



2017 **4TH OF JULY** ***Celebrations***

**Your official guide to celebrations in
Dallas, Independence, Monmouth and Falls City**

A special section of the Polk County Itemizer-Observer

June 28, 2017 • Section C

CELEBRATE AMERICA!

Fireworks, parades with floats vying to be the most patriotic, art, barbecue, carnival rides and music from soothing reggae to pounding classic rock. It must be July Fourth in Polk County.

Independence Day 2017 celebrations will take place in Dallas, Falls City, Independence and Monmouth, spanning from one-day events to a long holiday weekend of fun.

On July 1, Falls City is first in line to mark the nation's birthday.

Unfortunately, increasing costs ended Falls City's July 3 fireworks show in 2015, but the community celebration carried on in 2016, due to some last-minute heroics of Laura Britton, co-owner of Falls City restaurant The Boondocks.

Britton is organizing the celebration — including a parade and a community barbecue — on Saturday, hoping to build on what started last year.

"Everybody really enjoyed it last year," Britton said. "The community came together very well. I think it was a great idea."

Saturday evening, Independence's Western Days joins the party with the carnival in Riverview Park opening at 6 p.m.

Western Days run from Saturday to July Fourth with two fireworks displays on the schedule. Monday, the Hometown Celebration Day ends with a display for those wanting to see fireworks without the crowds anticipated on Independence Day.

July Fourth, the display begins at dusk — around 10 p.m.

This year, entrance to the show will be \$2, unless wristbands are purchased ahead of time at Les Schwab or from someone in the Monmouth-Independence Rotary Grand Parade on July Fourth.



From classic cars to fireworks there are plenty of ways to celebrate Independence Day in Dallas, Falls City, Independence and Monmouth.

"We're trying to give the community their opportunity to buy their bracelets ahead of time," Thompson said. "We have not had a price increase in a very long time. Our fireworks show has gotten smaller because the price of fireworks has gone up and our budget hasn't."

Monmouth's July Fourth festival opens on Monday and runs through Independence Day. The main event has an art show, held both days. Artists can enter until 11 a.m. on Monday.

The Friends of the Monmouth Library will host a booth in the park for local authors, as well.

"The theme is 'art in the park,' so we're looking at books as a form of art, literature as art," Friends member Margaret Johnson, said.

Independence Day brings the long-standing Mini-Marathon, Children's Parade, and the highlight Monmouth-Independence Rotary Club's Fourth of July Grand Parade, all starting in Monmouth.

This year, Johnson will be the Grand Marshal.

"We talk about how much we want to honor the person or people involved," said Jim Birken, parade committee chair-

man. "We discuss how much they warrant recognition. This year, the Grand Marshal is Margaret Johnson and she is representing all of the community volunteers."

Dallas will mark July Fourth with Freedomfest and the revival of its barbecue contest. It was not part of the 2016 celebration, so Freedomfest founder Beth Jones stepped in to bring it back.

This year the contest isn't for professionals like it has been in the past. It pits six amateur smoker teams against each other.

"We are opening it up to something that embraces everybody," Jones said.

Freedomfest opens in Dallas City Park at 3 p.m. with the contest, a beer garden, vendors and live music. At 6 p.m., it moves to Roger Jordan Community Park for more live music, food truck vendors and, of course, fireworks.

Bonnie Dreier, the programs and events manager for the Dallas Area Visitors Center, said to come down to Freedomfest for some low-key fun.

"Even if you don't like barbecue, come down anyway, bring a picnic," she said. "West Valley Taphouse will have beer, wine and cider available."

