

Wee bit o' chatter

By Claudia Hughes

There was this Irishman who walked out of Bucknums... no, it really did happen!

'Tis that time of the year, a wee bit early perhaps, but the hills are green and ready or not, the Irish for the weekend will be arriving in County Morrow to be welcomed by the likes of us.

Visitors Thursday, March 11, may head for O' donkey basketball, then move on to another great Father Condon/Joe Lindsay original, "Ireland in Story, Song, and Laughter."

During March 11-14, Heppner features its own Irish Olympics. Spectators or participants can partake in O' donkey basketball, boxing, motorcross, sheepdog trials, run-walks, Iron-Man, bike ride, softball, leprechaun run, bowling, throwing the welly, the bartenders race, kiddie tricycle races, and road bowling, to name some of the events.

It wouldn't be a St. Patrick's celebration without the sounds of Irish music up and down the street, at the St. Patrick's ham dinner, the Elks, the elementary school and during the parade. The first celebration started with the KUMA Coffee Hour, featuring John Doherty and the Irish Singers in Jim Farley's car dealership nearly 30 years ago. The Coffee Hour, like the energized leprechauns, keeps on going and going to include music, stories, and a lively interchange with a priest, lawyer, and a politician on

Saturday morning. Sounds of Ireland continue with the traditional Ceili upstairs in the Elks March 13. Both local and out-of-town talent will be featured. Old Time Fiddlers and The Tillers Folly will be Saturday evening entertainment, thanks to the Morrow County Unified Recreation District. Teens will enjoy disco-club night downtown.

Leprechauns cavort about and challenge visitors to take it all in. One may eat his way through the weekend, purchase a lucky button, view live mannequins, kiss the blarney stone, and enter the Great Green Parade or the Cruz-In. 'Twould be fine if the leprechauns could magically clone Heppner people so they wouldn't be meeting themselves coming and going this fine Irish weekend.

Should one prefer a quieter venue, have a look at the book sale put on by Friends of the Library, tour the museums, check out the local artisans, or St. Patrick's O' Flock and Fiber Show at the Morrow County Fairgrounds (new this year). Need a moment of quiet? Heap up to cemetery hill to view the flood memorial and contemplate the community down below, where you find a mix of people from all walks of life and country heritages pitching in together because they love Heppner.

'Tis lucky we all are and blessed we be. Have a great Wee Bit O' Ireland in Heppner, Oregon weekend.

Arenacross to be held March 13

The St. Patrick's Day Arenacross will be held Saturday, March 13, at the Morrow County Fairgrounds.

Sign-ups are at 7 a.m., a rider's meeting will be held at 8:30 a.m., and races will start at 9 a.m. Sign-ups will also be held at the fairgrounds from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Friday, March 12. Admission is \$5 per person and free for children age six and under.

Entry prices are: \$25 each class for 80-85cc and above including women and 30+ (motorcycles); \$10 each class for 50cc and 65cc (motorcycles);

\$25 each class for ages 12-16, beginner and expert including women and 30+ (quads); and \$10 each class for age classes up to age 11 (quads).

Special events include: PIT Bike Races - entry fee of \$25 for Pit Bike 110cc and Pit Bike 50cc (lottery payout); Razr/Rhino Barrel Race - \$25 best of two runs.

The arenacross is presented by the Morrow County Fair Board and ClearView Auto Glass.

For more information call 541-314-2876 or 541-571-3847.

Cowboy mounted shooting demonstration to be held March 13

The Columbia Basin Mounted Shooters Club, the local chapter of the Cowboy Mounted Shooting Association (CMSA), they will be holding a Cowboy Mounted Shooting Demonstration free of charge on March 13 from 11 a.m. - 12 p.m. at the Morrow County Fairgrounds. The mounted shooters will be practicing all day in preparation for the upcoming North Pacific Regional Championships to be held May 1-2 in Hermiston.

