

Your official guide
to celebrations in
Dallas, Independence
and Monmouth

4TH OF JULY CELEBRATIONS

A special section of the Polk County Itemizer-Observer
June 29, 2016 • Section C

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, AMERICA!

The smell of freshly spun cotton candy, roasting corn, sunscreen and sulfur can only mean one thing: It's time again to celebrate America's birthday, and nobody does it better than Polk County.

Whether you prefer a more laid-back atmosphere or the excitement of adrenaline-rushing carnival rides, one of our three cities will have something for you.

Celebrations kick off Friday night at Independence Riverview Park with a showing of "Jurassic World." Many food trucks also will be open Friday night, so grab a blanket and get ready to enjoy a dinosaur movie of epic proportions — picnic optional.

Don't forget to brave the carnival rides on Friday for only \$1.

Saturday, festivities continue in Independence with the annual Hometown Celebration, a time set aside for locals to come out and enjoy the parks — and an evening fireworks display — without fighting the crowds of tens of thousands that gather there for the Fourth.

Monmouth's new Art in the Park festivities open at noon, with a Community Art Show at its new home in the fire hall across from Main Street Park on Warren Street, and arts and crafts for children.

Three bands will take the new stage at the amphitheater at Main Street Park throughout the day on Saturday, all locals.

Sunday, you'll have a choice between Monmouth and Independence. With the cities so close together, it isn't difficult to explore what both have to offer. Church services will open the festivals in both locales, followed by concerts and activities.



Thousands of people line the streets for the Monmouth-Independence Rotary Grand Parade every year in Monmouth and Independence.

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In Monmouth, the Willamette Valley Concert Band will play its patriotic concert Sunday night. In Independence, the band Romance will fill the air with Latino beats.

The evening wraps up in Independence with a showing of "McFarland, USA."

Unfortunately, Falls City will not host its traditional Third of July festivities this year, as volunteers and money were lacking. We hope to see it make a come-back next year.

Monday, Dallas, Independence and Monmouth have something going on.

From the Polk County Firefighters Breakfast in Independence, to the Mini Marathon in Monmouth, followed by the children's parade and the start of the Monmouth Independence Rotary Grand Pa-

rade — which finishes at Riverview Park — the morning is packed full with events.

In Dallas, the festivities begin at 5 p.m. at Roger Jordan Park. The celebration, called Freedomfest, is shorter than it has been in the past, with no sanctioned barbecue contest taking place in the morning and afternoon.

But that doesn't mean Dallas residents have to leave town to celebrate the country's birthday.

Famous food trucks, Black Rock BBQ, El Pique and JT's Food Truck will be serving dinner, and Johnny Wheels and the Swamp Donkeys will take the entertainment stage at 5:30 p.m.

The Dallas Fire Department will launch the fireworks show at dusk.

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2016 Fourth of July Celebration Events

MONMOUTH FOURTH OF JULY FESTIVAL All events at Main Street Park unless noted

SATURDAY, JULY 2

- 10 a.m. — Festival opens
- 10 a.m.-5 p.m. — Bounce Houses open
- 10 a.m.-5 p.m. — Vendors open
- Noon-12:30 p.m. — Monmouth Taiko Drummers
- Noon-5 p.m. — Community Art Show
- Noon-5 p.m. — Beer and wine garden
- 1-3 p.m. — Shinkle Band (country)
- 3:15-4 p.m. — Zumba in the Park
- 4:15-5 p.m. — New Horizons Willamette Valley Orchestra
- 5 p.m. — Festival closes

SUNDAY, JULY 3

- 10 a.m. — Festival opens
- 10-11:15 a.m. — Church in the park
- 10 a.m.-6 p.m. — Vendors open
- Noon-1:30 p.m. — Phil Ward and the Way Walkers (Christian)
- Noon-3 p.m. — Children's arts and crafts (in gazebo)
- Noon-6 p.m. — Bounce Houses open
- Noon-6 p.m. — Community Art Show
- 2-4 p.m. — Castletown (Celtic)
- 2-9 p.m. — Beer and Wine Garden opens
- 4:30-6:30 p.m. — Albany Swing Band (big band)
- 6:30-8:30 p.m. — Willamette Valley Concert Band
- 9 p.m. — Festival closes

