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Welcome to the Hells Canyon Days and Hells Canyon Jam

Hells Canyon Days have been a Cambridge, Idaho tradition for over 30 years. And for over 30 years, each Hells Canyon Day event has been 100 percent organized and run by volunteers.

Everything from the main Bulls n Broncs event to the Car and Truck Show, are major fundraisers for several organizations, all of which donate their proceeds directly back into Washington County.

Four years ago, the Hells Canyon Jam concert was added to the lineup in hopes of creating new excitement, increased attendance, and more revenue...and it has done just that!

After last year's Hells Canyon Days cancellation due to COVID-19, and so much uncertainty running into 2021, it was nearly impossible to predict what this year would have in store.

But, determined to hold fast to Hells Canyon Days traditions, volunteers with the Cambridge Commercial Club, Washington County Fair Board, and Cambridge Rodeo Association optimistically trudged forward.

And now, after countless volunteer hours, and through enormous support and generosity from businesses near and far, it's looking like this year's turnout will be in record numbers.

The support for the Jam itself has been overwhelming, and it has now been entirely paid for through sponsorship dollars.

This now allows for each ticket sale dollar to be donated directly back to the area's youth and associated programs

to the area's youth and associated programs.

Donations are made to Washington County 4-H and FFA chapters, funds local scholarship opportunities, and helps pay for Washington County Fair

and Rodeo grounds improvements.

As a community we would like to invite you to come and experience all

that Hells Canyon Days has to offer! Visit us for the Car and Truck Show, Pit BBQ, Bulls n Broncs, sidewalk sales, food vendors, and an amazing lineup at Hells Canyon Jam.

There's something for everyone at Hells Canyon Days in Cambridge on Friday, June 4 and Saturday, June 5!

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Cambridge events are back - bigger and better than ever

by Philip A. Janquart

The 2021 installment of the annual Hells Canyon Days and Hells Canyon Jam is scheduled for June 4-5 in Cambridge, Idaho.

Cancelled in 2020 due to COVID, the events are back in full force with a packed lineup of attractions and live outdoor music that has resulted in the sale of over 1,300 tickets as of May 19.

Bulls and Broncs rodeo kicks things off on Friday, followed by the Show and Shine car and truck show on Saturday.

There will be multiple vendors and six bands on Saturday, featuring Reckless Kelly, Micky and The Motorcars, The Dave Nudo Band, Dusty Leigh and the Claim Jumpers, Jesse Dayne and the Sagebrush Drifters, and Corey James.

"It's fantastic!" said Brandi Lincoln of Hells Canyon Adventures and the Cambridge Commercial Club. "Last year we didn't know if people would even show up, and we were concerned that we were really going to put ourselves in the red, so we cancelled."

This year's event is expected to draw crowds from all over Idaho, the Pacific Northwest, and beyond, according to Lincoln who said every dollar made will benefit the city of Cambridge.

"It's been very well supported," she said. "This is a fund-raising event and it's been paid for solely by sponsors, so any amount we make off ticket sales is going directly back into the community."

Some of the money will go to local organizations in need of financial help.

"Most of it will probably be kid related, so that's what makes it cool," added

Lincoln, who is originally from Halfway, Ore.

Hells Canyon Days, and now the Hells Canyon Jam is an important staple to the local community that depends on tourism for its livelihood.

"You're coming off the winter season and in a community like this, where they are really not promoting a lot of winter activities, business is slow and we are trying to get that tourism back up so that businesses are making money," Lincoln said.

The addition of the Hells Canyon Jam, now in its third year, has been a successful and important addition to what is now a true, two-day event, which is on its way to becoming one that pays for itself.

Those working at the event are strictly volunteers and are not being paid, according to Lincoln.

"This year, it's going to make enough money to where the Commercial Club can create a stable event where it wouldn't necessarily have to be sponsor funded, which is really important," she said.

"That says your event has some stability and has steam to move forward, and it is also going to give the Commercial Club funds to support local school groups that might be short money, or to increase scholarships, or to really put money directly back into the community, so you aren't always tapping your businesses."

Security will be provided by the Washington County Sheriff's Office and the local ambulance service will be onsite in the event of an emergency.



The Show and Shine truck and car show is a popular event at Hells Canyon Days in Cambridge. This year promises to be the largest turnout ever from big logging trucks to classic cars. While there, check out the businesses and yard sales around town and the delicious barbecue at the Washington County Fairgrounds. Make a day of it and stick around for the Bulls and Broncs and the Hells Canyon Jam. *Photo by Don Dopf*

Show & Shine truck and car show slated for June 5

by Philip A. Janquart

Don Dopf is no stranger to classic cars.

He had Chevelles, Impalas and more, but always ended up selling them for one reason or another. It is, in part, why he started what is now known as the Show & Shine truck and car show back in 1996.

The event is part of the 2021 Hells Canyon Days celebration scheduled for June 4-5 in Cambridge, Idaho.

Aside from the Show & Shine event, the celebration also features the Hells Canyon Jam and the Bulls & Broncs rodeo.

"There are five or six other car shows around the state on the same day, but a lot of people like to come here because their cars get more attention and it's a more relaxed atmosphere," said Dopf, 71. "Plus, there are a lot of other things going on and they can walk around, check out the vendors, the music, the open pit barbecue, the rodeo and just have a great time."

The 26th annual Show & Shine truck and car show is scheduled for Saturday, June 5, beginning at 11 a.m. There will be over 30 awards given out, beginning at 3 p.m.

Although not as large in numbers

as others going on around the state, the event is going to be a big deal; And yes, there will be big rigs on hand, tricked out to the max.

"The preliminary numbers indicate about 100 cars and 25 or 30 trucks," said Dopf, who conceded that this year's event promises to be the largest ever.

Most years, the Show & Shine event brought in between 70 and 85 cars, with a previous record of 92 cars.

"Everyone really wants to get out because they missed last year," he said.

Registration is by walk-up, at a cost of just \$15, which includes a potential door prize.

"Historically, everyone who has registered has received a door prize," Dopf said. "So, you pay your 15 bucks and it's like a winning lottery ticket because some of those door prizes are worth over a hundred bucks."

Dopf said there are about 50 people who have sponsored door prizes, some of them multiple times, increasing the likelihood of receiving one.

Some of the prizes include automotive products, décor, gift baskets,

lodging vouchers and, Dopf said, potentially a river-rafting trip.

The show is followed by the Rodeo Association's Open Pit Barbecue, which runs from 3:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Washington County Fair Exhibit Hall next to the rodeo arena. Tickets are \$10.

"Most of the people who go to the car show, also go to the barbecue because if you register your car, you can get a two-for-one pass, so for ten bucks, two people can go to the barbecue," Dopf added.

Children six and under are free. There will also be a beer garden and food vendors, but be forewarned: "No coolers, no pets, no exception," according to the event poster.

Dry camping is available at the Washington County Fairgrounds, but reservations are required. Lodging is available at the Frontier Motel and RV Park, (208) 257-4000; the Cambridge House Bed and Breakfast, (208) 257-3555; the Trail Head Guest House, (208) 473-6292; and Mundo Hot Springs & RV Park, (208) 257-3849.

For more event information, log on to www.cambridgeidaho.com/ events, or call or text Kyla at (208) 741-2786.

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Six bands will perform on Saturday, June 5 at the Washington County Fairgrounds rodeo arena for the Hells Canyon Jam. Reckless Kelly will be the headliner for the event with The Dave Nudo Band, Mickey and the Motorcars, Dusty Leigh and the Claim Jumpers, Jesse Dayne and the Sagebrush Drifters performing.

Online ticket sales for the Jam is \$40 for adults and \$10 for youth plus a processing fee. Tickets will still be available at the gate, but are \$10 more.

Want to enjoy all the events? There will be available weekend passes which will include the concert, rodeo, breakfast and barbecue. Cost for adults is \$65 and youth \$25 plus processing fee.

"We are really trying to encourage early sales so we know what we are looking at in terms of numbers," added Lincoln, who said support from the City has been "phenomenal."

For information on ticket prices and sales, lodging, camping, and schedules, log onto www.cambridgeidaho. com or visit the Cambridge Facebook page.



