

Boogg burns away woes



Boogg master Bill Pearson invites written troubles in net for burning in the Boogg.

Problems vanish in effigy flames

The burning of the boogg is one of the oldest traditions of Alpenfest.

The boogg is manmade of wood and paper and looks something like a giant nutcracker, according to Ernie Grocock, parade marshal of the 25th Alpenfest and longtime festival volunteer.

The boogg is originally from Zurich, Switzerland, where the boogg is burned to signify the end of winter at the Sechselauten celebration.

At Alpenfest, the boogg is burned to begin the festivities for the week. The boogg is always burned after dark on Tuesday during Alpenfest.

Prior to the burning, volunteers collect slips of paper from those in attendance. On the paper a person is to write his or her problems.

The slips of paper are then stuffed into the boogg and consumed in flames.

"We use it as a form of entertainment," Grocock said.

According to Grocock, the average number of spectators gathering for the burning of the boogg is 400-500.

"That's not bad considering we wait until after dark on Tuesday night," he said.

The boogg is built by volunteers and decorated by the American Business Women's Association (ABWA).



The boogg averages 12 feet in height and about six feet in diameter, Grocock said.

The burning of the boogg has started every Alpenfest, although last year a new twist was added.

"The ladies decorating the boogg put a skirt on 'him', so we had a 'booggette' last year," Grocock said.

The boogg takes about half an hour to burn on a normal summer night, Grocock said.

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