MONDAY, JULY 4

- 9 a.m. — Festival opens
- 9 a.m.-5 p.m. — Vendors open
- 9 a.m.-3 p.m. — Community Art Show
- 10 a.m.-2 p.m. — Classic Car Show
- 10 a.m.-5 p.m. — Bounce Houses open
- 11:30 a.m. — Mini-Marathon
- 11:35 a.m. — Children's Parade
- Noon — Monmouth-Independence Rotary Grand Parade
- Noon-5 p.m. — Children's Arts and Crafts (in gazebo)
- 1:30-4:30 p.m. — Charlie Horse (rock)
- 5 p.m. — Festival closes

INDEPENDENCE WESTERN DAYS All events at Riverview Park unless noted

FRIDAY, JULY 1

- 6-10 p.m. — Carnival opens
- 10 p.m. — Movie in the Park: "Jurassic World" PG-13

SATURDAY, JULY 2

- Noon-7 p.m. — Kids activities
- 2 p.m.-midnight — Vendors open
- 4 p.m. — Watermelon eating contest
- 7 p.m. — Diva Dance
- 8:30-9:45 p.m. — Petty Fever (Tom Petty tribute band)
- 10 p.m. — Hometown fireworks show (\$1)
- 10:45-11:30 p.m. — Petty Fever (Tom Petty tribute band)

SUNDAY, JULY 3

- 10 a.m. — Church service in the amphitheater
- Noon — Carnival opens
- 2-10 p.m. — Vendors open
- 6 p.m. — Aaron Crawford (country rock)
- 8:30-9:45 p.m. — Romance (traditional Latino)
- 10 p.m. — Movie in the Park: "McFarland, USA" PG

MONDAY, JULY 4

- 6-10 a.m. — Pancake breakfast (at Polk County Fire District No. 1)
- 11:30 a.m. — 44th annual Mini-Marathon
- Noon — Monmouth-Independence Rotary Grand Parade
- Noon-7 p.m. — Kids activities
- Noon-midnight — Vendors open
- 8:30-9:45 p.m. — Infamous Souls (classic rock)
- 10 p.m. — Fireworks (\$1)
- 10:45-11:30 p.m. — Infamous Souls (classic rock)

DALLAS FREEDOMFEST

MONDAY, JULY 4

- 5 p.m. — Food Trucks (Roger Jordan Community Park)
- 5:30-8:30 p.m. — Swamp Donkeys (Roger Jordan Community Park)
- Dusk — Fireworks (Roger Jordan Community Park)

• POLK COUNTY 2016 INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS • Published by the Polk County Itemizer-Observer Newspaper

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The fireworks displays during Independence's Fourth of July celebration are spectacular sights.

Celebrating Independence with a bang

What better place to celebrate America's Independence Day than in Independence, Oregon? The city makes a four-day event out of America's birthday this year, kicking things off on Friday with a movie and the carnival, both at Riverview Park and Amphitheater. The movie, "Jurassic World," is free, and the carnival will feature rides for \$1 on Friday.

Saturday is perhaps the favorite day for residents: Independence's Hometown Celebration.

"The idea behind it is it gives the locals the opportunity to come out and see the fireworks show and participate in the festivities," said Janice Thompson, chair of the Western Days commission. "A lot of them don't like to come out on the Fourth because of the traffic."

It's a special day for Independence, with a watermelon-eating contest, concerts, pyrotechnics and all the vendors. Children's crafts open at noon.

"Christal Sperling from Curves will be hosting Diva Dance," Thompson said. "It's geared toward women, but it's not just for women. It's a really fun dance workout."

Tom Petty tribute band Petty Fever will end the day before the fireworks at dusk. A \$1 fee is collected to view the fireworks.

On Sunday, the Western Days commission decided to do something new, Thompson said.

"We have a very big Hispanic culture between Independence and Monmouth," she said. "We decided to tailor Sunday toward our Hispanic community."

A church service starts the morning in the amphitheater before the vendors and carnival open at noon.

Local Latino band, Romance, will perform, along with an evening concert by Aaron Crawford, country music artist. The

movie, "McFarland, USA," will be shown in the amphitheater.

On the Fourth of July, the park comes alive after the Monmouth-Independence Rotary Grand Parade makes its way down Main Street.

During the parade, people may purchase bracelets for \$1 for admission to the fireworks show. The bracelets also are available from Les Schwab in Independence.

"People who have those bracelets are directed to the front of the line or an alternate entrance," Thompson said.

Bracelets are only good for the Fourth of July, not for the Hometown Celebration fireworks show on Saturday.

Classic rock band Infamous Soul will entertain the crowd of thousands before and after the fireworks show.