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Fast paced rodeo action is planned at Hells Canyon Days in Cambridge on June 5. Eight seconds can seem like eternity while on a twisting and jumping bull or bronc. Keagan Richards, pictured above, will be one of the competitors in the bronc portion of the rodeo. Richards is a student at Treasure Valley Community College and he recently won the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Assocation Northwest Region title. Bonner Paradis from Council is pictured below riding a bull. The rodeo begins at 8 p.m. and tickets are \$10 at the gate, with kids under six admitted free.

TVCC athlete readies for Bulls & Broncs rodeo

by Philip A. Janquart

It takes guts – a lot of guts – to sit atop a 1,200-pound animal and try to stay upright as it jumps, twists and thrashes around.

Treasure Valley Community College (TVCC) student Keagan Richards, however, has grown accustomed to it.

"My whole family has been doing rodeos our whole lives," said Richards, who is studying Natural Resources and hopes to eventually land a job with the Bureau of Land Management.

Richards, 21, recently won the Northwest Region title for TVCC as a member of the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association.

He is also a member of the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) and has competed in five professional rodeos thus far.

The cowboy – he really does wrangle cattle at his family's ranch in Tropic, Utah – will ride again June 4 at the 2021 Bulls and Broncs event, which is part of the Hells Canyon Days celebration taking place June 4-5 in Cambridge.

The rodeo begins at 8 p.m. and tickets are \$10 at the gate, with kids under six admitted free.

Richards says his family owns about 120 head of cattle, but he also likes working the tourist angle for income.

"When I go back home in the summer, I do trail rides down into Bryce Canyon National Park," he said. "It's a pretty fun job. I like it a lot. You get to meet a lot of new people."

His rodeo path was all but decided

when he was barely a teen, when his dad needed a bronc rider for a rodeo.

"I started out riding sheep, calves and all that, and then when I was 13, I started doing junior high rodeos, riding saddle bronc steers and bareback steers," Richards explained. "My dad is a pickup man and they were doing a little tourist rodeo up there in Bryce Canyon and they didn't have any bronc riders. Dad said, 'You're getting on one tonight,' so I did, and I've been doing it ever since."

Richards had never ridden a bronc and said he was plenty nervous at the prospect of suddenly being thrown into the mix.

"I just thought, 'Well, hopefully everything goes good. Just stay in the middle," he explained. "Long story short, she came out and stubbed her toe and fell over. Well, dad told them to keep her saddle on because I was going out again. I got back on and rode her."

It was eight seconds of what seemed like forever, even for what Richards describes as a "hopper," a "friendly" horse that's "not out to hurt you."

Richards is also a member of the Northwest Pro Rodeo Association. In all, he has won about \$3,200 over the last couple of years.

"Yeah, it's not bad for eight seconds of work," he said of his winnings, which are all tallied together when the PRCA determines who will compete in which rodeos.

His last PRCA rodeo was May 29 in Casper, Wyo.

Most recently, he has also been competing in team roping at the collegiate level.

When asked if he has a job waiting for him after he graduates, Richards made his plans fairly clear:

"Not yet," he said. "I don't quite want to get a real job yet, if you know what I'm saying. I still want to have a little fun."

For now it looks like rodeos, tourist rides and working the family cattle ranch, which affords him one of his favorite meals.

"Oh yeah, I love steak!" he said.



Welcome to all our fiddle festival visitors

Welcome back to our old friends and to our new visitors. We are happy you have joined us for a fun and busy week in our community. This is a time for our community residents, organizations and visitors to volunteer and come together to help put on a great week of entertainment for people of all ages. I hope you will take time to enjoy many of the activities going on in our area and attend the Contest.

If you are returning to our community from previous years, you will see some changes. The 2020 Fiddle Festival was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, so there are two-year's worth of changes to be seen since you were here last. Instead of a temporary grocery store, Ridley's has a new facility on E. 6th Street next



to Bi-Mart which, in addition to the supermarket, includes a full-service hardware store. What was the temporary grocery store on State Street is the Weiser Memorial Hospital's office complex.

Memorial Park is again a center of activity and is full of vendors and lots of talent on the stages. The City Park is being used again this year to allow families and friends to get together to share music and picnics. Check our local media for the schedule of events at Memorial Park throughout the week.

There is a lot going on this week at the "Institute" as well, so watch for the signs and listen for the sounds. If you have an opportunity take in some of the Weiser River Music Festival being held across the Weiser River Bridge. Entertainment will be non-stop for the weekend. Don't miss the parade on Saturday and the great entertainment at the Memorial Park stage.

Take time to enjoy the historic architecture in our downtown and along many of our neighborhood streets.

Like many communities this time of year, we have street work going on across town to provided better walkability, safety and flow of traffic in two of our busy areas. Thank you for your patience in these areas.

Our local Weiser Senior and Community Center provides a great breakfast along with a venue for fiddlers to showcase their talent. The Elks Lodge is a good place to enjoy dinner or you can enjoy a meal at one of our local restaurants. Take time to attend some of the additional activities as well as the contest itself.

Take a few minutes to visit the many other businesses in our community.

All of our downtown businesses and businesses along the Hwy. 95 corridor look forward to your visit.

Our two coffee shops are friendly places to grab a good cup of your favorite hot or cold beverages and visit with some of the locals. The Metropole is located in downtown Weiser in Creative Homes shop and Black Sheep Coffee is located on Highway 95. They can also be a great source of information. Don't forget to sample Angela's cookies when you pick up a drink at Black Sheep Coffee on Hwy 95. You'll be back for more.

As you walk downtown be sure to stop and have some candy, meals or ice cream at Weiser Classic Candy, Legends on Main, Ruszoni's, Golden Horse, Idaho Pizza, Homestead Cafe, Domino's, JEBS Corner and McDonald's.

The Cook Shack on Seventh is located at the corner of W. 7th and Pioneer, straight down from the Fiddle Contest.

Breakfast is served all day at Farmers Cafe located on the corner of Hwy. 95 and East Commercial. They are open from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Subway is located in the Campo's Fast and Easy convenience store for your favorite sandwich.

Weiser has two hardware stores, K Hardware located on North State St. and Ace Hardware in the Ridley's Family Market building.

Look for Fiddle Week specials at all the businesses this week. There will be music in most of the venues during Fiddle week as well.

Arrow Creek Clothing has moved into Second Chance Consignment on Hwy. 95 south of town. Second Chance has also added several other fun corners of handmade and local products. It's just a short drive away.

Stop in town at Peoples Furniture for great buys and browse the Bee's Box inside of Peoples for great accessories for your home or home-away-from home. Stop across the street to see Joe and Narie at Picker's Paradise and look over their huge selection of guitars, banjos, and ukuleles. You will find some great music going on in the store throughout the week.

Next door to Joe and Narie's is the wonderful Creative Designs which has lots of great items and a talented upholsterer. In addition several local providers offer hand-made gifts. We have stores with antique clothes, toys and other second-hand treasures. Walk on down to the Flower Basket and enjoy the beauty of the flowers and gifts Dana has. Check out Station 30 at 30 E. Commercial St. for vintage decor, collectibles and more fun.

If your favorite four-footed friend needs a bath don't miss the Pampered Pooch in the heart of downtown Weiser. Bike trouble? Stop in at JD'Z in the Mini-Mall.

Another great stop is Marbella's Pottery Painting, Mosaics and Wine. This is a fun place for kids to make something to take home and even for us older kids. They also have a wonderful garden in the back to enjoy your favorite adult beverage in a comfy setting. Legends on Main and Ruszoni's have also added areas to enjoy the weather, beverages and music.

Artful Bon's on West Idaho St. carries art supplies and offers crafternoon classes, paint nights and projects for children.

Stop at Pioneer Express for the best chicken and Jo-Jos, a cool drink or ice cream on your way to and from the Contest area on West Seventh.

Thanks for coming and we hope you enjoy your time with us. Have a safe and fun filled week.

