

Original Old-Fashioned July 4th Festival in Drake Park

by K_Guice

Long to celebrate the holidays of yesteryear? Then grab the kids and head to downtown Bend for the Original Old-Fashioned July 4th Festival in Drake Park.

From a pancake breakfast to heart runs to marching in a parade with your pet, there is patriotic fun to be had for everyone.

Spark Your Heart

Get the old heart pumping with an early morning 5K walk or run at 8:30 a.m. on July 4 at Troy Field. Not only is it a great way to start the day, it helps raise money for a good cause.

“This is our annual fund-raising event to raise awareness about heart disease prevention and it gets families out and moving,” said Staci Burgess, director of development and community relations for the Heart Institute of the Cascades. “The money goes to raise money for our research and education programs,” she added.

Raising awareness through various programs is more important than ever. "With the increase of obesity in our country and in our community we really want to provide a way for families to get out and prevent heart disease and other diseases that are caused by obesity," Burgess said.

Children stretch in preparation for the 2005 Firecracker Dash, part of the Spark Your Heart Run. This isn't just for adults; she invites kids to come along too. "It's a really fun family event," Burgess said. "There is also a firecracker dash at noon in Drake Park. It's for 10 and under and it's free!"

For more information call: 385-7988

Bend Weekly Newslink: www.yourheart.org

Drake Park Pancake Breakfast

Head down to the park for a hearty breakfast before the festivities begin. The Sunrise Lions Club invites everyone to come down to the park from 8 a.m. to noon for a delicious plate of pancakes. Adults eat for \$5, kids eat for \$3.

For more information call: 330-0715

Pet Parade

Lizards and horses and dogs! oh my! Those are just a few of the creatures that may be seen roaming the streets of downtown Bend on July 4th.

Bend Metro Parks & Recreation District invites children of all ages, one to 100. Everyone is encouraged to bring their kids, bikes, tricycles, wagons, costumes, and pets down to the annual pet parade.

The event is free and everyone is invited to participate. "Decorating and staging begins at 9 a.m. at the Library School Administration building. The parade begins at 10 a.m.," said Chris Zerger, special events coordinator Bend Metro Parks & Recreation District.

"It is a community event that is rich in tradition," she said. "The pet parade has been around since the 1930s."

Zerger said the district has worked hard to hold on to the event's heritage. "We do not have any motorized vehicles, we ask that there is no solicitation or handing out of information; we just want it to be a fun event for the entire family."

Some changes have had to be made, like blocking off roads and setting up barricades for public safety. She says it has become necessary as Bend's population and the size of the event have grown.

The route has also changed. "This year the route starts on Wall at the school district administration building, goes down to Oregon, Lava, Minnesota and back down Bond to Troy Field and into the parking lot of the school administration building," she said.

After the parade, everyone is invited to head down for the 4th of July festivities at Drake Park. "We will have live bands, over 150 crafters selling their goods and community agencies educating the public," Zerger said.

Children are sure to have a blast. "There are old fashioned kids games: water balloon toss, gunny-sack races, a three-legged race, a hula-hoop contest, and a water melon eating contest," she added.

Kids will also get to meet firefighters, see a fire truck and there is a new attraction this year. “Life Flight is going to be landing in Harmon Park, which is right across the river,” she said. “That is going to be a lot of fun.”

Best of all, she says the events are free. “This is all funded through the park district,” Zerger said. “This is how we showcase what we are really about: for fun, for friends, for family, for health. It’s one of our gifts to the community.”

For those attending the festivities, she suggests that people arriving after 9 a.m. prepare to park on the edge of downtown and walk. In addition, she says the new parking garage will be closed since it is right on the parade route.

For more information call: 389-7275

Fireworks Fantastic!

End the evening with a bang. Watch the sky come alive at the annual Bend community fireworks extravaganza. The pyrotechnics are scheduled to get under way at Pilot Butte State Park at 10 p.m.

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