The Cowboy Mounted Shooting Association, better known as the CMSA, is the national organization that governs the sport of Cowboy Mounted Shooting. Dubbed by many as the "ultimate western

shooting and riding challenge," Cowboy Mounted Shooting is sighted in for shooters and horsebackers who want to combine the romance of the Old West, with the excitement of a high speed shooting and riding competition. More precisely, Cowboy Mounted Shooting is a full-tilt timed event, where contestants, many dressed in colorful 1800s Wild West clothing, gallop their horses through varied courses that require firing frontier-era single-action revolvers, while putting their mounts through some rodeo style barrel racing, pole bending, a bit of reining competition, and lots of speed.

Specially loaded



A member of the Columbia Basin Mounted Shooters Club gets in some practice. -Contributed Photo

blank cartridges, which can break a balloon at a distance of about 15 feet, are used in this arena sport, with 5-second penalties for each missed target, and penalties for not following the prescribed course, dropping a

gun, and so on. The action is non-stop, with a rider racing through the course about every 60 seconds.

For more information contact Cindy Griggs at 541-571-1153 or www.cbms shooter.com.

Leprechaun Fun Run to be held March 13

The Leprechaun Fun Run will be held again this year on March 13 for Kindergarten through 6th grade children. Applications are available at the schools and Heppner Chamber office. Each participating child will need a parent's signature before running.

The Fun Run will begin at the Heppner Library/Museum City Park,

down Main Street to the corner of Les Schwab and back to the finish line in the center of Heppner's Main Street. Participants are asked to meet at the park by 11:15.

Follow the Leprechaun and the magic gold dust. A pot of gold dollars is at the end of the fun; one dollar for each participant.

O' Flock and Fiber Event to be held during St. Pat's Celebration



Members of the Heritage Fiber Arts Guild demonstrate spinning techniques at the Morrow County Museum. -Contributed Photo

The Heritage Fiber Arts Guild from Heppner is organizing a new event for the St. Pat's weekend call the O' Flock and Fiber Event. This event will bring fiber related vendors offering hand-knitted scarves, shawls, hats, gloves, handspun yarn, rugs, tanned sheep skins, and live fiber animals to the Morrow County Fairgrounds for a one day sale event on Saturday, March 13.

The guild plans best fleece and best skein of handspun yarn contests, with prizes to include savings bonds from Bank of Eastern Oregon and Community Bank. Dino's Catering will have a food booth along with Italian Ice Cream by DeSalvo's.

Heritage Guild members will present spinning and weaving demonstrations throughout the day. In addition, there will be opportunities for spectators to join in and try their hands at these ancient arts.

Vendors will be open from 9 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. and the Old Time Fiddlers will perform in the building from 6:30 p.m. until the event closes.

Heppner FFA to hold donkey basketball game

The Heppner FFA will take on the Pilot Rock FFA in a game of donkey basketball on Thursday, March 11, at 5:30 p.m. at Heppner Elementary School. During half-time there will be donkey petting and pictures. Also, the alumni will be having a dessert auction.

Ticket prices are: \$8 (adult), \$6 (6th grade-12th grade), and \$4 (K-5th grade) if the tickets are purchased ahead of time. Tickets are available through the FFA program at Heppner High School by calling 541-676-9138. The tickets prices will \$1 more if purchased at the door.

Doors will open at 5 p.m. at the HES gym.

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40-mile Iron Man bike ride to be held

As part of the Heppner St. Patrick Celebration, a 40 mile Iron Man bike ride sponsored by Scotts Cycle and Sports, will be held March 13. The bikers will start at 10 a.m., on the shamrock, in the center of town.

The bikers will cycle to Ione and back. A poker ride can be incorporated for \$5 in this cycling event. A shorter ride has been designed for the day if wanted. The cyclist can sign up at a booth in the park prior to the event.

For more information call Kathy at 541-980-2352 or the Heppner Chamber office at City Hall at 541-676-5536.

Mrs. O'Leary's Irish beef stew feed to be held

Mrs. O'Leary's Irish beef stew feed will be held on Friday, March 12, at the Saint Patrick's Senior Center on Main Street in Heppner between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Beef stew, coleslaw, rolls, beverage and a variety of desserts will be served for \$6-adults; \$2 for children 6-12; and free for children five and under.

The feed is sponsored by the Heppner United Methodist Church.