Glad to have you with us,

Randy Hibberd, Mayor City of Weiser

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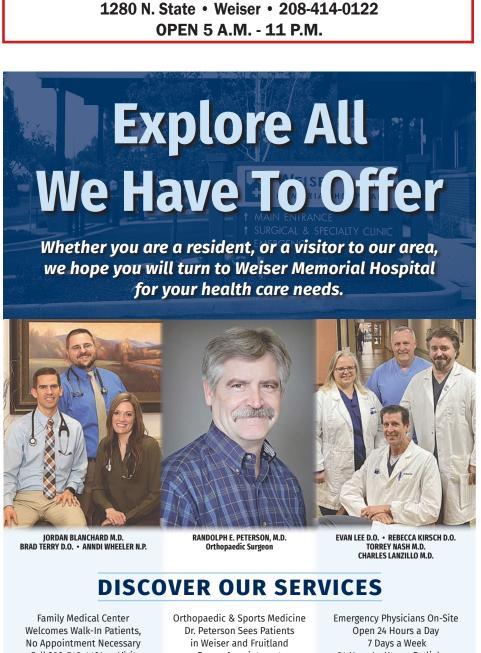
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Katrina Nikolayeff, center, won her fifth National Grand Championship title in 2019. She is pictured with accompanists from left Joey McKenzie and Makaela Shippy. Pictured below is Teo Quale, the reigning junior junior champion who successfully defended his title and took first place in 2019. He is pictured with accompanists, from left Tristan Clarridge and Jim French.

COVID-19 forces Fiddle Contest format changes

by Philip A. Janquart

The 2021 National Oldtime Fiddlers' Contest and Festival is scheduled for June 23-26, but this year's format has changed due to the continuing effects of COVID.

Traditionally, contestants from around the country gathered in Weiser to compete onsite at Weiser High School's auditorium, and many have chosen to do so this year, but others will compete via a live stream program provided by organ-

In Weiser, there will be no audience, and contestant performances, along with those performed online, will be livestreamed to judges.

"Contestants may compete virtually from the location of their choosing, using a reliable Internet connection," according to Cindy Campbell, an event organizer. "Those rounds will be livestreamed according to the randomly pre-selected order of play along with the contestants who are competing in the auditorium."

Fiddlers were forced to stay home last year due to COVID-19 lockdowns that occurred nationally, forcing organizers to cancel the event altogether.

This year's hybrid event is the first of its kind in the Fiddle Contest's long his-

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, followed by local health districts, recently relaxed mask guidelines for those who have been vaccinated.

People who have been vaccinated are no longer required to wear masks at gatherings or practice physical distancing, but the announcement came too late for organizers in Weiser to resume the contest under its traditional format.

"At this point, we probably could do business as usual, but it's a huge gamble

because it's just opened up, and it's pretty open here [in Weiser], but there are other areas where some people are still scared to death, so if they don't show up, we don't sell tickets," said Fiddle Contest Executive Director Sandra Cooper.

Changing things now, she added, would be akin to starting the whole planning process over, which would be costly and may not give people enough time to make travel plans.

There is an audience we have to have," Sandra said. "We have to pay the sound guy and then we have to have the complete sound system for the auditorium, and it just quadruples our expense, and, right now, we already have everything in place."

Sandra said the number of onsite registrations is already fairly light and contestants, at the time of her interview, had less than 10 days to register.

There are many factors that come in to play because of COVID," said Sandra's husband, Dennis, a local musician and business owner. "Many school districts are going way into, or through, the summer. The reason summer break started out west is because the kids worked on farms in the summer.'

Complicating things further, some essential behind-the-scenes collaborators wouldn't be available to lend their services.

'Our sound guy moved to Indiana," Sandra added. "We would have to find a new sound guy, so I think we made the right decision this year."

Contestants and members of the public can access the livestream program link by logging on to www.fiddlecontest.org, or on the National Oldtime Fiddlers' Contest and Festival Facebook page.





The banjo contest is a fun way to start Fiddle Week in Weiser. Gary Eller puts on the contest with the winners receiving some gas money and the real prize is a homemade fruit pie made by Sally Carpenter. The banjo contest consists of a banjo player with accompaniment of a fiddler. Pictured above is Eller accompanying banjo player John April.

Banjo Contest really not that 'Serious'

by Philip A. Janquart

Gary Eller comes from West Virginia, and he almost takes it as an insult if you don't immediately assume he is a banjo player by default.

'Heck, I'm from West Virgina!" when asked.

Raised in the tradition of Appalachian story songs, the Weiser resident and 2021 Banjo Contest organizer prefers looser, more audience-involved musical performances, which is the whole point behind the Weiser Banjo Contest.

"In a lot of ways, it's the polar opposite of the Fiddle Contest," Eller said of the contest. "We get goofy and have novel events like the hogcalling, and [Weiser Airport Manager] Jim Metzger wows the crowd with his auctioneering ability."

The contest, scheduled for Sunday evening, June 20, in front of Slocum Hall in Weiser, is an event that encourages "Hootin' and Hollerin'," according to Eller who said the contest is usually a two-day event with four different sessions.

Scheduling for the event proved difficult post COVID, but Sunday promises to be entertaining.

"The prizes include a little bit of gas money, but the real prizes are Sally Carpenter's hand-made fruit pies," he said. "That's what people really go for. It's a long-standing tradition. We keep the stakes low on purpose and have a lot of fun. It's all about having a blast."

This year, in particular, the audience is invited to take part in judging the performances, which are open to any genre of banjo playing.

"The audience is going to determine the winners this time," Eller explained. "We are just going to have some tip jars with names on them and we will pass them around and whoever lands in the top three, in terms of money that gets stuffed in, those are the top three winners."

On tap for the contest is a group called, "The Old Farthings," which Eller says has a completely different meaning when you take the "h" out of "Farthings."

"To be an old farthing, you have to be over 70; you have to know a million old, old songs, especially humorous songs; and you have to play something that has a banjo head on it," explained Eller, who is an Old Farthing himself. "That includes guitars and bass. If you want to be an old farthing, you have to

meet those three criteria."

"That's all we'll do Sunday night this time, from 7- 10 p.m. or so," he added. "As long as we're having fun, we'll keep going.'

Eller came to Weiser in 2005 after a 30-year career working for the Los Alamos National Laboratory in Los Alamos, New Mexico. He has a PhD. in chemistry and first began visiting Idaho in the 1970s on rafting trips.

He later worked in Washington state on a government project.

"I had a two and a half year detail to the Tri-Cities, working on a nuclear high-level waste tank problem, the most expensive environmental problem in the world," he said. "And, my first daughter went to Seattle University, so I've been coming through here for over 40 years.'

Eller has since worked on his Idaho Songs Project, collecting early Idaho folk songs.

"I grew up hearing story songs in the Appalachians," he said. "I love them, songs about hangins'

and shootins' and train wrecks, and good stuff like that. When I came here to Idaho, I found nobody knew those kinds of songs."

ranged interpretive books, all of them with audio CDs.

"At one time, you could count the number of true Idaho songs on one hand," Eller said. "But I started this project looking for them and now I have a couple hundred of them. They got lost along the way, but they were back there. My cutoff is 1923, when radio came to Idaho."

The bulk of the songs come from early Idaho cowboys and sheepherders.

Eller, who plays several instruments, has traveled throughout Idaho for the Idaho Humanities Council and Idaho Commission on the Arts, performing Idaho-centric

He is a past board member of the National Oldtime Fiddlers' Contest and founded the Weiser Banjo Contest and Weiser Banjo Camp.

He has since documented over 200 Idaho songs in 19 topically ar-



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A 'hootin' and hollerin' time will be held on Sunday, June 20 in front of Slocum Hall at the banjo contest. Sally Carpenter, left, provides handmade fruit pies as the coveted prize to the winner of the contest. Jim Metzger helps raise funds and wows the audience with his auctioneering skills. Photos by Nancy Grindstaff





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Fiddle making is like an 'addiction' says craftsman

by Philip A. Janquart

It all starts with a good piece of wood. That's just one of the secrets to crafting a fiddle, according to Ken Pollard, 63, who is passionate about the instrument.

A musician since his youth, he decided 15 years ago that he wanted to start making his own fiddles, in addition to repair-

Now he's making a living at it, crafting beautiful, hand-made instruments from his home in Nampa, Idaho.

"It's really cool," said Pollard, who graduated from the University of Utah with a master's degree in physics and the University of Washington with a doctorate in medical imaging. "I started doing repairs in 1996, then I decided it was time to learn how to make one."

After about 10 years on his own, Pollard decided to attend courses at a school in California to supplement his own knowledge

He is one of a handful in the Treasure Valley that hand makes fiddles, violins, and violas and has orders from all over the United States.

