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Mossyrock Blueberry Festival celebrates on July 30 - Aug. 1

BY BUDDY ROSE
The East County Journal

Blueberries will be celebrated July 30 – August 1 in Mossyrock during the 20th Annual Blueberry Festival. This year’s theme is The Super Berry, focusing on the economically significant Mossyrock blueberry harvest and community. The fun begins Thursday with an evening of bingo in the Community Center and continues Friday afternoon through Saturday night with many of the activities taking place in Klickitat Prairie Park. Mossyrock, The Heart of Lewis County, is expected to be packed with visitors and there will be plenty of the delicious berries available for them to take home.

Highlighting festivities again this year will be the return of the Wenatchee Youth Circus, with multiple performances in Klickitat Prairie Park on Saturday. The popular youth circus has been performing in the Western U.S. for more than 70 years. They feature young people performing high wire, flying trapeze, aerial and ground acrobatics along with hilarious clowns. Saturday’s shows will be at noon and at 2:00, 4:00 and 6:00 p.m. There is no charge to view these shows.

On both Friday and Saturday, there will be many vendor booths set up in the park selling food, blueberries and blueberry-themed products and a host of



A winner of one of the heats in the Blueberry Pie Eating contest at the Mossyrock Blueberry Festival last year.

other wares and services. Other popular features returning to the park will be the kids’ huge, inflatable obstacle course and a mobile fishing pond, courtesy of the Mineral Lake Lions Club. On Saturday, a blueberry bake-off competition and pie eating contest will take place along with the Family Fun Dog Show and wildly entertaining Wiener Dog Races.

Saturday’s Blueberry Festival Parade on State Street will start at 10:00 a.m. Grand Marshal for this year is Darell Myers, Master

of Mossyrock Grange #355. Before the parade, Mossyrock Youth from the Assembly of God Church will be serving a blueberry pancake breakfast fundraiser in front of the church, from 7:00 a.m. until 10:00 a.m. Behind the high school, the Road Rebels Car Club will be hosting their ever-popular car and motorcycle show from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. The show includes a poker walk, raffle drawings – including the loony chicken drop – and prizes awarded for the best vehicles.

A beer garden will be set up near the park amphitheater on Friday and Saturday, hosted by the Bucksnot Pub in Morton along with Longmire Springs Brewing in Packwood and 3 Dog Cider and Brewstillery in Ethel. Music in the Park on Friday evening at the amphitheater will showcase Cody Bartels from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m., Noah Delos Reyes from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. and Todd Seals and Baird Creek from 8:00 – 10:00 p.m. On Saturday, a concert finale featuring Runaway Fire will take place from 8:00 –

10:00 p.m. Over at the Mossyrock Community Center, the Thursday night bingo is a fundraiser for the Mossyrock Area Historical Society and goes from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. and features valuable cash prizes. On Saturday following the parade, the Community Center serves as the dedicated, air-conditioned Cooling Center for overheated visitors. The historical society will be displaying local history items and providing historical information there from 11:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. During those same hours, various Blueberry Academy classes will also be featured, including how to grow blueberries and a beginner’s beekeeping class.

Local blueberries will be on sale at the Mossyrock Area Action League booth in the park on Saturday and on Friday and Saturday at three locations nearby: Pan-American Berry Growers farm stand from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. at 212 Klickitat Creek Road, west of Mossyrock; Aldrich Berry Farm from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. at 190 Aldrich Road off of Mossyrock Road West; and at McFadden Family Farm You Pick Blueberries from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. at 156 Damron Road off of State Route 122 near the stop light on Hwy. 12. Of course, berries at those three locations will be available for the remainder of the blueberry harvest season, as well.



Skyo Fire outside of Packwood taken on Friday, July 24 by local resident Sarah Barnett. The view is looking over the fields of Baker Road at the Skyo Fire across the Cowlitz River.

Lightning strikes, causing wildfires

BY AMBER BROWN
East County Journal

On Wednesday, July 22 a lightning storm swept through East Lewis County. Two wildfire starts were reported that night. “Since July 23, 17 additional small fires have been reported, scouted, contained and a few controlled. Local responders and U.S. Forest Service crews are working toward full suppression under challenging, densely forested terrain,” the July 26 press release stated.

