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It's tartan time again in Prosser

By **Tammy Ayer**

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Pipers pipe during the 2012 Prosser Scottish Fest. (TJ MULLINAX/Yakima Herald-Republic file)

PROSSER, Wash. -- Grab your plaid and don your tartan for the annual Prosser Scottish Fest and Highland Games on Saturday at the Prosser Wine and Food Park.

The Chieftain of the Day and the famous “Prosser Anvil Launch” will officially open the festival. Gates open at 9 a.m., when the traditional competitions begin.

“Heavy athletic” events feature kilted men and women in the caber toss, sheaf toss, stone, hammer and weight events. Youth athletes ages 7-14 can learn similar events in the morning and compete in their own afternoon heavy games. The competitions end with the Challenge Anvil Toss and Keg Toss, which are open to anyone to attempt to heave the objects for distance.

The Highland Dance competition features Scottish Highland dances historically performed by warriors as pre-battle preparations and victory celebrations, plus national dances that developed after the Highland dances were banned by the English.

At noon, gather your clan and join the Parade of Tartans, led by drum major Dayna Wilkinson. Participants include the Massed Band featuring the Columbia Regional Pipe Band, made up of pipers and drummers from all over the Pacific Northwest; and Highland Pipes and Drums from greater Yakima. The band is led by pipe major Darin Record.

The Firefighter’s Challenge begins at 1 p.m. Wearing bunker gear, paired competitors from fire departments throughout the Yakima Valley race head-to-head, performing a linked series of tasks demonstrating firefighting skills, strength, endurance and team efficiency.

Musical entertainment will feature the traditional sounds of the lowland and uilleann pipes, guitar, fiddle, Appalachian dulcimer and bodhran, pipes and drums.

Performers include Seattle-based Ockham’s Razor, a Celtic fusion band that blends influences of Celtic and Irish tradition with rock, pop, Gypsy, punk, jazz, bluegrass and folk elements; Portland’s Sons of Malarkey; Skweez The Weezle; and the Three Rivers Dulcimer Society.

Also on the schedule: the “Bonny Knees” contest; MacPherson’s Farm; Flashover Farm in Sunnyside; “From Sheep to Cloth” by Prosser’s Pearson Sheep Co.; and the Desert Fiber Arts Guild of the Tri-Cities.

The Highland Market will feature local and regional artisans plus Scottish and Irish imports, and head to The Flying Anvil Pub to enjoy the selection of local beers including Smokin' Anvil Scottish Ale and PNW cider.

If You Go

WHAT: Prosser Scottish Fest and Highland Games.

WHEN: 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, June 18.

WHERE: Prosser Wine and Food Park, 2840 Lee Road, Prosser.

COST: \$10 general admission; \$5 ages 5-12 and over 65; free for ages 4 and younger.

PARKING: Free parking at the Port of Benton Prosser Wine and Food Park just off Exit 82 from Interstate 82.

WANT TO HELP? Email info@prosserscottishfest.org.

INFORMATION: www.prosserscottishfest.org; Facebook page; @ProsserScots on Twitter. (For tourism information, visit TourProsser.com or call 509-786-3177.

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