



## GRAND MARSHALS

## MIKE & MARLENE HEATH



What started 30 years ago has come full circle for Mike and Marlene Heath.

"We met in our living room with a group of people and we were saying we needed something to add to White Bird Days," Marlene explained. And that's how the White Bird Rodeo was born. Although now longer active members, we still come back as often as we can, as our grandson, Riley rides in the rodeo. The Heaths will serve as the Grand Marshals for the 2019 White Bird Days and Rodeo, set for Father's Day weekend. "It's definitely a family weekend," Marlene said.

Mike was born in Lewiston and as a young boy moved to John Day Creek where he was raised on a ranch there. Marlene (Lowe) was born in Boise and then as a child moved to Cow Creek. The two met at Salmon River High School in Riggins. They raised their two children, Vicky (now Smith) and Ron.

When their son was a sophomore in high school, they decided to go into full-time logging.

They moved to Burns, Oregon for 11 years, where they both drove logging trucks. "Of course we missed our friends, and Vicky was married by then, but we really enjoyed our time in Oregon,"

Marlene said.

The couple have been married for 54 years, and have 7 grandchildren, and 3 great-grandchildren. They enjoy being active in the lives of Vicky and her husband, Craig's children, and watching them grow up.

About a year and a half ago, we moved to Okanagan, Washington. To retire on our son's ranch,"

Marlene said. They now get to spend some time watching their two youngest grandchildren in high school rodeo and track.

"We were involved with the Riggins Rodeo for 25 years, and our family was into rodeoing." Mike said, while he worked as a cow boss on John Day.

Returning to the White Bird area, they decided to try ranching again, but Mike decided to retire when he suffered a double loss in one year: both his best horse, and best cow dog died. "I think God was trying to tell me something," he grinned.

"We are enjoying getting to spend time in Okanagan, but we're excited to come back here often, and especially for White Bird Days and Rodeo," Marlene said.

"We really "THANK" the community, and the rodeo committee for this honor," Mike added. The family will camp out at the rodeo grounds and participate in the White Bird Days and Rodeo activities, as well as enjoy time with their family and friends. "The rodeo family is just that...a big family. "And we're so glad to be a part of it!"

We will have a float in the parade, and will be riding horseback in the grand entries both days, so come on down to our little town, and help us Let 'er Rip, Father's Day weekend.