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Members of Tenino’s Colvin family, including Fred (rear) and Katherine (left) are presented with an Oregon Trail Days Grand Marshal plaque awarded posthumously to Colvin Ranch funder Ignatius Colvin (1829-1899), founder of the Colvin Ranch.

Local pioneer is posthumous '26 OTD Grand Marshal winner

Ignatius Colvin, first posthumous OTD honoree

By Dan Fisher
News Editor

To recognize the historic nature of the 2026 Oregon Trail Days celebration in Tenino, coming on the heels of the 250th anniversary of the U.S. Declaration of Independence founding the country, the Tenino Area Chamber of Commerce has announced its first-ever posthumous award of the Oregon Trail Days Grand Marshal title to Tenino pioneer Ignatius Colvin

(1829-1899), born in Missouri, who founded the Colvin Ranch on its current site just west of Tenino in 1874. Ignatius was honored at the Tenino chamber’s monthly lunch forum, held July 15 at the Sandstone Café. Accepting the honor on his name were Fred and Katherine Colvin and other members of the Colvin family, still running the ranch today. Ignatius came west in 1849, driving a commissary wagon over the Oregon Trail. He crossed the Columbia River in 1854 and founded the ranch near Tenino that still bears his name, building a house in 18776 that is still in use by family members.

“It’s a real honor – we deeply appreciate it,” Fred Colvin said as he and his family were presented the certificate by Tenino Area Chamber President Cheryl Pearce. During Oregon Trail Days, the Colvin Ranch entry in the Grand Parade will include three covered wagons, which will also be on display in the park over the OTD weekend. “I found an old farm wagon from about the 1870s,” Fred Colvin said. “I built a new box for it. The farm wagons were what they used for covered wagons. We wanted to give everybody kind of idea of what that Oregon Trails trel was like.”

Frank Hicks named Tenino Citizen of the Year for 2026

By Dan Fisher
News Editor

A lifetime of service to Tenino and its military veterans has resulted in Frank Hicks being named Tenino Citizen of the Year by the Tenino Area Chamber of Commerce, it was announced at the chamber’s July 15 lunch forum at the Sandstone Café. Hicks, called “A pillar of the Tenino Veterans of Foreign Wars post for 30 years” by Chamber President Cheryl Pearce, was the driving force behind the re-establishment of the Tenino Honor Roll of World War II veterans from the Tenino School District, which stood in the town plaza from 1946 until the early 1960s, before the painted wooden sign was finally removed. Hicks backed the project to replace the wooden Honor Roll with an Honor Wall of stone. The project began in 2015, and Hicks and his VFW committee decided to expand the list beyond WW II veterans to include TSD armed services veterans from World War I, Korea, Viet Nam and Desert Storm. “We decided to include those who served up until 2012, since that was 100 years from the opening of Tenino High School,” Hicks said, adding that the new Honor Wall located between the Quarry Pool and the Tenino City Park paved path, includes an extra panel for the addition of any veterans’ names from the era that have been missed.



Frank Hicks accepts the 2026 Tenino Citizen of the Year plaque during the July 15 Tenino Area Chamber meeting.

The new Honor Wall was dedicated in a ceremony held Saturday, July 18. Hicks is no stranger to individual honors, having been named State VFW Veteran of the Year for 2024-25. As a high school athlete, the 6-foot-6 Hicks

inherited the role of starting center on the Tenino High School boys’ basketball team after the graduation of 6-10 Beaver hoop legend Gordy Harris, who went on to play at the University of Washington.

Tenino Eagles Auxiliary disbands

The Tenino Eagles Auxiliary has disbanded and no longer exists, Jim Zmudtka of the Tenino Eagles Aerie No. 564 announced last week.

“Nobody would stiep up to serve as officers,” Zmudtka said. “Without offices, you can’t have a chapter.” The membership of the Ten-

ino Auxiliary has largely been absorbed into the Chehalis Eagles Auxiliary. “Members can join any active chapter,” Zmudtka said.

OTD 2026 will celebrate local, national history

Nation’s 250th, Colvin Ranch to be celebrated

By Dan Fisher
News Editor

As the United States semiquincentennial (250th anniversary) celebration continues through the summer, it sends out branches of interest in the history of the local area, well before the beginnings of Tenino itself in 1872. This year’s Oregon Trail Days celebration, July 23-26, will include a tribute to the nation’s milestone birthday and exhibits on display at the Depot Museum will include dioramas of a Native American longhouse which would have been located near the site of the future city 250 years ago, as well as one showing the Colvin Ranch in its early days of the 1870s.

