

A SUPPLEMENT TO

NISQUALLY
VALLEY NEWS

PRAIRIE DAYS

June 28-30

2019

Prairie Days 2019 —

Some New, Some Old at ‘Your Parents’ Prairie Days’

It's summertime, the livin' is easy and our annual summer event is back and better than ever!

We wanted Prairie Days to return to what many in our community remembered — a free, fun, family event. So, a group of like-minded folks got together and reimagined how we could best welcome summer to the prairie.



Yelm Mayor
JW Foster

What we came up with was a mix of old and new, but all fun.

Friday night, we welcome back the street dance! Now, we haven't had one of these for many years, but when we asked “old-timers” what they liked best about the old Prairie Days, the street dance was

one of the most often cited events. So, let's dance!

Friday night starting at 6 p.m. we'll close off Second Street right in front of the Community Center and a DJ will play music reflecting this year's theme of “Prairie Days Through the Decades.”

Family friendly, we'll have music all can enjoy, though as the evening progresses it will be less “Raffi” and more Rock n' Roll.

That might get you hungry, so there will be food trucks and a beer and wine garden. So strap on your dance shoes and come join the party! Don't stay up too late though, because you'll want to get up early enough to find a good spot to watch the parade Saturday morning. Organized by the Yelm Area Chamber of Commerce, the parade will start on the newly constructed Tornado Alley by the high

school, then proceed up Tahoma Valley Boulevard and turn onto Yelm Avenue at the Medical Center, finally dispersing at the middle school parking lot.

After the parade, come on over to the new and improved Yelm City Park. Your family is going to love it! We finished installing the long-awaited playground equipment improvements and the new splash pad. In the park, you'll find many of our community organizations have set up free, fun things to do for kids of all ages.

Remember, we no longer host the carnival at this event because, in part, it had become too expensive for families to enjoy and overshadowed all the cool things we can do as a community for free.

Try out the National Guard's climbing wall or enter the pie-baking contest. Want to see some great old military

equipment? There will be an impressive display! Tractors too! And then in the afternoon, grab some food from one of the food trucks, claim a section of cool grass and listen to live music on the little stage. Oh, and the Yelm Farmers Market will be going too.

Sunday, the fun continues with a 5K put on by Yelm Rotary, and in the park we'll cap off the festivities with two very special events — the Olympia Symphony Orchestra will play a free live concert in the community center starting at 3 p.m., which will be followed at 4:30 p.m. by a free performance of Shakespeare's “As You Like It” put on by Goldfinch Productions.

This IS your parents' Prairie Days, and now it can be your family's memories in the making. What a great way to kick off summer in Yelm!

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2019 Prairie Days Calendar of Events

Events take place in Yelm City Park, unless otherwise noted.

Friday, June 28

• The Yelm Education Foundation will hold a golf tournament at Tahoma Valley Golf Course. Additional information can be found at yelmprairiedays.com.

• 6-10 p.m., Street Dance on Second Street next to the Community Center. Enjoy an evening of music and dancing complete with food trucks and a wine and beer garden.

- Fire safety smoke house
 - Dunk Tank
 - Thurston County Sheriff's Office display
 - Children's fishing pond
 - Water balloon toss with state Rep. Andrew Barkis
 - Egg toss with JT Wilcox
 - Quilting display
 - VFW display
 - Kid's historic games
 - Chicken BINGO
 - Photo booth
 - Kids games with Church of Living Water
 - 1st Special Forces
 - Stomp Rockets with Boy Scouts
 - Kids derby races with Boy Scouts
 - Wilderness survival with Boy Scouts
 - Jazz Line performance
 - Cotton Candy provided by Crossroads Community Covenant Church
 - Game Booth with Crossroads
 - Noon to 10 p.m., music on the small stage
- (Note most of these park events will continue on Sunday)

Saturday, June 29

• 9:30-11 a.m., the Prairie Days Parade will run from Tornado Alley behind Yelm High School, down Tahoma Boulevard to Yelm Avenue and ending at Yelm Middle School.

• Tractor show. Additional information can be found at yelmprairiedays.com.

• 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., Yelm City Park opens.

• Food trucks will be open all day.

• Yelm Farmers Market will be open 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on McKenzie Avenue.

Activities in the park will include:

- Climbing wall
- Fire department activities
- Kids building workshop
- Portable bowling
- Military display
- Pie Baking Contest
- Magnificent Mutt Show

Sunday, June 30

- 9 a.m. to noon, 5Kwalk/run at Yelm Middle School sponsored by the Rotary Club of Yelm.
- Activities continued from Saturday.
- Bowling tournament at Prairie Lanes
- 7-10 p.m., Goldfinch Productions will perform "As You Like it" on the small stage.



