

FRIDAY EXTRA!

The Daily Astorian

Friday, March 13, 2015

Weekend Edition



MORE THAN HORSEING AROUND

Competitors exercise their horses between barrel-racing events inside the Red Barn Arena. Noncompetitive "time-only" events draw local equestrians of all ages and ability levels. More competitive events often attract riders from around the region who "haul in" for the day.

Red Barn Arena — home of equestrian dreams

Story and photos BY NATALIE ST. JOHN
EO Media Group

LONG BEACH, Wash. — At dusk, two teenage girls leaned out over the top of a corral fence, craning their necks toward a distant field.

One of them let out a long whistle, and a chestnut-colored horse with a white starburst on her forehead pressed against her corral, straining to see the girl.

"I love that it still works!" Eva's owner, Heather Williamson told her friend Amber Sholin.

The girls, both 16, were earning hay credit by mucking out stalls at the Red Barn Arena, a Sandridge Road stable that

is owned and operated by Amy and Bryan McHale. Equipped with an indoor arena and stalls, "The Barn" makes it possible to keep and ride horses in an inhospitable climate. It also provides a welcoming gathering place for locals who share a common bond.

As the girls worked, they chatted about the topics that arise naturally whenever two horse lovers meet; horse

personalities, horse dreams.

Heather and her boyfriend daydream about buying a big spread, raising, breaking, boarding horses for a living. Right now, she is working with her young mustang, who, she says, "is a spitfire — and that's an understatement."

Amber doesn't have a horse of her own, but she helps Heather out with hers. As she shoveled, she amiably compared her experiences with Heather's.

"You spend a lot of time with the cute fluffy end that you get to brush. I spend a lot of time with the end that smells like ammonia and gets stuck to your shoe!" Amber joked.

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As Marin McDonnell rode her horse Houston around the Red Barn Arena, her dog Blue decided to join her. Houston tolerated the extra passenger, but Blue was ready to return to earth after a few paces.

Tourists drawn to 'Deadliest Catch' crab boat

ILWACO, Wash. — The Aleutian Ballad was a crab boat for 23 years before it was converted into an industrial tourism ship. The crabber was shown on the Discovery Channel hit series "The Deadliest Catch" when it was hit by a 60-foot rogue wave that rolled the ship on its side. But that night in 2005 wasn't the first time a rogue wave knocked the ship over, co-owner David Lethin said.

In 1991, on a day known as Black Sunday when there were 17 mayday calls reported, a storm packing 170 mph winds took 160 crab boats by surprise. The seas were running 60 feet average, he said. The Aleutian Ballad, then known as the Shannon Marie, took a 90-foot wave and was knocked on its side.

The water in the crab tanks poured out, he said, and 60-foot waves crashed over the side of the boat.

"Vance Jones from Astoria, told his crew, 'This boat is going down; you need to get in your survival suits right

BY THE NUMBERS

- Homeport:** Ketchikan
- Year built:** 1986
- Owners:** David and Danene Lethin
- Captains:** David Lethin, Derrick Ray, Terry Barkley
- Length:** 107 feet
- Beam:** 26 feet
- Draft:** 8 feet
- Displacement:** 94 tons net, 300 gross tons
- Cruising speed:** 8 knots
- Main engines:** CAT 3408 (twin)
- Passengers:** 150
- Crew:** 6
- Cargo capacity:** 170,000 pounds crab
- Crab pot capacity before conversion:** 150
- Fuel capacity:** 9,900 gallons diesel

now." They abandoned ship and were rescued.

When the storm subsided, the U.S. Coast Guard called with the incredible news that the boat had been found floating on its side.

"This boat is the only boat I know of that's been abandoned in the Bering Sea for dead ... and resurrected," he said.

Lethin and his partners bought the boat for \$1.2 million in 1994 and used it as a crabber until the 2005 rogue

wave damaged it. Converting it to tourism cost \$2.8 million.

The ship now gives tourists the Alaska crabbing experience May 1 through Sept. 29 out of Ketchikan, Alaska. The tour business is working out fine, Lethin said. "We slam as much of Alaska into three hours as we can."

It can carry 150 passengers, including those in wheelchairs, in the calmer waters of the Inside Passage where the crew pulls up crab pots, octopus barrels and long lines.



Submitted photo
Guests aboard the F/V Aleutian Ballad get a close-up look at the catch. The boat hauls up crab for tourists out of Ketchikan, Alaska. The wildlife is released back into the water before the boat returns to port.

Some of the catch is placed in a live tank for the visitors to examine. All the catch is released back into the water. For more information about the

Bering Sea Crab Fishermen's Tour, call 888-239-3816 or visit <http://alaskacrabtour.com>

The Lethins winter the Aleutian Ballad at Tongue

Point. They live in the area and like to keep the boat close by for any work that needs to be done before the season starts and for reprovisioning.

7th Season ASOC Winter Children's Theater 2015

Directed by Heather Ramsdell
Music Direction by ChrisLynn Taylor

Donated by COLUMBIA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

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Book by Judy Wolfman

...it's rare we get to hear the Wolf's point of view.

Determined to defend his own good intentions, he reveals Red Riding Hood's true nature... rarely shown to the outside world.

This side splitting cuddly tale will show that there are two sides to every story.

Performances – Friday 7pm March 13th
Saturday & Sunday 2pm March 14th & 15th
ASOC Playhouse 129 West Bond Street, Astoria.

Adults \$10 Kids \$6 on sale ONE HOUR before all shows!

Reservations Recommended

www.astorstreetworkscompany.com For more info 503-325-6104