



PHOTO BY JOSHUA BESSEX

Fort Clatsop hosts Seaman's Day every July in honor of the 34th member of the Corps of Discovery: Seaman, Meriwether Lewis' Newfoundland dog. The event, set for July 13 this summer, attracts children and many Newfoundland dogs and their owners.

best-known fort, Fort Clatsop, at the Lewis and Clark National Historical Park, which also has pleasant trails through forest and by water, and a visitor center with displays surrounded by fascinated children.

Tired of all that hiking and fort exploring? Take a ride on the Astoria Trolley. It's only a buck for a ride, two bucks all day. They let kids ring the bell, you learn something about Astoria, and you can get off for a picnic on a bench looking out on the river, or Pier 39, or the sea lions (which kids seem to like, no matter what others may say).

Get off the trolley and stroll along the east end of the Riverwalk. There you'll find Violet LaPlante Park, on Cedar Street in Alderbrook, which has a picnic area and play equipment. In fact, check out all your city parks; there's bound to be a picnic site and playground near your neighborhood.

You might also get off the trolley at the Columbia River Maritime Museum. In addition to being a great museum for kids as well as adults, the museum offers Teen Art Week day camps in July and August, and classes like knot making and beginning woodcarving.

When thinking about what activity to do next, don't forget our local libraries. They have story times and summer reading programs for children through teens with games, crafts and prizes. There are also special events; last year Eli was especially impressed when he met a Star Wars trooper at Seaside Public Library. This year the Astoria Public Library will have morning movies and a juggler, Seaside will have a lineup that includes a puppet show and bubble making, and Cannon Beach has similar programs.

Finally, one of our favorite activities: gardening. It's fun, it's outdoors, and it's right at home. At age 3, Eli isn't much for planting or weeding, but he really gets into watering and dropping pebbles into the fountain. As he gets older he'll plant his first garden, as I did so many years ago.

Spending time with a child, it seems to me, isn't so much about doing things as it is about relationships, and passing on the joys and lessons life offers.

WHO DOESN'T LIKE A BEACH? THERE ARE THINGS TO COLLECT, PLACES TO DIG OR TO MAKE CASTLES, GAMES TO PLAY, DRIFTWOOD FORTS TO BUILD, AND PICNICS TO BE CONSUMED.



PHOTO BY DWIGHT CASWELL

In addition to being a great museum for kids as well as adults, the Columbia River Maritime Museum offers Teen Art Week day camps in July and August, and classes like knot making and beginning woodcarving. Kids — Eli included — also love to climb on the anchor and its chain on the museum plaza.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Children, tweens and teens may register for "Fetch a Good Book!" which is the theme of the Cannon Beach Library's summer reading contest.

ONLINE INFORMATION:

Astoria City Parks: astoriaparks.com/Parks/Parks_List.aspx

Columbia River Maritime Museum: crmm.org

State parks: Go to oregonstateparks.org and enter the name of the park
Lewis and Clark national Historical park: nps.gov/lewi

Astoria Public Library: astorialibrary.org or call 503-325-7323

Cannon Beach Library: cannonbeachlibrary.org or 503-436-1391

Seaside Public Library: seasidelibrary.org or 503-738-6742



PHOTO BY DWIGHT CASWELL

Right: Conductors and motormen on the Astoria Trolley will sometimes let children ring the trolley's bell.

PHOTO BY ALEX PAJUNAS

Left: Gardening is past-time that you can involve your children in. Planting, weeding, watering — and watching things grow.