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2017 Fourth of July Celebration Events

MONMOUTH FOURTH OF JULY FESTIVAL

All events at Main Street Park unless noted

MONDAY, JULY 3

- 10 a.m. — Festival opens
- 8-11 a.m. — Community Art Show entries accepted
- 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-4 p.m. — Children's arts and crafts (in gazebo)
- Noon-5 p.m. — Community Art Show
- 12:45-1:30 p.m. — Zumba in the park
- 3:15-4 p.m. — New Horizons Willamette Valley Orchestra
- 4:30-6 p.m. — Albany Swing Band
- 6:30-8:30 p.m. — Willamette Valley Concert Band
- 9 p.m. — Festival closes

TUESDAY, JULY 4

- 9 a.m. — Festival opens
- 9 a.m.-5 p.m. — Vendors open
- 9 a.m.-5 p.m. — Community Art Show
- 10 a.m.-2 p.m. — Classic Car Show
- 1 p.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
- 1:30-4 p.m. — Children's Arts and Crafts (in gazebo)
- 1:30-4:30 p.m. — Far Out West
- 2-4 p.m. — Monmouth Senior Center open house
- 5 p.m. — Festival closes

INDEPENDENCE WESTERN DAYS

All events at Riverview Park unless noted

SATURDAY, JULY 1

- 6 p.m. — Carnival opens
- 9:40 p.m. — Movie in the Park: "Captain America: Civil War"

PG-13

SUNDAY, JULY 2

- 10 a.m. — Church service in the amphitheater
- All day — Carnival

- Noon-10 p.m. — Vendors open
- Noon-10 p.m. — Entertainment in the Park (Talent Quest)

MONDAY, JULY 3

- All day — Carnival
- Noon-midnight — Vendors open
- Noon-7 p.m. — Kids' activities
- 2 p.m. — Watermelon Eating Contest
- 6-8 p.m. — The Junebugs
- 8:20-10 p.m. — Infamous Souls
- 10 p.m. — Fireworks Show
- 10:30 p.m.-midnight — Infamous Souls

TUESDAY, JULY 4

- 11:30 a.m. — Mini-Marathon
- Noon — Monmouth-Independence Rotary Grand Parade
- 2-10 p.m. — Old Time Photo Booth
- 4-5 p.m. — Reading of the Declaration of Independence and musical performance by Central High School Choir
- 5-7 p.m. — Longstride
- 7-8 p.m. — Talent Quest winner
- 8:30-10 p.m. — Cloverdayle
- 10 p.m. — Fireworks
- 10:30 p.m.-midnight — Cloverdayle

DALLAS FREEDOMFEST

TUESDAY, JULY 4

- 3-7 p.m. — Beer, wine and cider garden (Dallas City Park)
- 3-7 p.m. — Vendors open (Dallas City Park)
- 3-7 p.m. — Barbecue competition (Dallas City Park)
- 3:30-6:30 p.m. — Johnny Wheels and the Swamp Donkeys (Dallas City Park)
- 6-11 p.m. — Food Trucks (Roger Jordan Community Park)
- 6-9 p.m. — Live Music (Roger Jordan Community Park)
- Dusk — Fireworks (Roger Jordan Community Park)

FALLS CITY

SATURDAY, JULY 1

- Noon — Parade
- Noon-4 — Food and music (Lower Park)

• POLK COUNTY 2017 INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS •

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Monmouth ready for an artsy fourth

Monmouth celebrates the Fourth of July with festivities focusing on art in Main Street Park on July 3 and 4.

"We've got our Community Art Show running both days, and we're accepting entries up through 11 a.m. on July 3," said Mark Fancey, Monmouth community development manager.

The festival runs from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. on July 3, and from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on July 4.

All the traditional favorites will be back, including the Albany Swing Band and the patriotic concert by the Willamette Valley Concert Band, directed by Richard Sorensen who comes out of retirement for this concert each year.

Vendors will pack the park with hand-made arts and crafts, as well as a variety of food trucks.

The Friends of the Monmouth Library will host a booth in the park for local authors, said Friends member Margaret Johnson.

"The theme is 'art in the park,' so we're looking at books as a form of art, literature as art," Johnson said.

Authors will be available to chat and answer questions, as well as have books on hand to sign and sell.

Children's arts and craft projects will be ongoing in the gazebo on both afternoons, as well as bounce houses and vendors. On July 3, the entertainment opens with Monmouth Taiko Drummers in the amphitheater, followed by Zumba in the park.

