

Fourth Annual "Knee-Deep in Salmon" Auction

By Erika Paleck

Another turn in the circle of life brings us to the seventh annual Salmon Festival and the fourth annual "Knee-Deep in Salmon" auction.

According to Josette Mitchell, who along with her husband Casey, is co-chair of the Salmon Fest committee, the Vernonia Salmon Festival started out as a way to celebrate



This salmon by Dolly Keenon is one of the Salmon art pieces that will be up for auction at the Vernonia Salmon Fest on October 3rd.

fall and bring attention to our local eco-system. The original committee members, working with volunteers for the Upper Nehalem Watershed Council (UNWC), set out to craft a one-day celebration of Autumn using the arts, local vendors, activities for the whole family, fishing for the kids and educational resources to call attention to our locale's place in the salmon's life cycle.

According to Maggie Peyton, Director of the UNWC, this year's accent is on the connection between the health of wild salmon habitats, the Nehalem Watershed, and the personal actions each of us can take to ensure their survival and protection of water quality for the benefit of all. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife will be hosting a salmon watch along Rock Creek at Hawkins Park, a known spawning bed for Chinook salmon. The Chinook are at an all-time low

this year and the fishing season has been cancelled. For more information: info@nehalem.org

A featured event is the "Knee Deep in Salmon" Auction in which local artists buy a large, blank carved wooden salmon and turn their unique talents loose on it. The end result is then sold off during Salmon Fest with the proceeds going to fund next year's festival.

Through the years, salmon themes have varied from Homer Simpson take-offs to fish with scales made of fishing lures to life-like representations. This year, both Randal Harvey and Dolly Keenon will be taking the realistic approach using their skills to capture for all time one exuberant moment in the salmon's life. Dolly took many photos of fish heads during a ten-day fishing trip in Canada as part of her preparation. Randal, a newcomer to Vernonia, enjoyed working on her salmon and made it a special stand so that it looks as though it's perpetually swimming upstream.

Dolly's daughter Alaena, and Deb

Simmon have taken an alternative, symbolic approach harkening back to the days of the Northwest Indians. Alaena's is based on the traditional works of the Haida tribe of the First Nation. Deb Simmon has used an intricate inlay to accentuate her patterns.

All of these will be up for auction on Saturday, October 3, at the Vernonia Salmon Festival.

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Upcoming Meetings

First Wednesday of each month at the Vernonia Community Learning Center at 9:00 AM.

Open to the public, input is welcome.

October 7th
November 4th

Be a piece of the puzzle.

Coming in November:
"Beyond The Field"

Featuring John Underwood, founder of the American Athletic Association.

On November 19th & 20th John will present his innovative program "Pure Performance" for Vernonia and surrounding communities.

Join John and the Vernonia Prevention Coalition to learn how to build a safe community where our kids can grow to their full potential.

For more information contact:
DeAnna Pearl, VPC Director 503-369-7370