"This is what it is, in the beginning," he said, as he held up what, at first glance, appeared to be a simple, triangular chunk of firewood.

He turned the piece over in his hands, sliding his palm across its surfaces, assumingly checking for flaws, then awed at its near perfection.

"Yeah, this is a nice piece," said Pollard who has also taught physics and mathematics as an adjunct professor at Boise State University and the College of Western Idaho.

"I'll split this down the middle and join them on the ends," he said. "Then, you start cutting away.'

Most fiddles are made using spruce for the top and maple for the back, according to Pollard who said the combination of the two species of trees creates a specific acoustical effect.

Some of the wood he uses comes from the Pacific Northwest, but much of it he orders from places like Slovakia and Romania due to its quality and characteristics. He recently paid about \$400 for pieces he'll use to build two violins.

The process takes 200 hours but the work isn't finished once the fiddle has been constructed. It takes another 50 hours to seal it and apply the varnish.

"The sealer is made in the tradition of the 16th Century Italy, using a combination of egg whites and gum arabic," Pollard explained. "You don't want varnish sinking into the wood because you want to maintain the resonance."

Pollard charges in the neighborhood of \$4,000 for a custom made fiddle due to the time, labor and cost involved.

Just building the templates he uses to form the instrument's shape takes time and skill, and the blocks for the forms are never reused.

The forms are handmade to represent different periods. Some of them include Stradivarius models from the 17th and 18th centuries and Brothers Amati from the 16th century.

In comparison, factory fiddles are made by several people who focus on a single part of the violin and every piece, for every violin, comes out exactly the same.

Pollard's fiddles are purely custom, each with its own almost undetectable imperfections, but some might say that is exactly what makes them special.

"It's handmade, and you spend so much time with it, you are so intimate with it, you know everything that is wrong with it," Pollard said. "By the time you are done, if you can say, 'I'm not completely unhappy with it,' that's a good thing."

And, those decorative lines that parallel the fiddle's curvy shape? It's not paint: They are razor thin pieces of wood inlaid into the body.

Violin or fiddle: what's the diff?

In comparison, violins can be up to 25 percent smaller than the viola, which is longer, wider and taller.

The viola has a deeper sound and because of its size and C string, it can play a fifth lower than the violin, Pollard said.

In case you are wondering, and most people do, there is little to no distinction between a violin and fiddle.





The wood Pollard uses for his fiddles come the Pacific Northwest, but more often than from Bulgaria and Romania. He splits the piece, joins them together at the ends and carves out the shape by hand using wood working tools.

synthetic, but most bow hair comes from horsetails.

The hair comes from places like Mongolia or Siberia where horses are a food source, according to Pollard who also rehairs bows, which is usually done once per year. He charges about \$70 for the service. "The horses have been slaughtered and the tails are a bi-product that would otherwise be thrown out," he

said. "If you feel bad about

your job, think about the guy who is plucking

> horse hair and sorting it all day." Pollard added, quite glibly, that the test hair comes from stallions because mares pee on their tails. His friend,

Phil Stanley, in Boise, specializes in making bows.



Fiddle maker Ken Pollard, above, stands with one of his finished products after about 250 hours of labor.

trombone player in grade school and high school, Pollard says his love for the fiddle was something that evolved over time, beginning in high school when he borrowed his school's violin and started playing on his own.

> Making them has only served to amplify his appreciation for the instrument.

"It's a really bad career choice, but I like it," Pollard said of his craft. "Love it? Yeah, I suppose I do. I hate to say it, but it's almost like heroin or something: you can't stop doing it, and it ruins your life." For more information, call Ken Pollard at (208) 466-3633, or log onto www.

owyheemountainfiddle.com. For bows, call Phil Stanley at (208) 344-1321.

purely from sheep gut. Today, they consist of a string core wrapped with wound metal, although you can still buy strings made with a sheep gut core.

For

ries, strings

were made

centu-

The Bow Some bow sticks are wood, others



Pictured, below right, is Joe Young's first attempt at building a guitar, which he sold to a buyer in Mesa, Ariz. for \$1,100. It is modeled after a Paul Reed Smith electric guitar that the buyer boxed for Young's BlackBird Custom Guitar. The buyer used it in a Motor City 5, 50th anniversary gig in Phoenix. Above, Joe Young works in his home shop on his next project. In the background, hanging on the wall, are several templates he uses to build his custom guitars.

Local man learns the art of guitar making, builds side biz

by Philip A. Janquart

Joe Young loves the smell of wood.

His penchant for woodworking likely had its beginnings when he was a youngster, watching his dad restore furniture in his home shop, first in Boise and then in Cambridge.

"It's always been something that fascinated me," Young explained. "Dad was into restoring antiques, rocking chairs and other stuff. It was nothing professionally, but for him, it was kind of a hobby."

For Young, and most likely his dad, working with wood has been therapeutic, perhaps a type of medication that comes from working long hours, in six-day blocks, as an ER nurse.

Young, 42, who once managed the ER at St. Luke's Hospital in Fruitland, says he prefers to be in the action, but when it's over, he wants to be working in his shop, building something, but what?

The need to decompress, and to own a "really, really" nice guitar without spending thousands of dollars, not so long ago melded into an idea that has led to something special.

The hobby musician, who, along with his wife Narie, re-

cently bought the guitar shop Picker's Paradise in downtown Weiser, decided it was time to try his hand at building the guitar he dreamed about.

He never thought it would end up like it has.

"There was a guitar I had been looking at that was \$6,000 and there was just no way I was going to be able to afford it," Young said. "So, I thought, 'Well, I wonder if I can make it."

The guitar was a Paul Reed Smith (PRS) model, which meant the bar was set high from the get go.

"I knew it was probably not going to be awesome, but maybe it would be close," he said. "I thought it was worth a shot."

It was a learning process by fire and when he was done, although he was tired and maybe a little frustrated, Young had what he thought was a good, albeit a first, attempt.

"I just wanted to get rid of it," he said. "It's really a process of making mistakes and learning how to stop and think about how you are going to fix it. You think, 'did I just ruin this, or can I salvage it?"

He found a buyer online and sold the electric guitar for the nominal price of \$1,100, to a guy in Mesa, Ariz., thinking that would be the end of the story, but it wasn't.

"I just wanted to recover the money I put into it," Young said. "I wanted to sell it and never see it again, but while it was in transit, the guy I sold it to sent me a message

"He said he was super excited for the guitar to come and that he had the real thing I modeled it after, and I was immediately worried. I thought, 'Oh, man, there is no way he is going to keep this."

The guitar eventually arrived and Joe received another message from the new owner

"The first thing he said was that he was 'One happy camper," Young said, with raised eyebrows. "He said he'd been messing around with it, and it looked amazing and that it plays better and sounds better than his real PRS, and I thought, 'What?"

The buyer boxed the PRS and used Young's guitar to open for the MC5 (Motor City 5) 50th anniversary gig in Phoenix.

That was the turning point and BlackBird Custom Guitars U.S.A. was born.

"I thought, 'Shoot, I guess I'll build another one," he said.

And, that's just what he

did, recently finishing his first commissioned instrument for a local buyer, which turned out every bit as good as the first, only better.

One of the challenges with his new side venture involves he and Narie finding a better way to juggle the new guitar store, work at St. Luke's, and raising their five kids.

In addition, the Young's will be hosting their first major event called "Rock the Park" to take place July 3 at the Weiser City Park. There will be several bands, food trucks and vendors. Watch for more information in future editions of the Weiser Signal American.

"We're trying to figure out how to better manage our time," he said. "This will probably never be more than a two guitar per-year thing."

But no sooner had the words come out, than Young began hatching new ideas.

"One thing that might be exciting as I get better at this is to try to build electric, solid body mandolins, but design them after famous, full-sized electric guitars like the Les Pauls and Fender Strats (Stratocaster); miniature versions of those, but mandolins," he pondered. "I think that would be the next thing for Black-Bird."





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Lots of big changes for this year's National Oldtime Fiddlers' Contest!

Due to COVID-19, this year's event will be a hybrid contest

by Cindy Campbell
Option 1:

The registered contestants and their accompanists will compete on the stage in the Weiser High School Auditorium. There will not be an audience.

The contestants will play their round and it will be livestreamed to the judges and also be available for public viewing at the link on the National Oldtime Fiddlers' Contest website www.fiddlecontest.org or on our Facebook page National Oldtime Fiddlers' Contest and Festival.