A Corvette moves through the Prairie Days Parade in this 2017 Nisqually Valley News file photo.

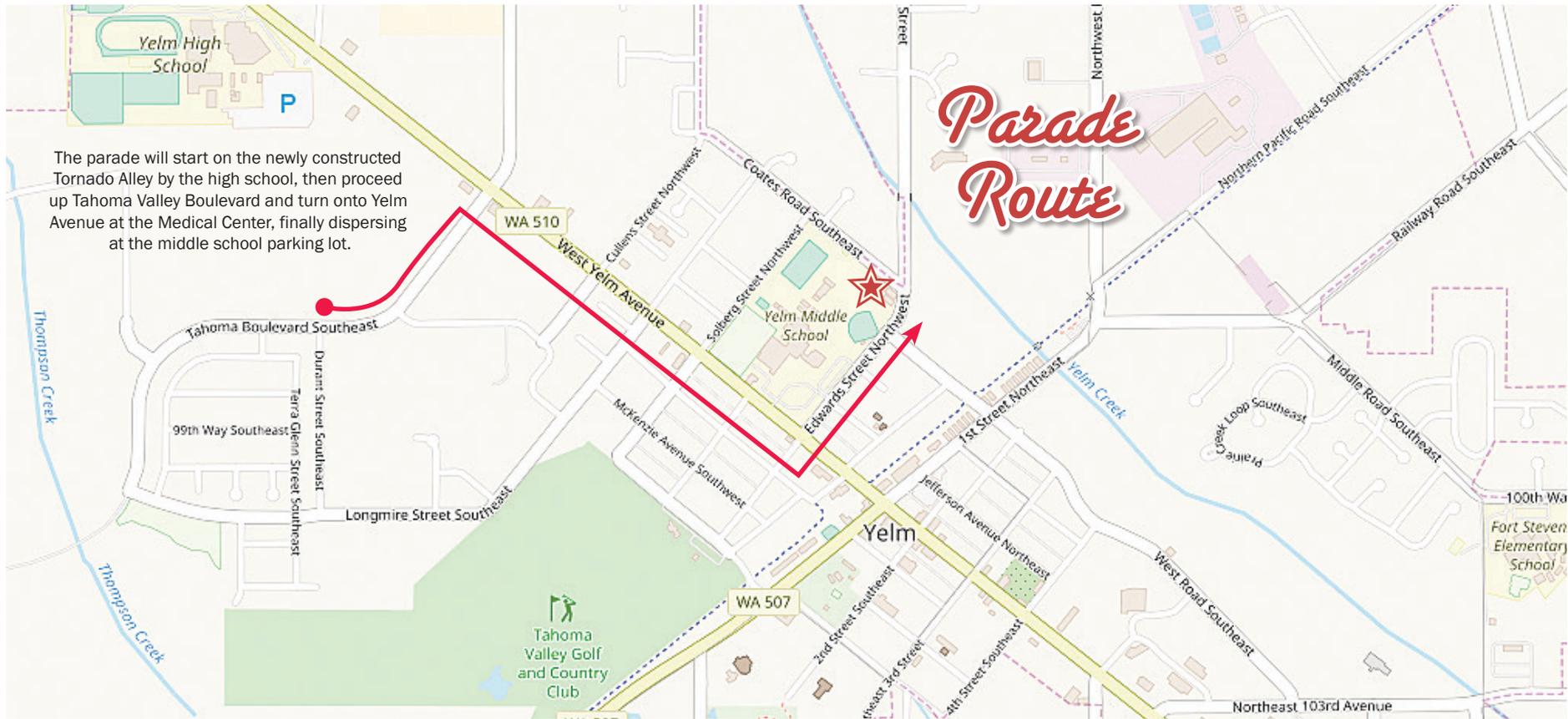
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Prairie Days Parade Theme to Draw From Its Roots

BY DANIEL WARN

dwarn@yelmonline.com

Prairie Days is going back to days gone by, and the parade is no exception.

The theme this year reflects a trip back into the event's history.

"I think the theme is the perfect fit with all the changes that they are making to the event (Prairie Days) itself," said Angie Evans, Yelm Area Chamber of Commerce president. "They are bringing it back to its roots, and so having it be 'Pride of the Prairie Through the Decades' is just a perfect fit. I love it."