After the parade on the Fourth of July, the Monmouth Senior Center will open its doors for parade-goers to take a break and refuel. Free hot dogs and cool drinks will be available, as well as tours of the center's new expansion,



Monmouth's celebration has plenty of chances to show your artistic side.

said Sue Teal, Monmouth Senior Center director.

"It's air-conditioned," she said. "Come in out of the heat."

Teal said she could use volunteers for the Fourth events, from helping decorate the center's float to serving hot dogs on July 4.

If interested: 503-838-5678.

Of course Monmouth is the epicenter for the Mini-Marathon, Children's Parade, and classic car show, in addition to the starting line of the Monmouth-Independence Rotary Grand Parade.

Those hopeful of a good seat put their

Local authors

On July 3 — Noon-1 p.m., hear children's stories from local authors, read aloud; 1-3 p.m., Scott McArthur, local historian; 3-5 p.m., Ben Gorman, Central High School English teacher. July 4 — 9-11 a.m., Micayla Lally; 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Therese O'Neill; 1-3 p.m., Mary Crawford; 3-5 p.m., Maureen Bradley-Anderson.

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The Fourth of July Mini-Marathon finishes in downtown Independence.

Western Days provide fun and thrills

Independence's Western Days kicks off Saturday, July 1, evening at 6 with dollar rides at the carnival and a showing of "Captain America: Civil War" at about 9:40 — depending on the sunset.

Sunday, July 2, will start with a multi-denominational church service led by The Grove in Independence. Sunday is also wristband day at the carnival.

"Our new thing this year is we're doing a Talent Quest from noon all day," said Janice Thompson, chair of the Western Days commission. "The big thing about that is that the winner, no matter if it's a magician, comedian, or garage band, is going to open for Cloverdale on the Fourth of July."

Monday, July 3, marks Independence's Hometown Celebration, complete with Buddy Day at the carnival.

"Buy a ride; your friend rides free," Thompson said.

The annual watermelon-eating contest returns at 2 p.m. on Monday. Entertainment by The Junebugs and Infamous Souls will wrap up the evening before the fireworks show.

This year, entrance to the show will be \$2, unless wristbands are purchased ahead of time at Les Schwab or from someone in the Monmouth-Independence Rotary Grand Parade on July Fourth.



Western Days has a variety of entertainment and activities going on.

"We're trying to give the community their opportunity to buy their bracelets ahead of time," Thompson said. "We have not had a price increase in a very long time. Our fireworks show has gotten smaller because the price of fireworks has gone up and our budget hasn't."

This year, Thompson said she increased the budget for fireworks and security, and the increase in entry will help pay for that.

"The show should go back to what it was four or five years ago when it was really big," Thompson said.

Fireworks will be shot over the Willamette River on July 3 and Fourth.

Also new this year is an old-time, western photo booth, run by the Central Youth Sports softball team, Thompson said. Northwest Hydro Sports will return for both July 3 and 4, and offer rides on the river during the daytime.

Events on July Fourth will not start until 4 p.m., with a reading of the Declaration of Independence and a performance of patriotic songs by Central High School's choir.

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Fourth of July, Falls City style

As is tradition, Falls City will officially kick off July Fourth events a little early.

The 2017 edition of Independence Day, Falls City style, is July 1 and you should expect plenty of small-town fun and charm at the event.

Event organizer Laura Britton said the celebration is scheduled for Saturday to give residents a chance to participate in both a hometown gathering and events in Monmouth, Independence and Dallas on Independence Day.

A short, but entertaining and patriotic parade make its way down North Main Street starting at noon on Saturday. This year, the parade has a solar eclipse theme.

Haven't signed up yet? Contact Britton at 503-871-6527.

Immediately after the parade, a community get together begins in Falls City's Lower Park. Hamburgers and hot dogs will be served hot off the grill and freshly made cotton candy will be available for those with a sweet tooth.