The first was named the Dog Mountain Fire. Fire crews and air support have been deployed. On Thursday, July 24, the fire was approximately three acres and 50 percent contained. As of Monday, July 27 it has grown to 5.4 acres and 95 percent contained.

The second was the Skyo

Fire, located between three and four miles away from the town of Packwood, technically in Randle. Each day tidbits of information were given to the public. The fire started small but due to the location of being on a steep mountainside terrain, it was difficult for local crews to access it. Air support was brought in but was pulled away to other fires as well.

The town of Packwood has been receiving the worst of the smoke. The air smells like a campfire. The reason that the air is as smoky as it is, has been caused by what is burning. Firefighters call it the duff.

The duff is the layer of one to two feet thick debris on the forest floor. Mostly pine needles and branches, this layer when smoldering causes thick white smoke. Pictures from passers-

by have shown that flare ups catching trees on fire are happening as well.

The night of Friday, July 25 showed a spectacular view of exactly how the fire is behaving. Packwood RV Park Manager Derek Brown described it as “100 campfires burning in a row.”

At 7 p.m. on Saturday, July 25, the Office of the Lewis County Sheriff sent out a press release with a Level 1 Evacuation Order. The corresponding map showed the highlighted area was on the North side of the Cowlitz River at the base of Skyo Mountain. There are no houses in that area. However, by Sunday night the fire has reached the river. The evacuation order has not changed as of Monday.

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‘Camelot’ comes to Morton

BY AMBER BROWN
East County Journal

“Camelot” is coming to Morton. Co-presented by the Fire Mountain Arts Council and Centralia College East and directed by Lynne Olmos. Musical directors are Brandon Pratt and Corey Hecker. The summer musical “Camelot” is based on the fantasy classic, “The Once and Future King,” written by T.H. White and turned into a play by Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe. There are 12 musical productions in Act I and nine in Act II.

The story starts with a young Arthur, after he has pulled the sword from stone, meeting Guenevere. She doesn’t want to be queen, preferring country living. However, after Arthur and Guenevere meet, they fall in love

and plan to marry.

Five years later, Arthur presents his idea for knights to represent honor and justice, not just fighting and pillaging. This leads to the Knights of the Round Table coming into creation. Their reputation reaches Lancelot Du Lac in France.

Guenevere is put off by Lancelot’s boasting and has him compete in a joust against Sir Dinadan, Sir Sagamore and Sir Lionel. The joust against Sir Lionel turns nearly fatal but Lancelot’s cries for Sir Lionel revive him from what the crowd presumes is death. This action turns Guenevere’s attitude toward him around and they develop feelings for each other. While remaining faithful to Arthur, Guenevere and Lancelot fight

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TRL Board approves Levy Lid Lift Measure for November ballot

On July 22, 2026, the Timberland Regional Library (TRL) Board of Trustees unanimously approved placing a levy lid lift measure before voters on the November 3 ballot. If approved, the measure would increase the library’s regular property tax levy rate to provide additional funding for library open hours, staffing, and services.

Approximately 96 percent of Timberland Regional Library’s operating revenue comes from local property taxes. If approved by voters, the measure would increase TRL’s regular property tax levy from its current rate of approximately \$0.22 to \$0.35 per \$1,000 of assessed property value beginning in 2027. Without additional funding, the library anticipates significant cuts to open hours, staff, and services.

Washington law limits how much property tax revenue library districts can collect each year. While operating

costs have increased over time, TRL’s levy rate has gradually declined to approximately \$0.22 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. November’s ballot measure will be the first time in more than 17 years that the library has sought to raise its levy rate after a 2009 vote was narrowly defeated.

“It’s been a quarter century since we’ve been at a full levy rate. ... The longer we go on, the further we get from the library system that we can be because we’re not fully funding it. ... We need to allow our communities to make this decision. If we don’t put it on the ballot, they don’t get to make that decision,” said Dustin Loup, Trustee representing Grays Harbor County.

Ballots will be mailed to registered voters on October 16. Election day is November 3, 2026.

Additional information about the levy lid lift measure, including FAQs and resources for voters can be found at [TRL.org/Levy](https://www.trl.org/Levy).