In the 58 years since Tenino’s first Oregon Trail Days in 1968, some traditional events have come and gone. The first OTDs featured beard-growing contests among local residents (and a ‘jail’ for those found to have shaved during that period), a pioneer-era fashion show and the black-powder shooting competition which for decades was the signature event of the weekend. No shooting competition has taken place in the 2020s, but there will be a black powder presence again at this year’s celebration, as some black powder enthusiasts will put on demonstrations of the skills required at the Pioneer Village which has become a major part of the weekend at Tenino City Park.

This year’s celebration has a soft opening on Thursday, July 23, with the Tenino Quarry Pool open to the public from noon to 6 p.m. and the weekend’s first Tenino Young-at-Heart Theatre performance of its 2026 production, “Once Upon a Mattress,” starting at 7 p.m. at Tenino High School. Friday’s activities begin at 9 a.m. with the WAMS Rock & Gem Rendezvous, a long-time participant. This collection of display and vendor booths for visiting rockhounds will also run until 6 p.m. At 10 a.m., Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 5878 of Tenino will conduct a flag-raising

ceremony at the City Park Flag Plaza, and the Pioneer Village (with 48 hands-on activities) and Deput Museum will open for visitors. Noon will mark Friday’s pool opening and the beginning of action at Tenino High School’s Beaver Stadium of the first day’s play in the Battle on the Blacktop high school girls’ soccer tournament, which will continue until about 7:30 both Friday and Saturday with free admission for spectators.

At 3 p.m. Friday will be the opening of “Castle Faire,” a parallel event sponsored by Castle Realty featuring a medieval theme and a bounce house for children next to Castle Realty’s Sussex Avenue building, also continuing through the weekend. Friday closes out with 7 p.m. events including the TYT play at the high school and live music at the City Park from the Exit 88 Band.

Saturday will be the highlight of the weekend, with the Grand Parade through downtown Tenino starting with the Tenino Motorcycle Drill Team performing along the parade route at 10:45 a.m. and the parade itself beginning at 11. The Capital City 3-on-3 basketball tournament will run from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. at multiple courts set up at and around Parkside Elementary School. That tourney will include a Dunk Contest at noon. Live music will be provided Saturday by the Shoot from the Hip Band at 1 p.m., Andra & Tank at 3 and 5 p.m. and Ethan Tucker from 7-10 p.m., while the Tenino Eagles Car Show will take place from 1-4 p.m. on Howard Street and the City Parking Lot.

The 3-on-3 tournament and WAMS Rock & Gem shows continue at 8 and 9 a.m., respectively, on Sunday, with the hoop tourney holding a 3-point contest at noon. At 2 p.m. Sunday the America 250 Birthday Cake ceremony will be held at the Depot Museum, and religious services will be held, also from 2-3 p.m. A closing flag ceremony by the VFW will bring the weekend to a close at 4 p.m. Sunday, but performances of TYT’s “Once Upon a Mattress” are scheduled at 1 p.m. July 29, 30, 31 and Aug. 1 at Tenino High School.

Foam Party at Tenino City Park

Charlie Plante
DeVaul Publishing

A Foam Cannon is coming to Tenino City Park for the first time ever at 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. on July 29. The cannon dispenses foam that is clean, hypoallergenic and safe for babies, kids, pets and environments, according to the Crazy Fun Foam Party website.

In addition to the Foam Cannon, the event will have music and beach balls for people to play with. “The friends of the library are the ones that help us raise the money for us to put on events for them to come and enjoy,” Brenda Camren, the regional manager of the Timberland Regional Libraries, said.

Pokémon Club at Tenino Library

Charlie Plante
DeVaul Publishing

Pokémon fans will gather at the Tenino Library from 3:30 to 5 p.m. next Thursday the 23rd of July. Typically, the club hosts children aged kindergarten through eighth grade with their parents, according to Kayla Emerson, a librarian of the Timberland Library’s Yelm branch. “It’s a fairly new club but we’re expanding as we can,” Emerson said. The club has several activities,

including teaching the Pokémon card game (bringing your own cards is not required), coloring pages and arts and craft activities. The event is a part of a partnership with the American Library Association that is sponsored by Nintendo, allowing the libraries free use of its logos and Pokémon games, Emerson said. “It brings people together,” Emerson said. All Pokémon events at the Tenino Library occur during the fourth Thursday of the month from 3:30 to 5 p.m.