The contest will be streamed for your viewing pleasure and ticket replacement will be by donation only. Please donate!

Option 2:

Contestants may compete virtually from the location of their choosing, using a reliable Internet connection. Those rounds will be livestreamed according to the randomly pre-selected order of play along with the contestants who are competing in the auditorium.

The contestant instructions will be emailed to them during the first part of June.

Our Emcees:

Emcees include Layna Hafer, Weiser, Idaho; Rob Henrikson, Battle Ground, Wash.; and Nikole Scribner, Denver, Colo.

Each will be using a computer to keep the show rolling from the stage in Weiser to people that are at home, wherever they may be

We will have three judges, with a fourth judge rotating to give others time off

Our judges are Jason Fewkes, Boise, Idaho; Mabel Vogt, Potlatch, Idaho; Tonya Hopkins, Houston, Texas; and Starr McMullen from Corvallis, Ore.

Two of the judges will be located in the high school library, watching the livestream while the other two might be in Weiser or in their homes.

All contestants will be competing in real-time and everyone will be judged in the same manner.

The changes are exciting, but mind-boggling: Score sheets will be sent by computer to our tabulation room at Weiser High School.

As of Friday, May 21, 2021, 97 people have registered to compete this year at Weiser.

May 31 was the deadline to register as a contestant so the contest committee has time to make sure everyone knows the schedules.

The tentative schedule is only a guesstimate.

We will be able to accurately update the schedule after registration closes.

Below is the tentative schedule:

- Small Fry and Junior-Junior will compete starting at 8 a.m. on Wednesday, June 23.
- Finals for the Small Fry and Junior-Junior Divisions will be Wednesday evening at 7 p.m.

Also included with the show on Wednesday evening will be the youngest fiddler and special entertainment by certified showcase winners from other contests.

The contest will be followed by the awards announcements in the top five in each division.

• Seniors, Senior-Seniors, and Adults will com-

pete starting on Thursday, June 24, at 8 a.m.

• Finals for the Seniors, Senior-Seniors, and Adults will be Thursday evening starting at 7 p.m.

Also included with the show on Thursday evening will be the oldest fiddler, special entertainment by certified showcase winners from other contests, plus a special group.

The contest will be followed by the awards announcements for the top five in each division.

- Junior and Young Adults will compete starting on Friday, June 25 at 8 a.m.
- Finals will be Friday evening starting at 7 p.m.

Also included with the show on Friday evening will be a special appearance by the Junior Jammers plus two other show specials. The contest will be followed by the awards announcements for the top five in each division.

• Grand Champions will compete starting on Saturday evening, June 26, starting at 6:30 p.m.

The Grand Champions will play all three rounds on Saturday. Also included with the show on Saturday evening will be three other show specials. The contest will be followed by the awards announcement for the Grand Champion division and the accompanists top five.

Because of early publication of the Fiddle Edition of the Weiser Signal American, we are unable to provide the exact times and the names of the entertainment groups.

Keep track of us on our National Oldtime Fiddlers Contest and Festival Facebook page.

2021 Fiddle Contest judges



Jason Fewkes - Boise, Idaho



Tonya Hopkins - Houston, Tex.



Mabel Vogt - Potlatch, Idaho



Starr McMullan - Corvallis



The National Oldtime Fiddlers' Contest parade grand marshals have been chosen and the honor goes to a family that has contributed a lot of good deeds to the Weiser Community. Toby and Dana Clary will be this year's grand marshals. Each tear the Slyters and Clarys host the community Thanksgiving dinner. Pictured from left are: D'Ann Slyter, Susan Slyter, Trip, Tatum, Dana, Quincy and Toby Clary.

Local business owners to serve as parade Grand Marshals

by Nicole Miller

Toby and Dana Clary have been named Grand Marshals for the 2021 Fiddle Parade to be held Saturday, June 26 in Weiser.

The time of the parade has changed this year and will be held one hour earlier at 11 a.m.

The parade is part of the National Oldtime Fiddlers' Contest and Festival, which runs from June 22-26

The parade committee selected the Clarys due to their amazing community involvement, positive attitudes and inspiration to others.

Dana Clary, a Weiser native, said she was both shocked and honored to be selected. Fiddle Week holds for her many great memories while growing up.

"To be selected for this nostalgic piece of our community is just a rare blessing," she said. "I am so thankful and humbled."

Toby Clary was also shocked and humbled, he said.

The Clarys both expressed appreciation for the many people who do so many great things in, and for, the community

Although they both feel like their involvement is minuscule compared to the many acts of service of others, they said that they nonetheless appreciate that acts of service that are seen as a deciding factor for the honor.

Dana shared that her favorite part of fiddle week is the sense of "coming home"

So many people choose this week to come visit, walking among the booths, and eating yummy carnival food. Seeing old familiar faces she hasn't seen in years is always fun and special, she said.

"The week draws the community out and together in lots of different ways and it's always a full, busy week for the whole family," Dana said.

Toby is not originally from Weiser, but in the last 16 or more years that he has lived here, the whole event has been something he has looked forward to, he said

In addition to the vendors at the park, selling their wares and delicious food, Toby is always blown away by the amount of talent that makes their way to our small town.

Toby's favorite thing is the gatherings and jam sessions at Stickerville. Watching the musicians not only displaying their talents, but sharing them, and experiencing them with each other is a wonderful and unique experience, he added.

As one of the biggest events in Weiser all year, the parade, the Fiddle Week finale, is full of memories for Dana of feeling the warmth of the sun while shielding her eyes to see all the different floats, cars, and people.

Her kids were always excited about the horses, the fire trucks spraying water, and the music, not to mention the candy and giveaways. Dana describes it perfectly as the exclamation point to a week full of fun.

Toby said that to him, parades, especially ones we get to see in our small town, represent Americana beautifully: a celebration of community coming together with our Nation's colors prominently on display.

On top of running The Flower Basket for the last several years, the Clarys also recently took over ownership of both Small Town Fitness and The Body Shop gyms. These businesses keep the Clarys very busy and give them the opportunity to work with the community on a daily basis.

In addition to their local businesses, the Clary family spearheads the annual community Thanksgiving Dinner.

Dana shared that as she transitions to her next phase of life, when The Flower Basket sells, she looks forward to finding even more ways to give back to the community.

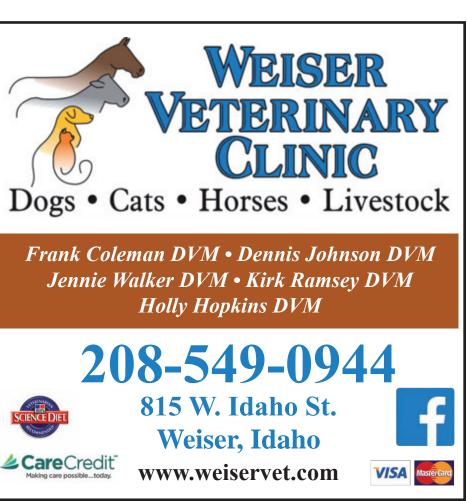
Weiser came together and supported Dana's mom through her cancer treatments and fully blessed Dana throughout her youth. She wants to teach her children to be looking for, and be willing to do, acts of service wherever they can.

Like the rest of the community, Dana is looking forward to Fiddle Week returning following the one-year COVID break.

She really hopes the community of Weiser will once again feel the excitement and magic of Fiddle Week and support the entirety of the community











Kids Day will be held on Thursday, June 24 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The street between Idaho and Main will be blocked off to set up fun activities for the children to enjoy. From a 60-foot obstacle course to face painting Patrick Nauman, owner of Weiser Classic Candy has a fun

A Fiddle Week favorite is Kids' Day

by Nicole Miller

The block of State Street between Main and Idaho is turned into a street-side carnival of games, activities and treats.

Luckily, with the return of the Fiddle Festival, the Kids Day tradition will also be back.

Weiser Classic Candy is sponsoring this annual event and invites all kids and families to come celebrate on Thursday, June 24 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Organizer Patrick Nauman said there are approximately 15 to 20 activities planned, with a variety including snocones, cotton candy, a 60-foot obstacle course, miniature golf, a dunk tank, basketball toss, money booth, face painting, bake sale, and a water feature, offering fun for everyone.