All food is donated by Falls City restaurant The Boondocks.



Falls City celebrates Independence Day with small-town fun and charm.

Guests are welcome to have lunch and play in the park until the celebration closes at 4 p.m.

Little Raven Productions provides live

music for the celebration, featuring a slate of local musicians.

"It'll be like an open mic at the park," Britton said.



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Freedomfest to provide fun, relaxation

Barbecue contest makes a return

The Grand Parade in Monmouth and Independence has wrapped up and there are long hours until the fireworks blast off. What do you do until dusk?

Dallas Freedomfest has the answer: spend the afternoon relaxing in Dallas City Park strolling through vendor booths, eating barbecue from local smokers and, for those 21 and older, enjoying a glass of beer, wine or cider.

The event opens at 3 p.m., to give people the opportunity to take in the Grand Parade tradition in Monmouth and Independence and fill the afternoon with relaxing fun.

The daytime showcase is the revival of the barbecue contest. It not a sanctioned event like Freedomfest held in the past,

but a six-team amateur contest to crown a local barbecue champion.

Live music, vendors and a beer-wine-cider garden will round out the day in the park.

Bonnie Dreier, event sponsor Dallas Area Visitors Center programs and events manager, said Freedomfest's daytime event was purposely designed to be low-key and centered around restarting the barbecue contest.

"Even if you don't like barbecue, come down anyway, bring a picnic," she said. "West Valley Taphouse will have beer, wine and cider available."

Johnny Wheels & The Swamp Donkeys will add live entertainment from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. Want to sell at the event? You are still welcome to apply.

"We are still looking or vendors and we will take them up to the last minute," Dreier said.

Freedomfest's second shift begins at 6 p.m. at Roger Jordan Community Park.

More live music, food trucks and the finale of fireworks are on tap at the evening event. Those who didn't fill up on barbecue — or are just ready for dinner will have plenty of options, including food truck favorites Black Rock BBQ, Big Foot Bites, El Pique and more.

Live music will get the party going at 6 p.m., the same time food vendors open.

Remember to bring lawn chairs and blankets and stay until dark for the patriotic evening capper fireworks show, put on by Dallas Fire & EMS. It blasts off at dark, or around 10 p.m.



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Tennis tourney enters 44th year

Organizers hope tournament draws new, experienced players

At its core, the 44th annual Monmouth-Independence Fourth of July tennis tournament brings together players to crown a champion.

But the tournament's appeal goes far beyond the chance to compete.

"(My favorite part) is seeing the faces of those who come every year and listening to stories of friends who connect on the courts," Patti Youngren said.

Youngren, Central High School's boys tennis coach, helps organize the event.

The true magic of the event — and what keeps people coming back year after year — is the chance to reconnect with old friends and make new ones.

"There are so many memories I've made as a participant and an organizer, it's impossible to pick one," Youngren said. "I have played with my husband, my friend and my daughter. In 1999, I played against a woman from Dallas who introduced me to other people who have become life-long friends."

This year, the tournament will take place July 1 and 2 at Central High School and Western Oregon University. Brackets are available for singles, doubles and mixed doubles — and there are brackets available for different skill levels. That makes the tournament accessible and fun no matter whether you're a seasoned pro or a rookie learning the ropes.

"I hope that win or lose, they leave with a smile after having a great time on the courts and wanting to do it again," Youngren said.

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



The Fourth of July tennis tournament offers singles and doubles brackets.

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

Youngren hopes that the tournament also serves as a way for tennis players to become more involved in the local tennis community. "There is a place for community tennis," Youngren said. "Tennis can be played at any age. Any sex can be successful at it and it has tiers built into it so beginners are not intimidated by advanced players and seniors are not intimidated by youth."

Players meet weekly at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesdays to play at Central, Youngren said and people may be surprised just how quickly they fall in love with the sport.

"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: July 1 and 2.

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



Players of all skill levels are welcome to participate.

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The Monmouth-Independence Mini-Marathon provides just that.

