

4 COASTAL LIFE
Razor Clam Festival
Long Beach hosts chowder tastings, contests, music and more

9 ARTS
Jesse Lee Falls
He's paid his dues. Now he shares his music and knowledge

12 FEATURE
The Maritime (Poetry) Memorial
April is National Poetry Month — the perfect time to visit this site

14 DINING
Mouth of the Columbia
Coast Weekend's local weekly restaurant reviewer is back!



STEPPING OUT.....	5, 6, 7
CROSSWORD.....	17
CW MARKETPLACE.....	18, 19
GRAB BAG	23

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on the cover

Astoria's Maritime Memorial not only honors those who have lost their lives at sea but also, with its poignant epithets, is a monument of real life poetry.

Photo by Tayla Fick

See story on Page 12

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Out & about

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

It's time to spring into the garden

For me, gardening is peaceful, a way to connect with nature and a source of pride.

Sure, the weeding and watering schedule can sometimes be monotonous, but there's nothing like putting your hands in the dirt and making something grow.

Last weekend I attended the Clatsop County Master Gardeners' Spring into Gardening seminar for the first time, and the event overflowed with inspiration for gorgeous gardens.

This year's seminar focused on "Food, Glorious Food" with help from the North Coast Food Web — lucky for me, since I like to grow vegetables.

Local farmer and NCFW outreach coordinator Teresa Retzlaff and NCFW board member Kelly Huckestein presented to a standing-room-only crowd about the best vegetables to grow on the coast. The key, they said, is to choose varieties with smaller fruits and shorter growing seasons.

There are some vegetable heartbreakers out there: tomatoes, basil, peppers, melons. Big beefsteaks won't do that well, but cherry and grape tomatoes are more successful.

"We don't get that heat at

end of summer," Retzlaff said. Peppers especially need hot days to develop their hot flavors. "Be prepared to do a lot of hand holding with that basil."

One melon that's known local success is the Minnesota midget, a softball-sized variety with sweet orange flesh that takes about 70 days to mature.

And, of course, other veggies are easy to grow: leafy greens like chard, lettuce, peas, broccoli and other brassicas.

Beyond the presentation on vegetables and another on soil,

the seminar also included a kids craft section, food demos and tastings by the NCFW, raffles and a large section of vendors offering plants, tools, books and more. There were plenty of ornaments as well as vegetable starts. I walked away with some leeks that are eager to get in the ground, and my friend showed off her evergreen huckleberry bush. I also picked up a jar of gooseberry jam from Watershed Garden Works, a farm and nursery from Longview. Their jams and jellies — quince, cherry, apple, pear, pepper and more — are all made from fruit grown organically on the farm.

Gloria's Garden Gems offered cute patio furniture and homemade birdbaths. Starvation Alley Farms, an organic cranberry farm in Long Beach, handed out juice samples.

Skamokawa Farmstead



Rebecca Sedlak
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Creamery, from Cathlamet, had samples of fresh goat cheese. Co-owner Vicki Allenback said the farm allows visitors in at 1 p.m. every day to help feed the goats. (I can't wait to plan my field trip; is there anything cuter than a baby animal?)

Antwerp

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