

Dads, daughters: Prepare to dance the night away

By **ANDREW R. TONRY**
For EO Media Group

have about 90 attendees all together."

SEASIDE — The exuberance at last year's inaugural Daddy Daughter Dance far exceeded organizer Darren Gooch's expectations.

"When I first got things together for it, I saw presales of about 35 tickets," said Gooch, information technology and marketing director at the Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District. "My original anticipation was that we'd probably

Almost 200 showed up. "I was, like, really sweating bullets because I only had tables for 90 people in the main hall here at the Bob Chisholm Center," Gooch said.

Despite the influx of attendees, the event ran rather smoothly.

"Nobody sat for long anyway," said Gooch. "They were all out dancing at different times. It did flow nicely, albeit pretty tightly."

He attributed the turnout to one simple thing: "There's a cuteness factor to the Daddy Daughter Dance that just isn't there with anything else."

This year, Gooch and Special Events Coordinator Grace Smith are prepared.

The second Daddy Daughter Dance, which takes place from 6 to 8 p.m. Saturday, will move to the Seaside Civic and Convention Center. On hand will be a DJ, photo booth, refreshments and, of course, a few more tables — just in case.

The event is open to dads and daughters of all ages.

"We had a dad and his preschool-aged daughter through a high school girl and her grandpa last year," Gooch said. "That was really sweet."

Moms are welcome, too. "The moms are kind of the bigger driving force for this than even the dads," Gooch said. "You've got these dads and their little girls and a mom who's there going: 'No, you need to go do this. This is cute, you need to do this.'"

Despite the influx of dads and daughters, last year's event came in slightly under budget. But the rise in ticket price is, Gooch said, is to pay for the larger venue.

"We don't want to make money off of it," he added. "We want to make just enough to pay for all the expenses. Any time that an event gives the opportunity for community members to come out and do something together as a group or together as a family, that's the idea."

IF YOU GO

What: Daddy Daughter Dance
When: 6 to 8 p.m. Saturday
Where: Seaside Civic and Convention Center
Cost: \$20 per daddy-daughter couple, plus \$5 per additional daughter
Information: Daddies, grandpas or any father figure is invited.

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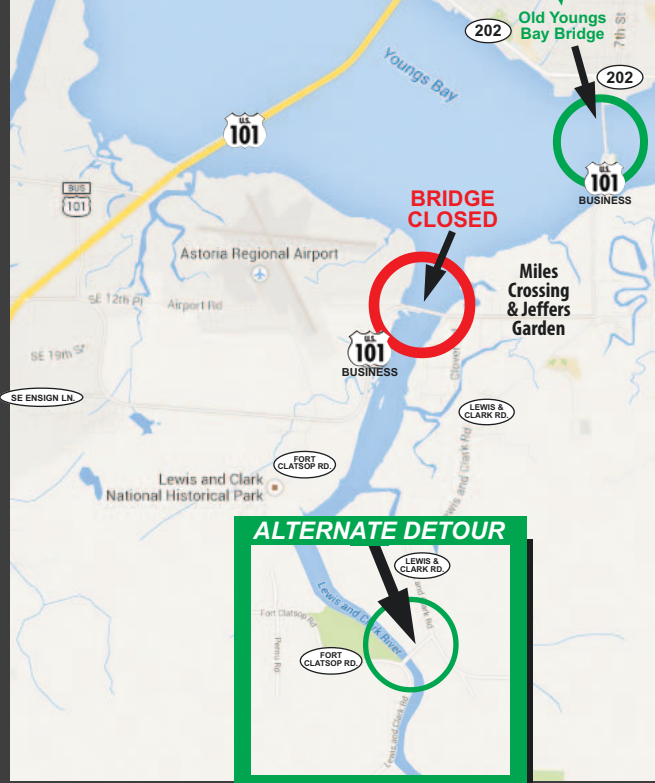
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