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

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

The distance hits a sweet spot, Cable said. It's short enough that runners of all experience levels can complete it without feeling intimidated but long enough that they feel proud of their accomplishment and have enough time to experience the thrill of fans cheering them on.

"Fitness has become more of a focus in our society," Cable said. "This 2.6-mile run won't be intimidating to anyone. Families can run together. We have tons of people who

On your mark...

What: 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 9 and younger in advance. Day of race registration will be available until 10:30 a.m.

For more information: Terry Cable, 503-930-2360; www.eclecticedgeracing.com.

make this a Fourth of July tradition."

The race takes off at 11:30 a.m. on July 4.

Cost is \$15 (ages 10 and older) and \$5 (9 and younger) until June 30.

Day-of registration will be available from 8 to 10:30 a.m.

Water will be available at various points along the course and snacks and hydration await you at the finish. A



The mini-marathon offers a unique, fun experience.

raffle and awards ceremony will follow.

Cable expects to see a large field come July 4. If you've never experienced this before, be ready for a unique and

amazing run, Cable said.

"The cheering crowds along the way make this a truly unique and memorable run," Cable said.



The mini-marathon takes runners down the parade route in front of thousands of cheering fans.


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You be the JUDGE! Teams will
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Beer, Wine & Cider Garden
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(3:00pm – 7:00pm)

Vendors

(3:00pm – 7:00pm)

Live Music

Johnny Wheels &
the Swamp Donkeys
(3:00pm – 6:00pm)

From 6:00pm – 11pm join us
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Community Park
for Music, Food Trucks &
Fireworks!

Dallas Fire & EMS light off the
show from LaCreole Middle
School. Citizens are encouraged to
grab their chairs, blankets and
family for an evening of celebration.
Dinner and dessert options will be
on-site as well as live music as we
await the spectacular
fireworks show!

Live Music

(6:00pm – 9:00pm)

Food Trucks

(6:00pm – 11:00pm)

Fireworks

begin at dusk
(Approx. 10:00pm)

Putting patriotism on display

It's an event that sees people stake out their viewing spots days in advance.

It's something that attracts thousands of spectators each year and is one of the highlights of Monmouth and Independence's Fourth of July celebrations.

It is the Monmouth-Independence Rotary Club's Fourth of July Grand Parade.

"It's a two-city community event," parade committee chair Jim Birken said. "The people don't have to travel and it's a chance for community members to share with their neighbors."

The parade begins at Western Oregon University in Monmouth at noon on July 4. The route stretches approximately three miles through Monmouth and Independence before finishing at Riverview Park.

Just be ready to stake out your seats early if you want to grab a prime viewing spot and bring bags to store candy.

"I suppose some of the prime spots are on Main Street in downtown Monmouth," Birken said. "Those spots are always taken well in advance."

Birken has been involved with the parade for more than 20 years. Currently, he drives the Rotary President in a convert-



The Grand Parade showcases the county's patriotism and local pride.

ible through the parade route.

"I'm always amazed at how many people are out there,"

he said.

The parade always provides a variety of floats. In past years everything from horse riders to a pirate ship have made an appearance and there's still time to get involved.

Parade entries are accepted through the day of the parade (cost \$25).

Prizes are awarded in a number of categories from most patriotic to farm equipment.

Of course, in any parade, choosing the Grand Marshal is important. This year, that choice was clear.

"We talk about how much we want to honor the person or people involved," Birken said. "We discuss how much they warrant recognition. This year, the Grand Marshal

is Margaret Johnson and she is representing all of the community volunteers."

If being part of a float isn't your cup of tea, the Luckiamute Watershed Council looks for volunteers to walk with their float to hold up signs and help collect trash along the parade route.

For more information www.luckiamutelwc.org/grand-parade-volunteer.html.

There is also a kids parade at 11:35 a.m. that is always a big hit.

Just come prepared to have a good time — and to deal with the weather.

"Wear a hat," he said. "We've had parades in the rain, but I don't think this is going to be one of them."