The vendors' space is reserved for nonprofits and offers them a chance to raise money for their cause, as well as provide a fun activity for kids.

At just .25 cents per ticket, the activities are a great way for families to have affordable fun and help organizations raise important funds.

ROSE Advocates, COPS, and the Greenhouse are just a few of the local non-profits that will be raising money for their organizations.

Weiser businesses will also participate in a ping-pong drop for three age groups on Thursday at 11 a.m. There will be both cash prizes and businesses-donated prizes.

All funds raised from the ping-pong drop will go to the Weiser Classic Candy Entrepreneurial Scholarship fund.

To add to the kids' day fun, Bonnie Akbar owner of Artful Bons, will have sidewalk chalk art.

With people looking forward to getting back to a sense of normalcy, Nauman said he is expecting a crazy amount of kids to show for this highly anticipated event.

One of the great things about kids' day is that it brings families downtown.

While spending time downtown together, families can also check out local businesses and all that they have to offer.

Many businesses will be having specials to help celebrate the day, so it's a great time to offer them much deserved support.

Memorial Park Stage Entertainment

Memorial Park is the venue for loads of fun during fiddle week in Weiser.

There will be vendors and daily activities held throughout the week.

There will be nightly entertainment Friday and Saturday.

There are plenty of acts in store for those visiting the stage at Memorial Park, but a new opportunity awaits for Weiser pickers who are invited to show off their skills at the first-annual "Riff-Off Contest," which is already under-

The contest, which runs from June 1-25, gives contestants the chance to show off their picking, shredding, riffing, rocking, and jamming skills on a guitar, banjo, mandolin, or ukulele by submitting a recorded video of themselves playing to the provided backing track

See Riff-Off rules at the Pickers Paradise Facebook page.

Memorial Park stage schedule Tuesday, June 22

1 p.m.-2 p.m. – Bruce 'Looselip' Pinson

2 p.m.-3 p.m. – Richie Reinholdt 3 p.m.-4 p.m. – Gary Eller "Stock Handlers of Idaho."

4 p.m.-4:30 p.m. – Emma Tolman 4:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m. – Britt Arnesen

5 p.m.-6 p.m. – Kip Hicks and Friends 6 p.m.-7 p.m. – Dan Doshier 7 p.m.-8 p.m. – Old Farthings

8 p.m.-9 p.m. – Chicken Dinner Road Wednesday June 23

1 p.m.-2 p.m. – Stu Carlson

2 p.m.-3 p.m. – Milly Raccoon

Bolos

4 p.m.-5 p.m. – Skookumchuck Bearclaws

5 p.m.-6 p.m. – Britt Arnesen

6 p.m.-7 p.m. – Roundhouse

7 p.m.-8 p.m. – Idaho Songs Project

8 p.m.-9 p.m. – Wilder **Thursday June 24**

1 p.m.-2 p.m. – Ken Worthington and Friends

2 p.m.-3 p.m. – Dennis Cooper 3 p.m.-3:30 p.m. – Mike Greenburg

3:30 p.m.-4:00 p.m. – Emma Tolman

4 p.m.-5 p.m. – Jim and JoAnn Trio 5 p.m.-6 p.m. – Nocturnals

6 p.m.-7 p.m. – Skookumchuck Bear

7 p.m.-8 p.m. – Blue Road Ramblers

8 p.m.-9 p.m. – Just for Kicks

Friday June 21

1 p.m.-2 p.m. – TBD

2 p.m.-3 p.m. – Skookumchuck Bearclaws

3 p.m.-4 p.m. – Sharon Rekward and Friends

4 p.m.-5 p.m. – Lisa Johnson

5 p.m.-6 p.m. – Kip Hicks & Friends

6 p.m.-7 p.m. – Dennis Cooper 7 p.m.-8 p.m. – Wrench Monkeys

8 p.m.-10 p.m. – Ace of Diamonds Band

Saturday June 22 1 p.m.-2 p.m. – Betty and Ozark Moun-

tain Music

2 p.m.-3:00 p.m. – Jim and JoAnn Trio 3 p.m.-4 p.m. – Pickers Paradise "Riff-Off" Finals

4 p.m.-5 p.m. – Lisa Johnson

5 p.m.-6 p.m. – Nocturnals

6 p.m.-8 p.m. – Raketooth

3 p.m.-4 p.m. – Don Burnham and the 8 p.m.-10 p.m. – Lyle Sinclair Band



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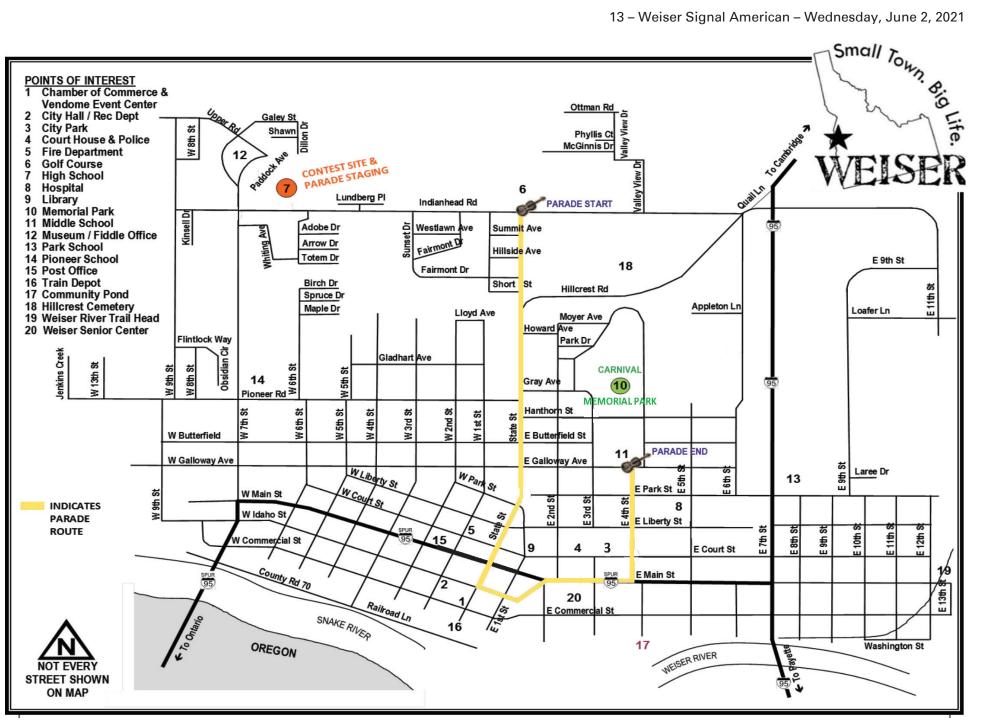
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This map shows key locations around Weiser to enjoy fiddle week events. The route for Saturday's fiddle parade is also noted in yellow.

Activities, sightseeing and fun to be had

National Oldtime Fiddlers Hall of Fame

Visit the Hall of Fame inside historic Slocum Hall, 2235 Paddock Ave., and read all about the great fiddlers who have won the NOTFC in years past. Enjoy some light refreshments and take a tour. You can learn about the contest's early days and how the grassroots fiddlers began the competition.

Breakfast daily at the Weiser Senior and Community Center

Visitors, regulars and locals are all invited to enjoy a hearty breakfast every morning during fiddle week at the Weiser Senior and Community Center, located at 115 East Main, from 8-11 a.m.

Money raised from the breakfast helps local charities and the center. Breakfast of pancakes, hashbrowns, eggs and bacon will be served Monday through Thursday. Biscuits and gravy, hashbrowns, eggs and bacon will be served on Friday and Saturday. Each breakfast comes with your choice of coffee, juice, milk or tea. Breakfast is \$6 per person.

The center will hold their weekly bingo game on Monday, June 21 during Fiddle Week. Doors open at 6 p.m. with games starting at 7 p.m. and going until the fun is finished.

Weiser Elks Lodge #1683 Serving Dinner

The Elks will serve dinner Monday through Saturday from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. all week except Thursday. The dining room will close at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday for bingo. Each evening will feature different main dishes, including tacos, Sloppy Joes, hamburgers, spaghetti, and Carolina pulled pork. Pool and entertainment every night. The lodge lounge is open daily at 4 p.m.

