

Learn to cook with whole foods

Jennifer Visser to lead cooking class at Tolovana Hall

CANNON BEACH — Jennifer Visser struggled with lower-back pain. On the advice of a naturopath she cut sugars from her diet. The results were remarkable.

“Three days later my A.D.D. cleared up,” Visser says. “I was amazed. I’ve never, ever been able to focus like that. It was incredible. I was hooked.”

A few days later, her back pain subsided too. “It changed my life,” Visser says.

Ever since she’s been spreading the word: We need to eat less sugar.

As the owner of the Healthy Hub Massage and Wellness Center in Seaside, Visser has led numerous cooking, diet and food-related workshops in the region. She’s also championed the annual 10 Day Sugar Detox Challenge, which has converts trumpeting the virtues of more mindful eating.

At 5 p.m. Saturday, July 16



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Jennifer Visser will lead a hands-on cooking class July 16 at Tolovana Hall.

at Tolovana Hall in Cannon Beach, Visser will present a hands-on cooking class entitled “Whole Foods Made Easy: Cooking for Health & Disease Prevention.” Visser will begin with an informative session then move into the kitchen to share some of the building blocks of sugar-free dining. The evening will conclude with a three-course meal, including an appetizer, main course and, yes, dessert.

The goals of the class are twofold: to eat not only with

health in mind, but to make those meals delicious.

“People think: ‘Well, what do you eat?’” Visser says. “I eat very, very well. I love food. You can make a great meal with just meat and veggies.”

Cutting sugar isn’t just about skipping dessert. It’s about removing or reducing foods that metabolize into sugar in your body — starchy foods like potatoes, breads and dairy are all high on the glycemic index.

“A baked potato is just as high in sugar as soda pop, conversion wise,” Visser says. “Grains convert into sugar.”

Though sometimes you wouldn’t know it, many processed foods also include sweeteners. For instance: just about every hot dog and sausage at the grocery store lists corn syrup in the ingredients. “The number one calorie consumed by Americans is high-fructose corn syrup,” Visser says.

Cutting sugar intake has numerous benefits, including reduced inflammation, increased energy, weight loss

and more.

The solution: Cook with whole foods.

“Last night I had an amazing dinner that was sugar free,” Visser says. “I had and elk burger. It was so easy and fast. I had greens, avocado slices. And then a hamburger, just frying up a patty. Then I sautéed mushrooms and onions and put that on there and I made a chipotle aioli with herbs. It was so good, it was so yummy, and it was easy.”

Saucing is a big part of Visser’s cooking, and she’ll go over a number of recipes at the class. Participants should expect to roll up their sleeves, and they should come with an appetite.

Class size is limited, and RSVP is required. To register, contact the Tolovana Arts Colony via email, at tolovanaartscolony@gmail.com, or by phone at 541-215-4445. Tickets are \$50, and include food costs. The class runs approximately two-and-a-half hours.

“People are going to walk away having become more food conscious,” Visser says. “That is important because knowledge is long-lasting. Losing five pounds is not.”



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The Paul McKenna Band, a traditional folk band from Scotland, will perform July 21 at the Armory.

Scottish band brings tunes to Astoria Armory

ASTORIA — On Thursday, July 21, Coast Community Radio will host an appearance by The Paul McKenna Band, a group The New York Times calls, “The best folk band to have come out of Scotland in the last 20 years.”

The band is on its 10th anniversary tour through Australia, Europe and North America — and will perform in a concert and dance at the Astoria Armory at 7:30 p.m. The Armory, located at 1626 Exchange St., will offer beverages and food.

There are five members

of the Paul McKenna Band, playing guitar, bouzouki, flute, whistles, bodhran, cajon, banjo and fiddle — and they all sing. Group members combine their love of folk and traditional music with original songs.

The event is a fundraiser for Coast Community Radio (and a recognition of the Armory’s past when it hosted USO shows for the troops during World War II.)

Tickets are \$17 in advance or \$20 at the door. Advance tickets are available at coastradio.org

Bridge anniversary committee invites all to join the fun

ASTORIA — The Astoria-Megler Bridge 50th Anniversary Celebration Committee is inviting businesses, organizations and members of the public to participate in this year’s festivities by finding their own ways to embrace the theme.

The committee is hoping the community will come up with creative ways to join the fun, whether it’s picking up the 50th anniversary theme for annual area events, dreaming up a bridge-themed culinary treat or beverage, or running a special deal on merchandise, lodging, etc.

“The Astoria-Megler Bridge is incredibly important to this community, and

we want everyone to pitch in to make 2016 a year-long celebration of what the bridge means to us,” said Clatsop County Historical Society Executive Director Mac Burns, who helped form the committee.

Burns and the committee have been meeting since late 2015. Funding for 50th anniversary-related events, including a reenactment of the dedication ceremony and an engineering day for local students, was secured from the City of Astoria in December 2015. Small sponsorship packages are also available to those who would like to contribute to the events.

Several area organiza-

tions and businesses have already assisted in making 2016 the “Year of the Bridge” by centering their events on the 50th anniversary of the structure. The Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce celebrated the bridge at their annual banquet in January, encouraging attendees to dress as bridge construction workers or Great Columbia Crossing runners. The Astoria Regatta picked the Astoria-Megler Bridge anniversary as the theme for its week-long celebration in August, using the tagline “Bridge to Everywhere.”

“We’ve had several local businesses and organizations approach the Committee,

asking for permission to use the 50th anniversary logo or participate in some way, and we always respond ‘Absolutely!’” Burns said.

Construction on the bridge began on Nov. 5, 1962, following a ground-breaking ceremony on Aug. 9. The bridge was inaugurated on Aug. 27, 1966.

More information about the Astoria-Megler Bridge and the calendar of 2016 festivities can be found at www.astoriamegler50.com.

Don’t run a business or organization? Members of the public can join in on the fun daily by posting photos of the bridge on social media and using the hashtag #astoriamegler50.

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