Patriotic Parade

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

When: Tuesday, 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.

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Shoot To Thrill**



**Chance McKinney
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**Aug. 19, 8pm
"Indy Goes Dark"**

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Aug. 10 - KONG: Skull Island • Aug. 17 - Star Trek Into Darkness • Aug. 24 - Beauty & the Beast

Festivals offer variety of entertainment

Want to hear some tunes or catch an outdoor action flick? What about a watermelon eating contest? July Fourth celebrations in Monmouth, Independence and Dallas have you covered.

July Fourth events begin on Saturday, with Western Days opening its carnival at 6 p.m. and the Movie in the Park featuring "Captain America: Civil War" at 9:40 p.m.

Sunday, Western Days will search for the region's next big star with "Talent Quest," which will occupy the amphitheater stage from noon until 10 p.m. If you miss the winner, don't worry. You can see the top act opening for headline performer Cloverdayle on July Fourth.

It may be a little old-fashioned, but that doesn't mean it's boring: Western Days holds what's sure to be some messy fun during its watermelon eating contest at 2 p.m. on Monday.

In the evening, The Junebugs will take the stage. Closing act Infamous Souls will play classic rock starting at 8:20 p.m. leading up to the Hometown fireworks show and from 10:30

p.m. to midnight afterward.

At Monmouth's July Fourth Festival, entertainment kicks off with Monmouth Taiko Drummers and concludes in the evening with Willamette Valley Concert Band.

On Independence Day,

Central High School's choir will open entertainment on the amphitheater stage. Longstride (reggae), Talent's Quest's winner and evening closing act Cloverdayle round out the schedule.

Far Out West, a funk band,

will play in the afternoon 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. at the Monmouth July Fourth event.

In Dallas, Freedomfest's daytime event will feature Johnny Wheels & Swamp Donkeys. Live music for the evening event will be scheduled soon.

Entertainment schedule

SATURDAY, JULY 1

9:40 p.m. — "Captain America: Civil War," Independence.

SUNDAY, JULY 2

10 a.m. — Church service presented by The Grove, Independence.

Noon to 10 p.m. — Talent Quest, Independence.

MONDAY, JULY 3

Noon — Monmouth Taiko Drummers, Monmouth.

2 p.m. — Watermelon eating contest, Independence.

3:15 p.m. — New Horizons Willamette Valley Orchestra, Monmouth.

4:30 p.m. — Albany Swing Band, Monmouth.

6 p.m. — The Junebugs, Independence

6:30 p.m. — Willamette Valley Concert Band, Monmouth.

8:20 p.m. — Infamous Souls, Independence.

TUESDAY, JULY 4

1:30 p.m. — Far Out West, Monmouth.

3:30 p.m. — Johnny Wheels & Swamp Donkeys, Dallas.

4 p.m. — Reading of the Declaration of Independence and performance by the Central High School Choir Independence.

5 p.m. — Longstride, Independence.

7 p.m. — Talent Quest winner, Independence.

8:30 p.m. — Cloverdayle, Independence.

10:30 p.m. — Cloverdayle, Independence (after fireworks).

Barbecue is back at Freedomfest

Time to fire up those smokers — Freedomfest's Barbecue Competition is back.

Barbecue central will be at Dallas City Park on the July Fourth beginning at 3 p.m., where the contest, returning after a year's break, will take center stage.

The 2017 competition isn't sanctioned, so rather than professionals, it will be pit local amateurs against one another.

"We are opening it up to something that embraces everybody," said contest coordinator Beth Jones.

Jones was involved with creating Freedomfest in 2013, but took a step back from organizing in recent years.

After the sanctioned barbecue contest (meaning a qualifying event for larger professional competitions) ended last year, she decided to take over that portion of the event for 2017.

She took the barbecue contest back to its roots, featuring smokers who do it as a hobby, not professionally.

Jones recruited six teams to compete to be crowned local barbecue royalty, so the contest will have a variety of methods and styles.