Line Critchfield, executive director of the Yelm Area Chamber of Commerce, worked with the chamber board to select this year's theme.

"Because we're going back to basics with Prairie Days, we wanted a theme that would encompass all the changes

that have happened through the decades in Yelm," she said. "The parade allows the community to come together to celebrate its beginnings, celebrate where we've come, and celebrate the people that make this city so great."

Critchfield added that when people are working in the same direction, it brings the community together.

The parade is huge for the community, uniting it, Evans said.

"The parade gives the businesses a marketing opportunity, but also allows the people that are coming to really see unity, and that's one thing that I love about Yelm — it brings the community together," Evans said. "We still do some of those small-town things. Not a lot of cities do parades any more and I think it is really important that we keep ours going."

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The parade itself will begin on Tornado Alley, take a left turn onto Tahoma, then a right turn onto State Route 510 (Yelm Highway) and will end at Yelm Middle School.

As for how to incorporate the theme into a float or presentation during the parade, Critchfield said folks should choose a decade and fashion their entry around that style.

“The cool thing about this theme is how easy it is to incorporate into a float,” she said. “We’re hoping that parade entrants pick a decade and roll with it.”

The floats could even take on an old wagon theme, or resemble elements of classic television shows, Evans said.

“I picture Laura Ingalls,” she said. “You know, ‘Little House of the Prairie?’ That’s what I picture, because I remember hearing that in the early days of Prairie Days they actually had a princess, and this Prairie Days Princess dressed in the Laura Ingalls garb. That’s what I picture automatically — going back to those roots.”



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Top: A vehicle-drawn wagon was the parade entry for Crowe Law Office in Yelm in 2017.

Above: Thurston County Sheriff John Snaza and Yelm Police Chief Todd Stancil ride in a golf cart during the parade in 2018.

Prairie Days Parade Grand Marshal Offers a Long List of Selfless Acts

BY DANIEL WARN

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The Yelm Area Chamber of Commerce selected Tess Faughn as this year's grand marshal of the 2019 Prairie Days Parade.

"Tess was selected based upon her selfless service to her community," states a Yelm Area Chamber of Commerce Facebook post. "Her community involvement includes current president for the Midday Yelm Lions Club, president of the Rotary Club of Yelm, Yelm Community Services board member and Hope Restored Christian Ministries treasurer.

Continued on Page 8



Tess Faughn was chosen as this year's grand marshal of the 2019 Prairie Days Parade because of her involvement in a number of community service projects and organizations.

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Her involvement with these organizations allows her the opportunity to do meaningful work within the Yelm community.”

Angie Evans, president of the Yelm Area Chamber of Commerce, said Faughn is the perfect choice, the very definition of what it means to be a community volunteer.

“Tess is amazing,” Evans said. “She has got her hands in so many different things and always in a leadership position and always gung-ho and willing to just step in and make things happen in every role that she’s in. I don’t even know how that woman has time. It’s just amazing.”

Faughn doesn’t only take on leadership roles her community work — she’s also a lead in her profession. As branch operations supervisor, she manages the employees at the Yelm Timberland Bank and manages the managers at the Edge-wood, South Hill and Bethel Station locations of the business.

Yet her true passion is helping others, she said.

“I do give selfless service,” Faughn said. “I’m not doing it for a recognition. I do it because it’s near and dear to my heart. Two things growing up that were very near and dear to me were the fact that there were kids in the community that did not have the same food that I had ... Another thing is literacy. I want kids to have food. Food helps them do better in school and then reading is extremely importation.”

Faughn’s personal journey reflects the work she does in the community.

“As a child, I struggled learning to read the way they were teaching us,” she said. “It wasn’t until later that someone was actually able to teach me to read. And then once I started, I never stopped, and now I write.”

Faughn said she wants all children to have the support she had as she learned to read, but some students are at a disadvantage from the start.

“Children are always a main focus to me because they don’t get to choose the situation that they’re currently in,” she said. “And they don’t have a way of get-



From left, Todd Stancil, Tess Faughn, Nichole Woolsey, Santa, Denise Hibel and JW Foster donate their time at Midday Lions Club Free family movie and toy drive-in this file photo.

ting them or their families out of a situation or whatever their circumstance is.”

At Rotary Club, she helps facilitate the “10 Weeks of Summer” program, where the club packs lunch bags for children that should last them a week, and hands them out for free at locations around the community.

During the school year, these students often get free or reduced lunch, and an organization called Homeless Backpacks gives them food for the weekends, but the summertime presents a gap in these programs.