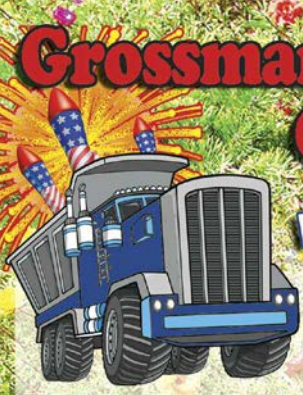
Thompson has been on the Western Days commission for years and ends up camping out at the park all week long.

"My favorite part is probably the fireworks on the Fourth of July," she said. "Not the show itself, but during that time, we sit back and look out over the park and see there's not an empty space in the park except for under that big old tree where no one could see."

To see the families who come out and enjoy the four-day holiday bash that Independence and the volunteers on the Western Days commission put on makes the hard work worth it, Thompson said.



The Fourth of July grand parade is one of many highlights during Independence's Fourth of July celebration.






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The Monmouth-Independence Rotary Club Grand Parade children's parade provides a memorable experience.

Celebrating the Fourth in style

The Fourth of July in Monmouth is the epicenter of the Monmouth-Independence Rotary Grand Parade and the annual Mini Marathon. It's where all the fun starts on the Fourth, but Main Street Park is bustling with activities all weekend.

Monmouth's Hometown Stars and Stripes begins on Saturday with Art in the Park, a new focus on arts and crafts. The community art show will be moved into the old fire house across the street from Main Street Park.

The festival opens at 10 a.m. with vendors in the park.

Bounce houses return, but will be placed near the gazebo and splash fountain rather than the lawn area.

With the amphitheater freshly built, and new grass trying to grow in, Community Development Manager Mark Fancey said the lawn will have to be watered each night.

New restrooms are completed near the area with the bounce houses, so it will make a convenient location, Fancey noted.

Speaking of the new amphitheater, the first band to open on Saturday will be Monmouth Taiko Drummers, which will put the acoustics to the test, Fancey said.

Saturday's lineup will comprise all local acts, he said, with the Shinkle Band at 1 p.m. and the New Horizons Willamette Valley Orchestra at 4:15.

Children's arts and crafts will be a theme throughout the weekend, starting with activities from noon to 5 p.m. on Saturday. Sunday, Home Depot volunteers will work with children on projects from noon to 3.

Fancey said Home Depot often organizes children's building projects that include things like making birdhouses.

Sunday morning, leaders from a number of different local churches will hold a service in Main Street Park at 10 a.m.

Sunday's entertainment lineup includes a Christian band, the Albany Swing Band, and Castletown, a Celtic band.

The evening wraps up with the Willamette Valley Concert band, directed by Richard Sorenson at 6:30.

On the Fourth, Monmouth is the place to be for the annual classic car show on Ecols Street, the Mini Marathon starting line, and the children's mini parade, which takes off at 11:35 a.m.

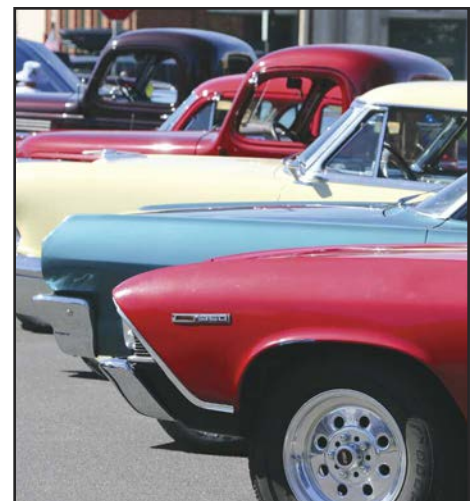
Thousands of people line the streets for these events, putting chairs out early — sometimes days in advance.

Some local businesses have requested

residents wait until after business hours to place chairs for the parades on Monday to allow patrons access to the sidewalks.

More arts and crafts will continue throughout the afternoon until 5, when the festival closes for the year.

At dusk, Monmouth residents can either get comfortable in their backyard, or head down to Independence Riverview Park to enjoy the fireworks show.



Classic cars will be on display on Ecols Street on Monday.

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Johnny Wheels and the Swamp Donkeys will perform until 8:30 p.m. on Monday evening.

Freedomfest aims to please

Dallas' Fourth of July celebration looks to improve experience

Freedomfest 2016 won't have a barbecue contest, but it will have plenty of good food — and music, too.

Event host Dallas Area Visitors Center is scaling back Freedomfest and holding it in one location, Roger Jordan Community Park.

The sanctioned barbecue contest won't be taking place in Dallas City Park in the morning and afternoon of July Fourth. Instead, the celebration will kick off at 5 p.m. when local favorite food trucks Black Rock BBQ, JT's Food Truck and El Pique will set up to serve dinner in the park off LaCreole Drive near the Dallas Aquatic Center.

