

PortlandTribune

Float on over to the locks

Come celebrate at Lock Fest in West Linn on May 15

By Linda Hundhammer

The West Linn Tidings, May 6, 2010



submitted photo

This year's Lock Fest on May 15 is a grand celebration of the reopening of the Willamette Falls Locks after a yearlong closer for gate inspection and repairs. The boater's flotilla will include canoes and kayaks, personal yachts, tugboats and barges and jet boats.

With great fanfare, festivities and fun galore, West Linn is celebrating the reopening of the canal and locks at Lock Fest 2010 on May 15.

After a yearlong closure for gate inspection and repairs, the 1873 Willamette Falls Locks now have a clean bill of health and everyone is invited to come celebrate the city's historical marvel.

Lock Fest is in its sixth year (not counting last year's hiatus), and this family-friendly history festival hosts music, exhibits and activities including the Willamette Falls Heritage Foundation photo history displays, West Linn Paper Company Mill tours, Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde display, the Paper + Ink = Art kids' monoprinting activity, the giant aquarium from the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the 1915 antique auto display, and classic wooden boats from the Antique Boat Society.

The locks will be open and all boaters are invited to join in an informal flotilla. Boaters are encouraged to put on parade dress, fly their flags and bring their personal color to the event.

“You never know what you are going to see at Lock Fest,” said Sandy Carter, festival organizer. “We’ll have canoes and kayaks, yachts and recreational boats, a Jet Boat from Portland Speedboats, a couple of barges and the Sternwheeler Rose – the locks will be extremely busy all day. It is really fun to watch.”

For the first time since 2007, the Sternwheeler Rose will be offering rides through the locks at Lock Fest for \$10. There will be two trips – a morning trip upstream (11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.) and an afternoon trip downstream (2 to 4 p.m.) Contact the Sternwheeler Rose staff for tickets at 503-388-0343; www.sternwheelerrose.com.

One of this year’s star attractions will be an industrial lockage organized by Bernert Towing and Wilsonville Concrete Construction. A Bernert tugboat will tow a barge loaded with 500 tons of Schnitzer Steel scrap metal upstream through the locks on its way to a recycling facility in the valley. The trip is a demonstration of how using the river can take heavy trucks off the highway.

Just down the river in Oregon City, the Oregon City Pioneer Family Fun Festival will be taking place at Clackamette Park. Oregon City Trolley will be running a free shuttle so that visitors may ride between the two festivals. For paddlers and sternwheeler riders, the trolley is perfect transportation from the SportCraft/JonStorm dock to Lock Fest.

The schedule for the day is as follows:

- * 7 a.m.: Lions’ Pancake and Sausage Breakfast in Willamette Falls Locks Park, Mill Street, West Linn.
- * 8 a.m. Locks Open: Register at the PGE Tours Booth for tours of the historic West Linn Paper Company Mill. Each group is limited to 12, and tours fill rapidly.
- * 9 a.m.: Exhibits, activities and displays open.
- * 10 a.m.: West Linn Paper Company to receive BRAG recycling award – PGE History Stage.
- * 11 a.m.: The Pricer Family, Old Time Gospel music, PGE History Stage, Lion’s lunch with the famous Lions’ burgers.
- * 11:50 a.m.: West Linn Community Chorus Ensemble presents the National Anthem.
- * Noon: Locks Reopening Ceremony “One Willamette River Coalition,” PGE History Stage.
- * 1 p.m.: Justin Franzino, accordion, PGE History Stage.
- * 3 p.m.: Door prize drawing and Passport Prizes.

n 3:15 p.m.: Casey Dyer and Anton Emery, Irish Music, PGE History Stage.

* 4 p.m.: Locks fest exhibits close.

* 7 p.m. Locks close for the day.

“We are looking forward to several thousand people attending the event,” Carter said. “The biggest variable with an outdoor festival is always the weather. In past years we’ve held this festival in September, but it felt so right to have it this year in May to celebrate the May 6 reopening of the locks and to honor all those that made that happen.”

For more information, please visit www.willamettefalls.org, or call Sandy Carter at 503-650-9570. To volunteer, call Michelle Eberle at 503-704-9744 or e-mail eberlem@comcast.net.

Copyright 2010 Pamplin Media Group, 6605 S.E. Lake Road, Portland, OR 97222 • 503-226-6397