

Pullman celebration brings together locals and visitors

By Samantha Malott Daily News staff writer | Posted: Saturday, July 5, 2014 1:00 am

Sunnyside Park came alive Friday night, as local families, students and out-of-town visitors arrived, anxious for good food, live music and fireworks.

Pullman's annual Fourth of July Celebration continued its tradition for the 39th year, in what has come to be known as one of the biggest, family-friendly celebrations in the area.

"I've been here since the first year," Mary Cole said. "I like getting to see all people together here."

Cole, as well as Steve and Loraine Bell, said they try to sit in the same general area every year to get the best view of the show. The Bells said this is their fifth year coming to the party at Sunnyside.

"I think it is one of the best firework shows I've seen anywhere," Loraine Bell said. "You look up and it is just so amazing."

Danielle Hurd of Pullman is especially fond of the firework show.

"I love how low the fireworks get set off," she said, adding it feels like they are right above the crowd when they fall down.

Hurd and Nicole Clark are both volunteers for the event through the Pullman Resonate Church. The two girls and another 20 or more church members were at the park to help direct traffic and serve ice cream, Clark said.

This is the first time Clark said she will get to watch the fireworks up close. Last year, they watched from across town and could see the fireworks before hearing them, which isn't quite the same, she said.

Coming here for July 4 is also nice because people can come and hang out with friends in a relaxed atmosphere, Clark said.

"It's a combination of all this," Steve Bell said.

Bell specifically complemented the food and music. This year's entertainment included the Community Band of the Palouse, folksinger Dan Maher and hours of rock 'n' roll classics from The Fabulous Kingpins.

All the proceeds from sales of barbecue dinners, ice cream, cotton candy, glow sticks and inflatable



Small town, big boom

Fireworks light up the Pullman skyline Friday as park of the Independence Day celebrations at Sunnyside Park, as seen from Military Hill Park.

bounce houses go toward covering the cost of the firework show.

Local law enforcement and emergency response crews were also at the event. Police officers opened up a squad car and allowed children and adults alike to take pictures and hop in the driver's seat.

The Pullman Fire Department was on site, with engines and equipment open for public viewing. Children were given the chance to use firehoses to put out fake flames.

The busy celebration drew in not only locals from Pullman and Moscow, but also many from out of town.

WSU alumni Kevin and Christal Magnuson, along with their two sons, Matthew and Tyler, came from Bremerton, Wash., to spend their Fourth of July in Pullman. Kevin said he enjoys the low-key, family atmosphere the small-town celebration provides.

The Gutoettemoeller family said they were visiting Pullman from Alaska to check out the local community and the Fourth of July celebration for the first time.

Matthew Gutoettemoeller said they are thinking of moving to the area in hopes of getting back to the small-town life, after having bounced around big cities for work. They are looking for a more family-oriented community, he said.

"It's a great place to raise a family," he said, adding the atmosphere lived up to the event's billing as a "staple home-town celebration."

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