

Thousands protest Trump inauguration in peaceful Women's March on Portland

By Jack Rubinger
The Southwest Portland Post

Thousands of people met at Gov. Tom McCall Waterfront Park, and then marched in the rain through the downtown streets on Jan. 21 for the Women's March on Portland, a celebration of inclusivity, diversity and positive action.

Participants overcame the Portland weather and added a bit of Trump bashing. This march of a magnitude to beat most huge Portland events was a spectacular success of good will supporting the "love wins" attitude currently churning through our neighborhoods, our nation and the world.

"Over the weekend, tens of thousands of people—perhaps more than 100,000—exercised their right to assembly and expression in our city," said Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler.

"My top priority is always to protect the safety of everyone involved.

Additionally, I want to try to limit acts of vandalism and disruptions to transit. By these measures, the weekend was highly successful. In the end, no one entered the freeways. There were five arrests and no serious injuries were reported."

Some reported slow going through downtown streets and some degree of disorganization amidst the pink pussycat hat-wearing marchers. Many were confused about the route and not all wound up marching the whole route.

The streets were filled with signs, some of which read "Love Trumps Hate," "You Can't Comb Over Sexism" and "Make America Kind Again."

That said, the overall vibe was cheerful, uplifting, and eclectic — filled with drummers keeping the beat, colorful and clever signs, friends reuniting with friends and an overwhelming sense of making history and being part of something huge and important.

"Women, men, children and even some of their pets and the police were in attendance. All had the entire city thrumming with energy and goodwill," said Nadine Lefkowitz, a volunteer peace keeper and the owner of Topanien Global Gifts in Multnomah Village.

Lefkowitz said being a peace keeper for the march was a way for her and her husband to both participate in and be pro-active. Lefkowitz was joined by another Multnomah Village business owner — Joan Steinbach from Thinker Toys.

Lefkowitz said she and many others have been feeling crushed and powerless. She said that the march was a way to begin the process of discovering a new voice and



Thousands line up along Southwest Naito Parkway and the Morrison Bridge during the Women's March on Portland, Jan. 21. (Post photo by Don Snedecor)

of empowering herself through group action.

Lefkowitz said that she's been feeling heavy with sadness about Trump's attitude toward women and disbelief that anyone can be so cavalier towards other human beings.

"This was a huge coming together of people believing in each other and in sharing, helping and taking care of each other on a local, national and global level. This march is just the beginning of what we can do if we move together," said Lefkowitz.

Lefkowitz said she did not observe any violence or vandalism throughout the afternoon, unlike other Trump-related protests.

Her job, she said, was to keep participants moving forward and to be available if any problems arose which would stop and/or hinder the march's forward movement, including injuries, illness, altercations, and confusion.

Despite the size of the event and how quickly it grew, most of the marchers helped each other, apologizing for accidentally knocking into each other, raising umbrellas way above their heads and just generally bending over backward to make sure the march was peaceful.

Lefkowitz said it was all about people moving together in a steady stream of happiness, diversity, rain (lots of rain) and a flowing celebration of women and, of humanity.

She has observed that groups are popping up all over the city, the state, the country and the world that have missions of kindness, diversity, helpfulness and inclusivity.

At the end of the day, once marchers (and reporters) were home, many shed their sopping wet coats, placed shoes next to heating grates and indulged in hot baths — weary, but grateful to have been a part of a far-reaching movement.



This was just one of hundreds of people carrying signs protesting the words and actions of President Donald Trump. (Post photo by Don Snedecor)

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