A panel of judges will be handing out prizes, sponsored by MAK Grills, but come hungry as guests will be able to sample each team's work.

Yes, that means you get to be the judge. People can buy tickets for samples from as many booths as they would like. The "People's Choice Award" will go to the most popular team.

A beer, wine and cider garden, hosted by West Valley Taphouse will be on hand to quench your thirst after making the barbecue team rounds. The Johnny Wheels & The Swamp Donkeys will play from 3:30 to 6 p.m.



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Main Street Park Amphitheater
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JULY CONCERTS

- July 5:** Shinkle Family Band — Folk, Country
July 12: Wildwood Allstar Revue — Rock
July 19: Hillstomp — Blues
July 26: Jenny Don't & The Spurs — Country

AUGUST CONCERTS

- August 2:** Sol Seed — Reggae
August 9: Cascade Crescendo — Jamgrass
August 16: Root Jack — Rock
August 23: Dina y Los Rumberos — Cuban Salsa
August 30: Coming Up Threes — Celtic

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*Look for Monmouth Music In The Park Series
on Facebook for more information
about this year's artists.*

Lighting the skies

Local displays offer perfect way to end Fourth of July celebrations

The county's Fourth of July celebrations offer a variety of things for locals and visitors to enjoy. But for many, the highlight of the Independence Day celebrations are the fireworks — and for good reason.

The fireworks shows in Independence are truly a sight to behold.

Pyrotechnic expert Keith Aldrich has been the longtime lead on the fireworks display.

Setup, running the show and cleanup of the displays starts early in the morning and lasts well into the night, but the reaction from the crowd makes all the hours well worth the effort.

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

There will be two displays during Western Days. The first

will be Monday at around 10 p.m. as part of Hometown Appreciation Day, with the second coming on Tuesday at about 10 p.m.

Monday's show is aimed at helping viewers who want to avoid the big crowds on the Fourth. But the Fourth of July spectacular can't be beat for fireworks lovers.

Aldrich said any viewpoint without obstruction is good for the show, but Riverview Park is especially popular — plus it has the bonus of making it easy to enjoy all the festivities happening at the park.

Dallas' fireworks show doesn't boast the history of the Western Days display, but it's no less impressive. The show begins around 10 p.m. on July 4 and is put on by Dallas Fire & EMS and gives locals a chance to take in an impressive display without having to travel.



Independence will offer two fireworks displays.

Red, White and Boom!

What: Fireworks in Independence and Dallas.

When: Independence: Monday at 10 p.m. and July Fourth at 10 p.m. Dallas: July Fourth at 10 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.

Art show spans two days

Monmouth's July Fourth Festival hosts the Community Art Show on July 3-4 in the city's Main Street Park.

Artists are welcome to enter their work until 11 a.m. on July 3. All mediums will be accepted by artists kindergarten-aged to professional.

Attendees of the show can vote for their favorite pieces in each of six categories for the "People's Choice" awards. Winning entries are slated for display at the Monmouth Public Library from July 5 through July 14.

To submit your work, bring it ready for display to the Art Show Tent on July 3 from 8 to 11 a.m.

The show runs from noon to close on July 3 and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Independence Day.

Entry forms are available at www.ci.monmouth.or.us.

Firefighters cook for a good cause

Start your Fourth of July on the right foot with a hearty breakfast, provided by Polk County Fire District No. 1. The annual firefighters' breakfast is on Independence Day from 6 to 10 a.m. at the Polk County Fire Station, 1800 Monmouth St., Independence. It's the biggest fundraiser of the year for the department's firefighters' association.

Come hungry because the menu includes healthy portions of pancakes, eggs, ham and coffee or juice.

Some of the cooks have decades of experience perfecting the golden-brown flapjack.

In addition to a delicious breakfast, people can enter raffles for more prizes.

Cost for breakfast is \$6 for adults ages 13 and older; \$3 for children ages 6 to 12; and free for those 5 and younger.

For more information: 503-838-1510.

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