Snake River Heritage Center Has History

Weiser's local museum offers a tremendous collection of artifacts that document the history of Weiser and Washington County. The museum houses many exhibits, including the Native American exhibit, the ranch room, the schoolroom, telephone room, camera room and the Intermountain Institute room. The museum has a superb new exhibit for the Knights of Pythias, and of course, there are souvenirs and books for sale, including signed copies of the Walter Johnson book. There is so much to see. Plan to spend a couple of hours in H.M. Hooker Hall, 2295 Paddock Ave., to take it all in. The building is part of the Idaho Industrial Institute founded in 1899. Guided tours will run daily during Fiddle Week from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Check out the first floor hallway that features "Weiser the Way it Was."

Downtown Kids Day is a load of fun

On Thursday, June 24, a block of State Street in downtown Weiser will be blocked off so children can have fun on Kids Day. There will be tons of fun activities for all children - a splash pad, 60-foot inflatable obstacle course, miniature golf, dunk booth, face painting, sno-cones, cotton candy, basketball toss, money booth, bake sale and much more. There will also be a ping-pong ball drop at the Depot with three age groups starting at 11 a.m. Plan on spending most of the day downtown for the annual Kids Day. Events start at 10 a.m. and go until 2 p.m. It's inexpensive, fun, and all for kids.

Movie in the park

On Friday, June 25, an outdoor movie will be presented by Bee Tree Folk School. The movie will be "Chicken Run" and will take place at Weiser Memorial Park at dusk. This is a free event, donations are welcome.

Get your Bikers Rodeo on

Stop by to check out a variety of motorcycles or sign up for the rodeo yourself. The Bikers Rodeo takes place after the parade on Saturday, June 26. The event will take place at Ole's Tavern south of Weiser. Signup begins at 2 p.m. and the rodeo begins at 3:30 p.m. Sponsored by Copper Lounge and Ole's Tavern.

Check out the yard sales

For those who love a good yard sale, many Weiser residents plan yard sales to coincide with fiddle week. Weiser will have plenty around. Look inside the Weiser Signal American for a listing and enjoy the hunt for treasures.

Local Artwork

For all of the art lovers out there, the Four County Art Guild offers a self-guided art walking tour. Participating businesses have teamed up with the Guild to help showcase our local artistic talent. The work of artists from Washington, Payette, Adams and Malheur counties is on display at several locations around downtown. Some of the pieces are for sale while others are just for visitors to enjoy.

Businesses where you can see the art include Weiser Classic Candy, Ruszoni's Pizza, Marbella Pottery, Painting, Mosaics and Wine, Weiser Public Library, Legends on Main Pub and Grill, Weiser Signal American newspaper and a short drive to Second Chance. We also have featured artists showcased at Zions Bank, Columbia Bank, and the Weiser Senior and Community Center. You can pick up a brochure, which includes a map, at any one of these local businesses and enjoy the art tour!

Fiddle Parade is the best

The 2021 Fiddle Parade promises to be filled with fun and entertainment. It's always a great part of fiddle week. See the horses, the fire engines, and the floats. This year's theme is "Together Again." The parade will be held Saturday, June 26 at 11 a.m. Please note this is an hour earlier than previous years. Look inside this edition for more information on the parade.

Top players at the Banjo Contest

A banjo contest will be held Sunday, June 20 at Slocum Hall outside on the lawn. Four banjo-style categories and a fiddle/banjo duet category. There will also be some novelty contests.

Register by emailing Pgaryeller@aol.com.

Gem State Fiddlers

The Gem State Fiddlers will playing Monday through Saturday at the Weiser Senior and Community Center from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. It's a lot of fun for musicans and audience members.

Weiser River Music Festival

The Weiser River Music Festival will start with a launch party at Ruszoni's Pizza in downtown Weiser Thursday, June 24, at 5 p.m. The concert Thursday night will be free.

Friday, June 25, the music will start at 1 p.m. at 606 Highway 95 (next to Steve's Hometown Motors).

On Saturday, June 26, the music will start around 2 p.m., after the fiddle parade in downtown Weiser. Tickets are available online and at the gate.

Enjoy music, vendors, beer garden at Memorial Park

Many activities are planned at Memorial Park. There will be free entertainment located on the stage, a beer garden and vendors. The park will open on Tuesday, June 22, and run throughout the week from 10 a.m. to

Many entertainers are planned to perform. Please see the schedule in this edition for tentative times of each performer. Check future issues of the Weiser Signal American for changes in the schedule.



The Weiser River Music Festival will kick off its fourth annual festival on June 25-26. The fun begins on Thursday at Ruszoni's parking lot featuring local acts, plus Pixi and the Partygrass Boys. Friday the event moves to the 16 acre venue located southeast of Weiser off of Highway 95. Bands performing will be Keller Williams. the Traveling McCourys and Hillstomp on Friday. Saturday's headliner will be the Del McCoury Band. Local artists will also be entertaining including Stella Beams. Around 20 vendors will be selling food, t-shirts and a variety of merchandise. Photo by Thereasa Rasmussen

Weiser River Music Festival adds life and atmosphere to Weiser

by Philip A. Janquart

When local business owner Nick Reed saw numbers at the National Oldtime Fiddlers' Contest and Festival begin to drop, he decided it was time to do something.

Scheduled for June 23-26, the Fiddle Contest will once again be complimented by the Weiser River Music Festival slated for June 25-26.

Now in its fourth year, the festival features Bluegrass acts from around the country, with the Del McCoury Band, the Travelin' McCourys, Grateful Ball, and Pixie and the Partygrass Boys heading the lineup.

Also on tap are Scott Pemberton, Hillstomp, Free Peoples,

Stella, Ryan Curtis, Elwood Haney, Dave Henry Trio, and Andrew Sheppard.

"I grew up in Weiser and everyone kind of knows how the Fiddle Festival used to be, with a lot of people coming into town," Reed explained. "I wanted to get that vibe going again. The goal all along is to bring people back to Weiser for a festival-type atmosphere."

Outdoor music is a winner at any festival or event, according to Cambridge Commercial Club member Brandi Lincoln, who helped bring in live bands to boost attendance at the annual Hells Canyon Days event in Cambridge, Idaho.

'When you look at all the dif-

ferent things you can do for an event, outdoor music tends to be pretty successful," she told the Weiser Signal American.

The Weiser River Music Festival is expected to draw about 350

"It's grown every year," said Reed, who owns Ruszoni's, located in downtown Weiser. "We have a mix of bluegrass, country, and Americana, so it's a really

The event kicks off on Thursday at 5 p.m. in the Ruszoni's parking lot and will feature local acts, plus Pixi and the Partygrass

Playing Friday is Keller Williams, the Traveling McCourys, and Hillstomp. The bands will perform at the 16-acre venue located east of Weiser, on Highway

The Del McCoury Band will headline on Saturday at the same location, followed by the Traveling McCourys, Scott Pemberton and others.

Local vocal artist, 20-yearold Stella Beams, who recently put out her first single, "Wait for You," will perform, as well. She currently attends the Berklee College of Music.

There will be about a dozen vendors selling a variety of merchandise, including t-shirts, knick-knacks, and food. Area favorite, Ogawa's Wicked Sushi, Burgers and Bowls from Ontario, Ore. will also have a booth. or at the festival.

"The reason we do this is for the community," Reed said. "We are all in this together. We just want to see something cool for the community."

Fellow organizer Zane Beams, 48, said people can expect a quality event.

"It's cool because you go from a grass field to a full-on venue to a full-on, high-class, high-dollar, professional sound stage and lots of people showing up," he said. "We don't do it for the money. It's a big deal to do something like this in our small town and get those caliber of people to come and play."

Tickets may be purchased online at weiserrivermusicfest.com

Weiser's 'Stella' to perform at Music Festival

by Philip A. Janquart

Local artist and Weiser native Stella Beams is performing live at the 2021 Weiser River Music Festival June 25-26.

She will appear on stage in addition to headliners the Del McCoury Band, Keller Williams, and the Travelin' McCourys at a venue off Highway 95 near Weiser, a 16-acre field that transforms into a sort of music central for three days during the Fes-

"We expect to have about 350 people down there listening to Bluegrass, Country, and Americana," said event organizer and local business owner, Nick Reed. "It's a really cool vibe."