Another Dallas fan favorite, local band Johnny Wheels and the Swamp Donkeys, will begin playing at 5:30 p.m. The band performed last year at Freedomfest and

has played after Saturday's parade at Summerfest the last two years.

Between the food trucks and entertainment, Dallas residents can make an evening of waiting for the highly anticipated fireworks show.

Chelsea Metcalfe, executive director of the visitors' center, said she took an infor-

mal poll of children at a recent event in downtown Dallas and found that the revived fireworks show rivals the Summerfest parade in popularity. It seems adults feel the same way.

"Weekly, people will catch me in the store and say 'We love the fireworks show,'" Metcalfe said.

If you want to find your spot for the show early, Swamp Donkeys will provide entertainment until 8:30 p.m., leading up to the fireworks.

This year, the pyrotechnics display, to be conducted by the Dallas Fire Department, will come with an extra bang. Metcalfe ordered a larger show than last year's, so if you were impressed with the 2015 display, this year will be must-see.

"I'm excited to see it this year," Metcalfe said.



A fireworks show will bring Freedomfest to a close on Monday.



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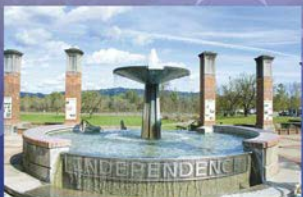





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Tennis tourney set for 43rd year

Tournament attracts new, experienced players alike

Patty Youngren has been a part of an annual tradition for more than three decades — the Monmouth-Independence Fourth of July tennis tournament.

“I moved here in 1985. I played against Mary Christensen in my first competition,” Youngren said. “She and Phil Schroeder, who ran the tournament at the time, crushed my partner and I. Mary has become a lifelong friend.”

Now entering its 43rd year, Youngren, who will help run the tournament with Paul Hirt and Ron Warkentin, are hoping others experience what Youngren discovered about tennis — that playing the sport can lead to far more than just getting into better shape.

This year’s tournament will take place Saturday and Sunday at Central High School and Western Oregon University. Brackets are available for singles, doubles and mixed doubles play. There are also different categories based on skill level, so no matter if you fancy yourself the next Novak Djokovic or are just picking up a racket for the first time, the tournament offers a chance to hit the court.

“It would be great to have new players out,” Youngren said. “Tennis is leveled into different flights, so a new player isn’t trying to strike a hundred mile an hour serve.” Organizers hope for a reverse in a recent trend, which has seen fewer players turn out.

“Tennis has seen a drop in competitive play in the last several years,” Youngren said. “People shift in how they spend their time. I’m hoping the high school kids get out and practice tournament play. It’s fun to see them competing



The Monmouth-Independence Fourth of July Tennis Tournament has brackets for all ages and skill levels so all tennis players can have an enjoyable experience.

and mixing together off-season. One couple who has played together from Corvallis for several years calls the tournament their little secret. Hopefully, we’ll have enough turn out to make it enjoyable.”

Sign-ups for the tournament are due by noon on Wednesday (today).

“We have learned that we should be flexible with the draws, the weather, etc.,” Youngren said. “We have learned that people like to play in two events, but don’t like to play in three or more rounds. We hope to limit play to two matches in any given day, unless opponents agree to a different set up.”

All participants must bring a can of balls. Cost is \$15 for singles and \$25 for doubles. All proceeds from the tournament

will go to the promotion of community tennis and Central High’s boys and girls tennis teams.

For many of the participants, the mix of supporting the community and getting a chance to take part in a shared love of tennis has helped make the Monmouth-Independence Fourth of July tennis tournament one tradition worth coming back to.

“Tennis is a wholesome way to get to know your neighbors,” Youngren said. “Tennis is something the whole family can do. It’s a fun experience because of the community of tennis players. Many players have played in this tournament for a number of years. It’s great to get together. It’s also a great time for newcomers because it is low-keyed.”

Tennis Time

What: Monmouth-Independence Fourth of July Tennis Tournament.

When: Saturday and Sunday.

Where: Matches will take place at Western Oregon University and Central High School.

Cost: \$15 singles, \$25 doubles.

How to register: Registration is available through noon on Wednesday (today) at www.oregontennis.com.

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The Monmouth-Independence Mini-Marathon features a 2.6-mile run along the Fourth of July parade route.

Mini run, big time fun

Looking for something unique to do this Fourth of July? How does taking a run through Monmouth and Independence — in front of thousands of cheering fans — sound?

