson says it is meant to be a fun time for all and a contribution to the weekend's festivities.

The first of three divisions will begin shooting at 10 a.m., in the driveway of the Bank of Eastern Oregon. The age groups will be 5-7, 8-10 and 11-13. Certificates redeemable at local businesses will be awarded to the top three scorers in each division.

Shooting will use a "round-the-world" set-up. Each participant's score will be the total number of attempts he or she needs for making a shot from each of seven spots on the semi-circle.

No matter the weather, Wilson knows the hoop shoot will draw several enthusiastic participants. And he knows, too, that the adults will be enthusiastic about the recent change in location of the hoop shoot, for they will be able to watch from under the protection of the nearby covered walkway.

Celebration button highlights new event

In the fifth year of the "Wee Bit O' Ireland" celebration, a commemorative 2.5-inch button was designed. Each year's button is uniquely designed by a local artist, numbered and sold at local businesses and at the information booth on Main Street. Each year's limited edition sells out, making the button more precious to collectors, of whom few have complete collections.

The \$3 button has three chances of winning \$100 during the weekend of the celebration. Drawings will be held at Friday's "Luck O' the Irish Casino Night" and on Saturday at the morning's KUMA Coffee Hour and at the evening's Campbell Road Concert.

The button designed for 2005 is highlighting the addition of the Casino Night to our events. On the button, our little leprechaun seems to be practicing its card-dealing skills. Proceeds from button sales help to fund weekend activities at the next annual celebration.

Marriage License

Feb. 14: Roland Lee Gaylor, 67, Alturas, CA and Betty Ann Baker, 57, Alturas, CA.

Feb. 18: Isaac Guzman Murguia, 33, Boardman and Eduviges Marquez Guzman, 33, Boardman.

Feb. 23: Daniel Lezama, 25, Boardman and Elizabeth Magallanes, 23, Boardman.

Feb. 25: David Daril Trowbridge, 29, Hermiston and Chrissa Dawn Chapman, 22, Boardman.

Births

Andrew Joseph Stanger- a son, Andrew Joseph, was born Feb. 14, 2005, at Good Shepherd Medical Center in Hermiston, to Ashley and Lance Stanger of Boardman.

Jaycie Johanna Taylor- a daughter, Jaycie Johanna, was born Feb. 14, 2005, at Good Shepherd Medical Center in Hermiston, to Catherine Chuit and David Taylor of Irrigon.

Osvaldo Chopin- a son, Osvaldo, was born Feb. 16, 2005 at Good Shepherd Medical Center in Hermiston, to Magdalena and Abel Chopin of Boardman.

We Print
Business Cards
Heppner Gazette