Stella, 20, recently wrapped up her sophomore year at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, Mass.

It is there that she is furthering the development of her musical identity while learning to transform disappointment into something positive.

Sent home during the COVID pandemic, Stella, as she is known to her growing fan base, used the time away from school, and the experience of apparent love lost, to pen her first single, "Wait for You," which was released in November 2020.

The song, she said, in an interview prior to its release, is an assemblage of emotions based on personal experience and those of close friends.

It presents as a mixture of pop accents

mixed with the folk-style influence that, in part, defined her musical experiences growing up in Weiser's Bluegrass tradition.

Being sent home turned out to be something like fate and, according to locals who have seen her perform since she was little, "Wait for You" is just the beginning for the humble recording artist.

"I have so much more that I want to share," said Beams, in the November 2020 interview. "My writing has improved immensely. I have such a deep appreciation for artists and their work, and I listen to music in a completely different way now."

Although not a complete surprise, Stella's dad, Zane, said his daughter's success so far took him a little off guard in the beginning.

"It's a pretty cool story," he said. "Your kids have dreams and you say, 'Ok, yeah.' Then one day it turns into, 'Dad, I need \$160 to apply for this school. Next thing you know, she gets invited to audition and you're, like, 'Ok, we've never been to Boston before; Let's go to Boston.""

Stella, who did not participate in choir during high school, performed in front of a two-man panel and came out feeling good

"She goes and tries out for these two older guys who had no idea where Weiser, Idaho was," Zane explained. "They asked her what kind of music school she went to and she told them that she didn't, that



Local musician Stella Beams will perform at the Weiser River Music Festival to be held June 25-26. The kickoff will be held at Ruszoni's on Thursday, June 24 at 5 p.m. with music on the field south of Weiser next to Steve's Hometown Motors Friday and Saturday.

where we live it's all about sports. In the east, you can go to a liberal arts school right from the start."

None of that held Stella back.

"So, she walks out of this audition and says, 'I did really good. I played a couple of originals for them and they really liked it," Zane said. "That was on Dec. 8, 2018."

Stella was told she would find out whether she was accepted sometime in

January 2019, but received her acceptance letter only 10 days later, on Dec. 18, her 18th birthday.

And the rest is history, although it would seem the sky is the limit for the young art-

"It's just a really cool story," Zane said. "I tell parents: If your kids have dreams, don't squash their dreams because I have a kid who made hers happen. She did it."



Pictured, above, is a contestant participating in a Biker Rodeo's beer keg race, using only the front wheel of his Harley-Davidson to direct it down a course. Photo by Alex Chavarria

Hogs to invade Ole's Tavern

by Philip A. Janquart

If you don't have the stomach for hogs, big and small, congregating in one area, you might want to steer clear.

For the rest of us, the much-anticipated 2021 Weiser Biker's Rodeo is set to rumble on Friday, June 25 at Ole's Tavern in Weiser.

The long-time event – some say over 30 years – is organized and sponsored by The Copper Lounge and Ole's Tavern.

It promises a wide variety of activities, beginning Friday with a Kick-Off that includes tricycle races on Ole's Oval

The race features four-man teams, but participants must bring their own tricycle. A trophy will be awarded following the event.

Sign ups are from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., with the race starting at 6 p.m.

The Weiser Biker's Rodeo follows on

Sign ups are at 2 p.m., with the event starting at 3:30 p.m. There is a \$1 gate fee. Kids 10 and under are admitted free.

This year's Grand Marshal is Carlos

Part of the proceeds will go to local non-profit organizations and scholarship

There are open spots for vendors, but space is limited. Cost is \$40. The price climbs to \$50 after June 1, so call soon to reserve a space.

Call Deb at (208) 405-5139, or the Copper Lounge at (208) 414-0411 for more information.

Limited camping space is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Call Greg at (208) 550-5973, or Ole's Tavern at (208) 414-9945 to reserve a

No outside drinks or coolers are permitted. A variety of food will be available for purchase.

"This is a great event, it's been going on here for 30 years," said Copper Lounge owner Deb Aberto. "It's just fun, family entertainment. It's reasonable, something you can do and it brings people who love riding together.'

'Together Again' is this year's parade theme

Parade will start one hour early at 11 a.m. on Saturday, June 26

One of the most memorable summer community events is the Weiser Fiddlers' Festival Pa-

It serves as the culminating event in a week full of activity, which always brings the fiddlers and community together for a great celebration of not only music but also unity.

The fiddle parade is returning this year to its traditional glory with the same route, but starting one hour earlier, at 11 a.m.

The parade this year has been themed "Together Again."

All entries are encouraged to be of a creative nature. The goal is to have the parade be a fun and entertaining activity for spectators and participants.

Use of music and/or Fiddlers is strongly encouraged.

"Best of Theme" entries for each category will receive a Rosette Ribbon Award.

Those interested in participating in the parade are asked to fill out the entry form available at www.fiddlecontest. org by June 15. No late signups will be accept-

Each participant can choose one category for their parade entry: Decorated bicycle (ages 12 and under), dance/ drill team, 4-H/FFA, political, float (musical or otherwise), non-profit, commercial/business, agriculture, school/preschool/daycare, car(s), ATV/motorcycle, equestrian.

Lineup is at Weiser High School, starting at 9:30 a.m. Entries with horses will meet at the staging area in the empty lot across from Rolling Hills Golf Course.

Judging for each of the categories will take place at 10 a.m.

The parade will follow the same route as it has in years past, beginning at the staging areas and then heading south on State Street before turning East onto Idaho, and finally turning North on E. 4th street before finishing at Weiser Middle School.

Committee Chairman Patrick Nauman said there is a lot of excitement for the parade's return. With the Weiser Music Festival happening at the same time and the growth it has also experienced, he expects the crowds to be bigger than ever.

"It's a great classic, small-town America parade and a wonderful Weiser tradition," he said.

Nauman first began heading the parade committee eight years ago with the hopes of having the parade return to the top spot for the largest parade in the state of Idaho.

While he hasn't made that goal yet, the parade has grown each year while staying true to its roots as a classic small town American parade.

Weiser Senior Community Center

Fiddle Breakfast



Served Monday-Thursday 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. Monday-Saturday: Pancakes, Hashbrowns, Eggs, Bacon, Milk, Orange Juice, Coffee, Tea.

All for only \$6

online!

Friday - Saturday 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. Biscuits and Sausage Gravy, Hashbrowns, Eggs, Bacon, Milk, Orange Juice, Coffee, Tea.

Raffle Drawing Saturday

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Treasure Valley, thank You for your support for the past 32 years! Our family is proud to serve our community and participate in many worthwhile causes, that give-back to our local communities. It's been a pleasure to be associated with the following organizations.

- The Hometown Dealerships Community Benefit
- Touchdowns for Education
- Special Olympics
- Next Chapter Food Pantry
- Oregon Food Bank
- Joe Malay Ho-Ho Express
- Weiser Memorial Hospital Foundation
- Weiser Elks Food Basket Program
- Weiser Senior Center
- New Plymouth Senior Center
- Weiser Chamber of Commerce
- Payette Chamber of Commerce
- Fruitland Chamber of Commerce
 Ontario Chamber of Commerce
- Ontario Chamber of Commerce
- Local Sports Teams
- · Weiser Valley Roundup
- Weiser River Music Festival
- · Old-Time Fiddlers' Contest and Festival
- Help Them to Hope
- Jr. Golf Foundation
- Treasure Valley Community College
- Boys & Girls Club of Payette & Ontario
- Cambridge Rodeo
- Adams County Fair & Rodeo
- Washington County Fair
- Malheur County Fair & Rodeo
- Payette County Fair
- PCRD Payette County Recreation District
- St. Luke Hospital Fruitland
- St. Alphonsus Ontario
- Corpus Christi Catholic Church
- VFW

SAVE THE DATE

We look forward to hosting the 32nd annual Hometown Dealerships Community Benefit Golf Tournament and Charity Auction.

September 11th: Charity Auction and Taste of Treasure Valley at The Big Red Barn Malheur County Fairgrounds

September 12th: Golf Tournament at Scotch Pines Golf Course in Payette

On behalf of Hometown Dealerships and 142 Employee Associates — We Thank you for allowing us to serve you and our Communities. We look forward to many more years of community involvement.