

FRIDAY EXTRA!

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Weekend Edition



BREATHING LIFE INTO PARKS, AFTER DARK

McClure Park comes alive during movie screening

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Lounging at McClure Park in a makeshift outdoor theater seemed like a fitting location to watch Steven Spielberg's classic 1985 film, "Back to the Future."

Perhaps it was the experience of being outside with twilight falling, the slight chill that made tightly wrapping in a blanket more appealing, or the nostalgia-arousing throwback to a drive-in theater — sans vehicles. Regardless, the Astoria Parks and Recreation Department took advantage of an enchanting ambiance to host the third installment in its "Parks After Dark" summer event series.

Undeterred by the potential chance of rain, a sizable group of moviegoers showed up for a specifically social event — the opportunity to commingle, in small groups and as part of a larger collective, for fun, food and fellowship. Luckily, the rain never came and attendees instead were supplied the unusual opportunity to watch a movie on a big screen from beneath the stars.

McFly at McClure

For some people in attendance, it was their first time meeting the McFly clan and Dr. Emmett "Doc" Brown and taking a fantastical journey to 1955 on Doc's modified DeLorean. Others were re-visiting their own pasts, watching a movie that sparked an iconic 1980s science fiction franchise.

Moviegoers — consisting of couples, small groups of friends, families and individuals — began gathering at 8 p.m. when the park opened and was abundant with daylight. Arriving early meant having ample time to stake out the prime spots for viewing the movie, which was projected on a large screen, but there was plenty of room for one and all.

Children were allowed to accompany their parents and guardians, unlike during the first "Parks After Dark" movie event in May. Because of an established "21 and older" rule, young people were relegated to watching "Jurassic Park" from the perimeter of the park, said Angela Cosby, the director of the city's Parks



Photos by Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

TOP: Dozens gathered at McClure Park Saturday night to watch "Back to the Future" as part of the "Parks After Dark" event series hosted by the Astoria Parks and Recreation Department. **ABOVE:** Camping chairs and blankets were a regular sight during the outdoor movie screening. **BELOW:** The event series was originally pitched for adults — with beer — but the city has also decided to allow children.



and Recreation Department. By about 9:10 p.m., upon the determination it was dark enough for attendees to clearly see the screen, the movie started. Moviegoers, sprawled across the park on lawn chairs and blankets, partook of food

provided by North Coast Food Web at an extra cost and libations from Fort George Brewery and Public House. Some came prepared with their own collection of snacks.

At \$5 per person, the "Parks After Dark" event provided a relatively cheap moviegoing experience, especially taking into consideration the more reasonable prices for concessions and the fact that food and drinks could be brought along without being considered contraband.

Money for scholarships

Additionally, all proceeds from "Parks After Dark" are designated to help provide scholarships for low-income families to participate in health and wellness programs. Fort George Brewery also donated the proceeds from beer sales for scholarships.

The Parks and Recreation Department has held two prior activities for the event series, which was introduced for the first time this summer as a fundraising endeavor done in partnership with the Astoria Parks Recreation and Community Foundation. The events featured a showing of "Jurassic Park" at McClure Park in May, and Capture the Flag at Shively Park in June.

The event series originally was crafted to be for participants 21 and older, because the city heard there were not enough activities for adults only, Cosby said. However, after the showing of "Jurassic Park," which had a similarly good turnout, she said, they received feedback that people preferred the events be open to all age groups.

The next scheduled "Parks After Dark" event was supposed to be glow-in-the-dark Ultimate Frisbee and kickball at Evergreen Fields in August, but that activity has been canceled, and a showing of "Ghostbusters" likely will be moved to August instead. The entry fee is again \$5.

Next summer, Cosby said, they may consider offering the athletic activities with a youth emphasis.

From the showing of "Back to the Future," the department and foundation raised more than \$700 for scholarships.

Starting in August, the department also will start its Kids' Movies In the Park series at Lindstrom Park.