That's the experience you'll get at the 44th annual Monmouth-Independence Mini-Marathon.

The 2.6-mile run follows the Grand Parade route and leads runners on a mostly downhill course from Monmouth City Hall to downtown Independence.

"It's a fun, special event to run the route just before the big parade," race coordinator Terry Cable said.

The distance is short enough that new and experienced runners alike can tackle easily, but long enough to give participants a sense of accomplishment and enough time to soak in the adoration from those watching.

"As fitness has become more ingrained in our society, a little 2.6-mile race like this isn't intimidating to anyone. Families



The mini-marathon features a mix of dedicated runners and those looking for a unique experience.

run together, and we definitely have people who make it a Fourth of July tradition," Cable said.

The run is scheduled for 11:30 a.m. on Monday. Cost is

\$15 for adults and \$5 for children ages 9 and younger, if you register online before Thursday at www.eclecticedgeracing.com.

But if you're a last-minute

On your mark...

What: 44th annual Monmouth-Independence Mini-Marathon, a 2.6-mile, mostly downhill race that begins in front of Monmouth's City Hall and ends at the Old City Hall building in Independence.

When: July 4, 11:30 a.m.

Cost: \$15 for adults and \$5 for children 10 and younger in advance; \$20 and \$10 on day of race until 10:30 a.m.

For more information:

Terry Cable, 503-930-2360; www.eclecticedgeracing.com.

entry, registration is available the day of the event beginning at 8 a.m. for \$20 for adults and \$10 for children. Cable expects to see a large turnout from both runners and fans.

Hearing thousands of people cheer you on is quite the enjoyable experience.

"The cheering crowds along the way and the weather is usually just perfect," Cable said.

Happy Independence Day!

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Parade a patriotic tradition

It's a slice of Americana that attracts thousands of spectators.

If you want to experience an Independence Day parade unlike any other, choose your spot carefully, bring some chairs and get ready for the Monmouth-Independence Rotary Club's Fourth of July Grand Parade.

The parade begins its route at noon on Monday. It begins at Western Oregon University in Monmouth and stretches approximately three miles before finishing at Riverview Park in Independence.

"Everyone loves a parade," director Chuck Thurman said. "People get the chance to get out and support our country and those who serve our country. I think the county has a lot of patriotism."

This year, the grand marshal will be Western Oregon men's basketball coach Jim Shaw and players from the team.

Choosing a grand marshal is a big decision and one that Thurman said the Rotary Club takes seriously.

"We go and talk in the community and see what is on



The Monmouth-Independence Rotary Club Fourth of July Grand Parade route stretches more than three miles.

Patriotic Parade

What: Monmouth-Independence Rotary Club Fourth of July Grand Parade.

When: Monday, July 4. The parade begins at noon. Registration starts at 9 a.m. at the staging area on Monmouth Avenue on Western Oregon University's campus. Entries are first-come, first-served.

Where: Monmouth and Independence. The parade route follows Monmouth's Main Street, runs eastward through the S-curves and onto Independence's Monmouth Street. The parade concludes at Riverview Park and Amphitheater in Independence.

Cost to enter: \$25 per entry.

Applications: Forms are available online at mirotaryclub.org, at the city halls in Monmouth and Independence, and at the Monmouth and Independence public libraries.

For more information: Chuck Thurman, 503-838-3526; email, parade@mirotaryclub.org.

people's minds," he said.

While there are always a number of worthy candidates, this year's choice was an obvious one.

"It was an easy decision," Thurman said. "They were the talk of the town."

Still want to get in on the action? Parade entries are accepted right up until the last float leaves, Thurman said. Cost is \$25 to enter.

Awards in a number of categories from most patriotic to best antique and modern vehicles will be handed out.

If participating isn't your cup of tea, the Luckiamute Watershed Council is looking for volunteers to walk with their float, holding up signs and helping collect trash along the route.

For more information: Krista Larson, 503-837-0237 or Sawyer Finegan, 503-623-9680. An online volunteer form is available at <http://www.luckiamutelwc.org/grand-parade-volunteer.html>.

The parade's festivities actually begins at 11:35 a.m. with the children's parade — which travels through a shortened route in Monmouth.

There is no judging in the children's parade. The event gives the community one of the few children's parades in the state, Thurman said.

"They aren't very common," Thurman said. "These kids are the future of our community. We need to teach them to celebrate life itself, let alone country and patriotism, and we're all kids at heart."

Whether you're out to experience the parade for the first time or have enjoyed it for years, this Fourth of July tradition is one you'll never forget.

