

PARTING SHOTS

A weekly snapshot from The Daily Astorian and Chinook Observer photographers



The Astoria Bridge disappears into the fog over the Columbia River.

JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

Band: Tico families welcomed the band members into their homes

Continued from Page 2C

For this 50th anniversary celebration Karen Graham, president of the Oregon Partners wanted a musical group that would represent a unique Oregon experience and offered it to the Brownsmead Flats, who were only too happy to accept. The group spent its first five days at playa Ocotol on the Nicoya peninsula, resting up and enjoying the beach and warm waters of the ocean (80 degrees Fahrenheit). They began their tour playing in Liberia and playa Ocotol, then traveled inland to Grecia near San Jose (the capitol and largest city) and played for Costa Rican partners' groups in Grecia, Zarce-ro, La Quesada, two locations in Guapiles, and a final concert and big celebration of the 50th anniversary at the Eugene O'Neill Theater in San Jose.

Performing for Ticos

In each place the venue was different and attendance varied from 30 to 150. The band played in a church annex, a hall for retired teachers (think Alderbrook Hall), several cultural centers, two restaurants and a theater for the performing arts with excellent acoustics. The concerts lasted about an hour and we got the audience up on their feet and taught them a country dance (with the assistance of two Flats' wives Lulu Heavenrich and Tory Sutherland). Ticos (the nickname for Costa Ricans) are generally enthusiastic dancers and responded well to learning a new dance everywhere the band played. The instrumentation of the band's guitars, mandolin, fiddle, banjo and harmonica are novel in Costa Rica and the Ticos were especially en-



Tory Sunderland photo

Costa Rican dancers perform for the Brownsmead Flats, who also taught locals some Western dances.

thrilled with Ray Raihala's banjo playing. In Playa Ocotol where the band stayed first, one of the workers there said that the banjo looked like una llanta (a tire). At every concert, the band sang "De Colores" a well-known song in all of Latin America, and the audiences all joined in singing with gusto. Following each performance, the band was treated to a potluck lunch or dinner with Costa Rican-style fare and often the Ticos would sing songs of their heritage to entertain the Flats. One of the most enjoyable parts of this trip was being hosted by Tico families who welcomed the band members into their homes. The

group spent four nights in the company of their Costa Rican hosts, enjoyed communicating in Spanish and sign language and sampling their comida tipica (typical meals). The fresh tropical fruits with rice, beans, eggs, fried plantains and tortillas in the morning along with local coffees and juices were especially delightful. To see more photos of the tour visit the Brownsmead Flats facebook page. For more information about the Partners of the Americas programs please visit oregonpartners.net or partners.net for the national organization. Ned Heavenrich is a band member of Brownsmead Flats.



Tory Sunderland photo

The Brownsmead Flats listen to stories in a Costa Rican restaurant. Facing the camera from left are Ned Heavenrich, John Fenton and Robert Stevens.

our coast

MAGAZINE

GET YOUR COPY TODAY!

DiscoverOurCoast.com