BEST RADIO STATION

Coast Community Radio

KMUN 91.9 FM, KCPB 90.9 FM, KTCB 89.5 FM

Runner-up: KRKZ Hits 94.3 FM Chinook / Astoria
Honorable Mention: KLMY Clammy 99.7 FM Long Beach

By DWIGHT CASWELL

Submitted photo

KMUN Coast Community Radio broadcasts live from the Astoria Event Center during the FisherPoets Gathering.

KMUN is a true community radio station. Unlike public radio stations that have a lot of employees, KMUN has only three employees and some 100 volunteers. This explains why the programmers are your friends and neighbors. In fact, it's likely that few people in our area don't know a KMUN volunteer or two.

According to industry data, KMUN is also the most-listened to radio station in its listening area, which stretches from Raymond, Washington to Pacific City. That may be because there's something for just about everybody, whether you like blues, psychedelic folk music, news and commentary, opera, gardening, yoga, the arts — you name it.

Of course, KMUN also does the things that small town stations should do, like lost pets, bedtime stories, and community events. And the station produces local shows like "Talk of Our Towns" or the quintessential Astoria program, "The Ship Report."

Station manager Joanne Rideout is proud that KMUN is more financially resilient than in the past, and that the station has been building relationships with emergency services since the Great Coastal Gale of 2007. Most of all, she says, "I'm proud that KMUN is dear to the hearts of the people."

Tune in to Coast Community Radio on your radio, or listen online at coastradio.org

BEST HAIR SALON

Salon Vervé

Astoria, Oregon

Runner-up: Salon Boheme, Astoria
Honorable Mention: Azure Salon & Spa, Ilwaco

By JON BRODERICK

Photo by Jon Broderick

Sari Hartman, owner of Salon Verve, which was named this year's Best Hair Salon, is a Finnish immigrant.

Submitted photo

Salon Verve in downtown Astoria won Best Hair Salon.

You're walking into a lot of history when you walk into Salon Vervé — though the salon's serene and inviting interior hardly hints at it. Ask owner Sari Hartman to speak her native Finnish for you. It sounds, to a non-speaker, busy but soothing, like a running brook, and it anchors the place deep in the community.

Sari, the youngest of seven children, came from Finland with her family to Astoria in 1970 to visit relatives. Shortly, they immigrated, staying with her uncle, 17 people in his house, until her parents soon built one of their own. Her dad, Reino Vedenoja, worked at the Astoria Plywood Mill, her mom, Raili, at the Bumble Bee cannery.

"My mom would come home at night looking like she'd murdered something, but by morning her uniform was bleached, pressed, the hat perfect," Sari recalls. "On Marine Drive you could see hundreds of women like her, coming or going to their shift. I used to wait with the other kids at the bottom of the hill below Captain Robert Gray School to walk the rest of the way home with our moms. There's a rich history here that I'm very, very proud to be part of."

Like all of the Vedenoja children, Sari worked at the plywood mill. At 19 years old she was a shareholder and one of the few women on the graveyard shift. "I knew that mill work wasn't for me," she says. "That job motivated me to go to beauty school."

She sold her share and enrolled at Astoria Beauty School. She found an apprenticeship at Portland's high-end Salon Nyla where she showed up early and stayed late. She brought her knowledge of color, technique and style back to Astoria where, 20 years ago, she opened Salon Vervé.

Sari favors the health-conscious, relaxed Northwest hairstyles. "Avant garde is fun," she admits. "It scratches an itch, but what I love best is giving someone a completely different look, but a believable look, they can wear on a regular basis. It's not difficult to make someone's hair purple or bright red — but to transform gray hair into chestnut hair with soft honey highlights and to make that look like natural hair color, that's art."

When Salon Vervé was destroyed in the 2010 waterfront fire, Sari found a new location at the site of her old beauty school on Commercial Street. "My husband, Dean, and I worked our tails off for a soft opening in three weeks," she remembers. "And we did it."

"There's a grit in this town that I'm so proud of," she says.

BEST CAR DEALERSHIP

Lum's Auto Center

Warrenton, Oregon

Runner-up: Hayward's Ocean Crest Motors, Warrenton
Honorable Mention: Astoria Ford, Astoria

David and Shirley Lum opened Lum's Auto Center in 1969, and since then it has become a multi-franchise car dealership including Toyota, Scion, Chrysler, Jeep, Dodge and Ram.

The couple's three daughter now run the day-to-day operations of the dealership and service shop. Julie Lum is parts manager, and Pamela Lum serves as marketing manager and office manager.

Lori Lum-Toyooka, president and general manager of Lum's Auto Center, began the process of family business succession by working in sales and finance at Lum's Auto Center while attending and graduating from the Chrysler Sons & Daughters Dealer Academy and the National Auto Dealer Association Dealer Academy, where she served as president of her graduating class.

Lori received Dealer of the Year honors in January 2013, during the North American International Auto Show held in Detroit, Michigan. She was honored for demonstrating an unprecedented record of exceptional sales, exemplary service, strong customer relations and an overall commitment to excellence in the automobile industry.

In 2010, Lum's Auto Center received Excellence in Family Business awards by Oregon State University.

David Lum was the 2011 recipient of the Astoria-Warrenton Chamber of Commerce's George Award, a top accolade awarded to those who build community through service.

The Lum family constantly gives back to its community. It helped develop the Astoria Riverfront Trolley and the Garden of Surging Waves and contributed to the renovations of the Astoria Column and the Columbia River Maritime Museum's Barbey Maritime Center.

Lum's Auto Center is located at 1605 S.E. Ensign Lane in Warrenton. For more information, call 503-861-1144 or visit www.lumsautocenter.com

Photo by Brandy Stewart

The Lum family gathers at David Lum's public 80th birthday party in November 2013. Pictured, from left, is Pam Lum, David Lum, Shirley Lum, Lori Lum-Toyooka and Julie Lum.

Crossword Answer

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