"It's just a great hometown parade," Thurman said. "We hope people come out, enjoy it and celebrate with us."



The Fourth of July Parade features a variety of categories from horses to farm low riders.



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Serving up a good time

The Polk County Fire District No. 1 has the perfect pairing to start a busy Fourth of July — pancakes, ham, eggs and coffee or juice.

It's the annual firefighters' breakfast, from 6 to 10 a.m. on Monday.

Firefighters and volunteers are up at the crack of dawn — before, really — to fire up the griddles to make hundreds of pancakes. Some have more than 20 years of experience flipping pancakes at this event and have mastered the art of a perfectly golden-brown flapjack.

The breakfast draws between 800 to 1,200 people each year, but Matt Connery, president of the volunteer firefighters association, is hoping for more.

"We hope that everybody comes," Connery said. "We have more than enough food, and fundraisers and raffles that are going to be available, as well."

One of the raffles will be for a fire truck ride to school.

"For the first or second week of the new school year, if your ticket is chosen, the fire department will come pick up you and one of your friends in one of the new engines and take you to school," Connery said.

The chauffeured ride will include lights flashing, creating a memorable way to kick off the



The Polk County Fire District No. 1's pancake breakfast is the biggest fundraiser the association does. Proceeds go toward Christmas baskets, the Boy Scouts and other programs.

2016-17 school year for a lucky youth.

After getting your fill of pancakes, take a tour of the new equipment — three new fire engines and a custom pumper — thanks to a bond passed by the community in May 2014.

Connery said firefighters are focusing on outreach, especially to children.

"If we have all our gear on, we look very frightening," he

said. "We're just normal people under big clothes."

Breakfast is \$5 for adults and youths aged 15 and older; \$3 for those aged 6 to 14; and free for anyone 5 and younger.

The event is the biggest fundraiser the association does each year, Connery said. Proceeds go toward Christmas baskets, helping the Boy Scouts and other community programs.

Pancakes

What: Polk County Fire District No. 1 pancake breakfast.

Where: Polk County Fire Station.

When: Monday, July 4, 6 to 10 a.m.

Cost: \$5 adults; \$3 for children ages 6 to 14; children 5 and younger are free.

Concert band to perform on Sunday

The Willamette Valley Concert Band will perform Sunday at 6:30 p.m. at the Monmouth Main Street Amphitheater.

The concert is free and open to the public.

The concert's theme is "Patriotic Pops" and will feature performances of music from Broadway musicals, movie soundtracks and several patriotic tunes.

Highlights include selections from Beauty and the Beast, Irving Berlin's Showstoppers, Fantasy on Yankee Doodle and His Honor March.

Attendees should bring their own chair or blanket to sit on.

The 50-member group has been performing since 1970. dr. Richard Sorenson will direct.

For more information: Richard Sorenson, 503-838-3474.

Rick's Place to hold open house

Rick's Place, 123 Main St., Monmouth, will hold an open house Saturday from 9 a.m. to noon.

Author and artist Rafael Gruszecki will be there to show his art project. Gruszecki uses a restored 1952 Divco "chalk truck" a palette for people to write or draw their inspirations. He supplies the chalk to encourage participation and records people and their art work.

Dallas photographer Ron Mittag will show his new exhibit featuring coastal images and his "car art" series in honor of the Chalk Truck.

For more information: Rafael Gruszecki, 360-947-5741 or Ron Mittag, 602-448-3636.



Monmouth 2016 **Music In The Park Series** **Main Street Park Amphitheater** **Wednesdays 6:30-8:30 pm** **Music, Food, Beer & Wine Garden**



JULY CONCERTS

- July 6:** Ben Rice Blues Band – Blues
- July 13:** Brothers and Sister – Allman Brothers Tribute
- July 20:** Transcendental Brass Band—New Orleans Jazz
- July 27:** Charlie Horse — Rock

AUGUST CONCERTS

- August 3:** Kathy Boyd & Phoenix Rising — Bluegrass
- August 10:** Boka Marimba — African-Style Marimba
- August 17:** World's Finest — Americana Dubgrass
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- August 31:** Coming Up Threes — Celtic

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Getting artistic

The Monmouth Community Art Show is in its third year, and is bigger and better than ever.

The show, started by Nancy Lehto, has had close to the same number of entries in its first two years, but community participation in judging has increased.

To accommodate more art, the show has been moved from a tent at Main Street Park into the old fire house, across Warren Street from the park, Lehto said.

In the past, artwork was ac-

cepted prior to the event. This year, it will be put up on Saturday, the first day of the festival.