“In the summer, they don’t have a way of getting that food,” Faughn said. “So then, Rotary Club, we have stepped in with other sponsors to fill the gap.”

In addition, there will be a 5K run on June 30 at Yelm Middle School, with registration starting at 7:30 a.m., to help support “10 Weeks of Summer.”

Faughn and the rest of the Rotary also give out yearly scholarships to high school seniors.

Also in the vein of education, Faughn works with Hope Restored Christian Ministries to raise money for a primary school in Uganda.

Beyond supporting access to education, Faughn also celebrates the fun of childhood with the community.

To that end, she and the Midday Yelm Lions Club throw “Movies in the Park,” in which admittance is free for attendees.

“I will be there,” she said of the Movies in the Park. “Sometimes I’m flipping burgers. Sometimes I’m helping do other things. Hopefully I’m doing other things. It gets kinda hot at the grill.”

After spending the time to invest in all of this, Faughn still finds time for herself. Specifically, she likes to play golf, read, write and cook, and she wants to get back into running.

“I’m getting super excited about golf, because the weather’s nice,” Faughn said. “It’s warm and not rainy. My husband’s not a big golfer when it’s cold. He likes it hot. So now I have my partner in crime in golfing.”

When it comes to her writing, Faughn said that she enjoys science fiction and children’s stories. In fact, she’s thinking about publishing a couple of the latter.

“I think I’m going to make the push and submit some stories,” she said. “It puts yourself out there, because it can be very personal.”

When all is said and done, though, Faughn said there’s a quote from Mother Teresa that has guided her since she was a teenager.

Throughout the years, the quote has changed in meaning for her, but its essence has remained a guiding force in her life.

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It's the Battle of the Pies at Prairie Days

BY DANIEL WARN

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Along with a slew of other new Prairie Days events comes a contest that harkens back to the old days of county fairs.

Ken McCulloch, owner of American Family Insurance - Ken McCulloch, will sponsor a pie-baking contest for the public. Pies will be dropped off at 2 p.m. Saturday, June 29, in the Yelm Community Center. Judging will begin at 2:25 p.m., and winners will be announced at 3:45 p.m.

McCulloch got the idea after word was spread for people to form the new Prairie Days Committee, because the Lions Club was no longer going to be the main organization putting the event on.

"So I went to the meetings just to kind of see what it was about and everything," McCulloch said. "Basically what (this committee) decided to do was they wanted to make a big, free day for everybody."

The Prairie Days Committee wanted to make it the way it used to be, McCulloch said. People were free to volunteer ideas and take responsibility for the execution of those ideas. One of the committee's jobs was to help find a place for the events in the grander schedule of the weekend. When McCulloch heard about this new structure, an idea immediately

came to mind.

"My first thought was the old days of the county fairs where they have the local people get together," McCulloch said. "One of the things they would do was have pie baking contests. So I decided that I would use my business to sponsor it, to help pay for it and everything. It doesn't cost anybody anything except the pie. It should be lots of fun. It'll be the first annual and hopefully one of many to come."

McCulloch may want to bring the community together with this new event, but it is possible he harbors a few ulterior motives, he joked.

"I was also inspired a little bit, because I get to be a judge and I'll get to eat a lot of really great pie," he said, adding that he encourages others to step forward to help judge the event.

The pie-baking contest could get anywhere between 30 and 300 pies, McCulloch said, so it is essential that those interested in entering fill out the registration form by June 25 and turn it into Ken McCulloch American Family Insurance Agency or Crow Law Office. Visit the Yelm Prairie Days or Ken McCulloch-American Family Insurance Facebook pages for rules and registration forms.

"It's an old-fashioned event," McCulloch said. "We have three categories — we



Ken McCulloch poses with one of the trophies for the pie making contest that his company, American Family Insurance - Ken McCulloch, has founded and is sponsoring for 2019 Prairie Days. Pies will be dropped off at 2 p.m. Saturday, June 29 in the Yelm Community Center. Entrants may register by visiting the Yelm Prairie Days or Ken McCulloch-American Family Insurance Facebook pages.

have the fruit, the non-fruit and we also have the youth category. If you are planning to go to school after high school, apply for this thing and we'll write you a \$500 scholarship if you come in first."

In the fruit and non-fruit categories, the prize for first place is \$125 cash. For second, it's \$75 cash, and the prize for third place is \$50 cash.

McCulloch cautioned that the event is for amateurs only, so he doesn't want to see professional bakers trying to win the grand prize.