"In the fire hall, we can set up the display racks ahead of time, so we will be accepting artwork on the morning of the festival, tagging it and hanging it as it comes in," she said. "If all goes as planned, the show will be open shortly after noon."

The show includes two- and three-dimensional pieces from local artists of all ages and abilities. The community votes for

its favorite based on age for the people's choice award. The winners are put on display at both the Monmouth and Independence libraries.

"People really seem to like it," Lehto said. "We get lots of positive comments, and some people even write notes on their ballots."

Lehto started the show because of fond childhood memories of the Salem Art Fair, which has grown from a small community art show to an extensive event. Monmouth's show is off to a good start.

"We don't count how many people come and look at the show, but we can estimate numbers by how many people fill out ballots," Lehto said. The first year about 400 ballots were cast. Last year, that number grew to 550.

Lehto said she expects more entries this year, too, because of more involvement from artists at the Ash Creek Arts Center.

Winners will be announced on the afternoon of the Fourth of July.

Don't stop the music

Looking to rock out? How about hearing some classic movie tunes?

No matter what your tastes are in music, Polk County's Fourth of July celebrations have you covered.

Independence's Western Days has an eclectic mix.

Petty Fever takes the stage at the Amphitheater at Riverview Park Saturday at 8:30 p.m. and again at 10:45 p.m. after the fireworks.

"I like to use headline bands that are new to the area, have a great stage presence and that portray artists that people are familiar with and, most importantly, have great song hits that resonate over generations," Alex Trevino said.

On Sunday, Aaron Crawford brings his blend of country and rock to the amphitheater at 6 p.m. He'll be followed by Romance, a group of Latin musicians, at 8 p.m.

On Monday, Infamous Soul hits the stage at 8 p.m. and again 10:45 p.m. after the big fireworks display.

"I am looking forward to

this show just for the fact that they bring a wide range of music of heart and soul," Trevino said. "It seems fitting for a day to relax, dance and be part of such a great holiday with family and friends."

Monmouth's Hometown Stars and Stripes celebration offers a tantalizing mix of

local artists.

The Monmouth Taiko drummers kicks things off at noon on Saturday.

The Shinkle Band, a country act, takes the stage at 1 p.m., followed by the New Horizons Willamette Valley Orchestra at 4:15 p.m. Sunday sees everything from Chris-

Music for the Ears

SATURDAY, JULY 2

Petty Fever — Tom Petty Tribute, Independence

Monmouth Taiko Drummers — Monmouth

Shinkle Band — country, Monmouth

New Horizons Willamette Valley Orchestra — classical, Monmouth

SUNDAY, JULY 3

Aaron Crawford — country rock, Independence.

Romance — traditional Latino, Independence.

Phil Ward and the Way Walkers — Christian, Monmouth

Castletown — Celtic, Monmouth

Albany Swing Band — Big band, Monmouth

Willamette Valley Concert Band — patriotic concert, Monmouth

MONDAY, JULY 4

Johnny Wheels and the Swamp donkeys — blues, Dallas

Charlie Horse — rock, Monmouth

Infamous Souls — classic rock, Independence

For a full schedule of all events, see Page 4C.

tian (Phil Ward and the Way Walkers) to Celtic (Castletown), rock (Charlie Horse), big band (Albany Swing Band) and classical (Willamette Valley Concert Band).

In Dallas, Johnny Wheels and the Swamp Donkeys will entertain the pre-fireworks show crowd at Dallas' Freedomfest starting at 5:30 p.m. The show will be in Roger Jordan Community Park off LaCreole Drive near the Dallas Aquatic Center.

From Polk County, the band has made appearances at Freedomfest and Summerfest in recent years.

Chelsea Metcalfe, executive director of Freedomfest host Dallas Area Visitors Center, said the blues rock band is growing in popularity locally.

"I've had so many people tell me they want to hear more of them" she said.

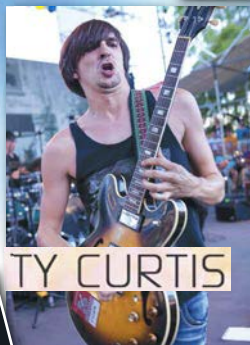
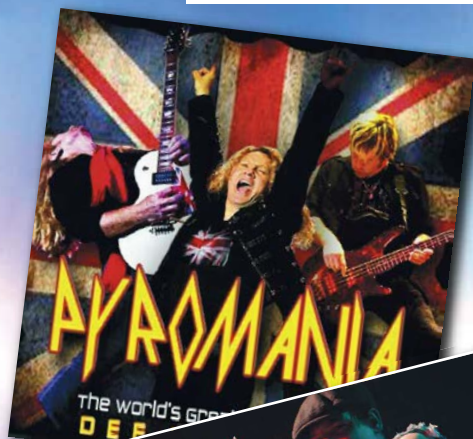
The band will play until about 8:30 p.m. — an hour before the fireworks show.