"It's a fun community thing to help bring us closer together," he said. "I think on my Facebook page 200-and-something people said they are interested. Heck if I get half that it would be fabulous."

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Food Galore All Weekend Long at Yelm Prairie Days

BY ERIC ROSANE

erosane@yelmonline.com

There's no need to fret about finding food in between synchronistic Street Dance or the barking and balancing acts of the Magnificent Mutt Show — food vendors have you covered at Yelm Prairie Days.

From barbecue to kettle corn, and everything in between, it'll be hard not to schedule your fun-filled Prairie Days activities around these food vendors.

"I think they're all going to be really good choices and we're going to have a variety," said Prairie Days Committee Member Becki McGinnis. "You won't be disappointed."

Baines Kettle Corn (Kettle Corn)

(Friday, Saturday and Sunday)

Pop on by Blaines Kettle Corn for some syrupy-sweet kettle corn and snacks.



Blaines Famous Kettle Corn is a family-owned and operated business with a knack for serving up the golden snack just right to satisfy that craving. It also makes for a great snack in between busy events.

More food vendors are expected to join the lineup in the days leading up to the big weekend. Go online to yelmpriedays.com to stay up to date on what vendors will be rolling into town June 28.

Tacos Gaby (Authentic Mexican) (Friday, Saturday and Sunday)

Nothing compliments a hot summer's day quite like the authentic Mexican food from the southwestern states of Jalisco and Michoacán.

Tacos Gaby will be cooking up Mexican delicacies all weekend long at Yelm Prairie Days.

Catch the crew at Friday's Street Dance event and pick up a taco or three next to the wine and beer garden.

The Cattleman (Barbecue and Burgers) (Friday)

Whose got the beef? Oh, yeah. The Cattleman's got the beef. And so much more.

Sporting their iconic and recognizable red food trailer, The Cattleman will make an appearance Friday at the Street Dance to assist Prairie Days-goers in satisfying their taste buds with home-styled barbecue and burgers.

Yelm Lions Club (Burgers)

(Friday, Saturday and Sunday)

One of the best things about coming to a community event in the Prairie is seeing the smiling faces from members of the Yelm Lions Clubs. And you can feel the love they put into their food as you chomp into a hamburger.

Coming up on 80 years of service for the Yelm community, Yelm Lions Club and the food they serve set a high bar at many of the events in Yelm; the food they serve up is a can't-miss.

Emanuel Lutheran Church (Baked Potatoes and Treats) (Friday, Saturday and Sunday)

Sink your chompers into a golden-baked potato or grab some cotton candy to go thanks to the fine folks over at Emanuel Lutheran Church.

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Get Your Jig On at the Prairie Days Street Dance

BY ERIC ROSANE

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A longtime Prairie Days favorite will make a much-anticipated return this year.

Kick off the three-day event in style and brush up on your dance moves Friday, June 28, during the Street Dance party, from 6 to 10 p.m. on Second Street S.E. next to the Yelm Community Center.

The event is sponsored by Hump Day Partner Dancing, and food vendors and a beer/wine garden will be available nearby for those of legal age.

Co-organizer Matthew McLellan said the free event will be a no pressure, fun way for community members to express themselves and enjoy the beats of modern, family-friendly dance music.

"You could get out there and dance or you could sit in the beer garden and watch people dance," McLellan said. "There will be everyday folks, like you and I, out there."

Being an instructor at Hump Day Partner Dancing, McLellan said it gave him leverage to spearhead the revival of the Street Dance, which he said has been in talks for years.

Nicki Foster, wife of Mayor JW Foster, and Cory Kolilis, co-founder and owner of Puget Sound Entertainment, assisted McLellan with this event. Puget Sound Entertainment is expected to provide music. McLellan, a sixth-generation Yelmite, said he's not exactly sure when Yelm held its last Street Dance. But he knows a couple residents who might have the answers.

"It was certainly sometime within my mother's lifetime. So sometime within the last 40-some-odd years," he said.

According to the Nisqually Valley News archives, dances in the parks and streets during Prairie Days have been hosted in one way or another as far back as 1979, back when the event was a week long.

"Immediately following the selection

of the royal ruler (Prairie Days Princesses), teenagers will remain in the park for a free dance with music supplied by Highway 101 Rock band," a 1979 Nisqually Valley News article read.

In addition to featuring a beer and wine garden, this year's event will also play host

to Tacos Gaby and The Cattleman. It's not recommended, but dancers can bring their own food to the dance floor.

"It's just really exciting to have the opportunity to create more vibrancy in our town and maintain the culture in the same stride," McLellan said.



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