Throughout Polk County's Fourth of July festivities, acts appealing to all musical tastes will be on display, making this a must-hear for music lovers.

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- Aug. 4 - Star Wars The Force Awakens PG-13
- Aug. 11 - The Breakfast Club R
- Aug. 18 - Zootopia PG
- Aug. 25 - Batman vs Superman PG-13



Celebrating with a bang

Local fireworks displays offer awe-inspiring sights

The fireworks shows in Independence on Saturday and July 4 have an experienced veteran in charge.

Keith Aldrich, the pyrotechnic expert for Western Days, has been at it for so long that his certification number with the state is "3."

He's coordinated the Independence shows for 30 years, and they have become something of a family affair. His wife and sons are all licensed pyrotechnics, as well.

"That's how we spend our Fourth," he said.

Setup, running the show and cleanup of the displays starts early in the morning and lasts into the wee hours, but putting on a good show makes it worth it to Aldrich.

"My favorite part is listening to the audience after the finale goes, all their whooping and cheering," he said.

On Saturday, Independence will hold its "Hometown Celebration" event that is capped with the hometown appreciation fireworks display, a slightly shorter show that allows viewers to avoid the crowds on the Fourth.

But if you love fireworks, the Fourth of July show is the

Red, White and Boom!

What: Fireworks in Independence and Dallas.

When: Independence: Saturday at 10 p.m. and July Fourth at 10 p.m. Dallas: July Fourth at 9:30 p.m.

Where: Independence: Riverview Park; Dallas: Roger Jordan Community Park.

How much: Independence: \$1 park admission for patrons ages 6 and older. Dallas: Donations accepted.

one for you. The display is longer, about 30 minutes, and comes with all the patriotic pride of the holiday.

Want advice on where to sit from an expert, no matter which night you choose?

Aldrich said any vantage point without obstruction is fine for the show, but especially good spots are at Riverview Park. That comes with the bonus of being able to enjoy the carnival and food at the festival.

"It makes for a good environment," he said.

Dallas may be the new kid in the game when it comes to fireworks, but that doesn't mean it can't put on a show.

In 2014, what was once a Dallas tradition — though just how many years ago is unclear — was revived when Freedomfest held its display for the first time.

It was a hit and organizers brought it back for a second

cided to take a break between Freedomfest day and evening events.

She slept through the entire display and woke up in time to see people posting comments about it on social media.

Metcalfé will not miss it this year and is encouraging viewers to bring glow sticks, necklaces, or bracelets to the show on July Fourth.

"Let's glow in that park," she said.

year, but event coordinator Chelsea Metcalfé didn't get to see it. Metcalfé is the executive director of the Dallas Area Visitors Center and she de-



The fireworks displays at Riverview Park in Independence attracts thousands each year.

Kings Valley ice cream fundraiser

Kings Valley PTO will hold an ice cream fundraiser Friday though Monday during Western Days in Independence. Volunteers will operate an Umpqua Ice Cream trailer from 5 to 9 p.m. on Friday, 1:30 to midnight on Saturday, 1:30 to 10 p.m. on Sunday and 11:30 a.m. to midnight on Monday.

Volunteers are needed to work in shifts.

For more information: Cindy Simmons, csimmons@kvschool.org with days and times you are available.

Parade volunteers needed

Luckiamute Watershed Council and Polk Soil and Water Conservation District are looking for volunteers for the 2016 Monmouth-

Independence Rotary Club Grand Parade on Monday.

Volunteers are needed for the rear detachment which consists of riding or walking alongside Claudia, a 14-foot tall Chinook salmon, to spread the word about keeping streams and streets clean. Volunteers may hold signs or carry trash bags and encourage the public to deposit bottles, cans, candy wrappers and any other trash and recyclables they have.

The parade route is approximately 3.3 miles long, beginning at Western Oregon University in Monmouth and ending at Riverview Park in Independence. Volunteers may sign up for the entire length or a section of it.

For more information: Krista Larson, 503-837-0237 or Sawyer Finegan, 503-623-9680. An online volunteer form is available at <http://www.luckiamutelwc.org/grand-parade-volunteer.html>.



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