

Celebrate heritage at Finnish American Folk Festival

NASALLE, Wash. — The 18th biennial Finnish American Folk Festival will take place Friday to Sunday, July 29 to 31 on the grounds of the Naselle-Grays River School.

This cultural event presents a feast for the senses. See authentic costumes, folk dancers, historic photos, genealogy charts and cut flower arrangements. Hear presentations on numerous topics and live music, including the sounds of the kantele, Finland's national instrument. Taste and smell Finnish foods such as makkara, sima, pannukakku and leipä. The Finnish American Folk Festival is a fun-filled event for all ages and all nationalities; the only admission is a donation. This year's theme is "My Finnish Memories."

Golfers can participate in a tournament at the Peninsula Golf Course in Long Beach on Thursday, July 28. Lunch will be served at noon; the tournament starts at 1 p.m. Preregistration is required; cost is \$50. Register by calling Dave Leeland at 360-484-3277.

Festivities begin at 10 a.m. Friday, July 29 at Naselle-Grays River School, located at the intersection of Washington State Routes 4 and 401. The Tori (aka marketplace) will be open until 6 p.m. as will all the exhibits and food vendors.

The festival will open with the screening of the documentary "This is My Childhood: Finland at War." Produced by Nordic American Voices, an oral history program at Seattle's Nordic Heritage Museum, the 58-minute documentary includes interviews with 26 Finnish-Americans who lived in Finland during World War II. Many were sent to Sweden for safety.

The festival's Cultural Programming Series will feature many different presentations both Friday and Saturday. Topics include the Finnish Civil War, Finland in World

War II, the history of Finns in New Sweden, genealogy, why immigrants from Nordic countries came to the lower Columbia River region, the history of the Longview/Kelso area Finns, Naselle history and Sami shaman ancestors. On Saturday, there will also be a beginning Finnish language class for youth and a presentation by Jim Kurtti, editor of the Finnish American Reporter, for people interested in Finnish-American archival materials and keepers of records.

At 12:30 p.m. Friday afternoon, hear national anthems, and watch the May Pole Dancers. New this year is Laulaa Out Loud Kids Chorus with 3 to 11 year olds singing in Finnish. From 4 to 6 p.m. Appelo Archives Center will host a reception for adult performers and presenters; the center is located at 1056 SR 4. Friday night's performers include Lisa Bighill, the Naselle Kanteles, Acustica World Music, and the FinnAm Choir.

Saturday starts early with a pannukakku breakfast from 7 to 10 a.m.

Then comes the Paavo Nurmi Run/Walk for all ages at 8 a.m. at the high school track. Named after the Finnish runner and Olympic gold medal winner, the race is a 5K course on a gravel road. Cost is \$15 without a T-shirt and \$25 with a T-shirt (limited availability). For more information, call Haleigh See at 360-484-3878.

On Saturday, the Opening Ceremony takes place from 10 to 11:30 a.m. in the stadium. Again, the exhibits, lectures, Tori and food booths are open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Live music during the day and into the evening will be provided by Gene Quilhaugh, Carl Wirkkala, Folk Voice, Amigos Nobles, Skamokawa Swamp Opera, Valerie Blessley, the Laulaa Out Loud Kids Chorus, Dale Bradley, and Toby Hansen and the Smilin' Scandinavians. The Astoria



PHOTO BY NATALIE ST. JOHN

Dancers perform around the maypole at the 2014 festival.

Scandinavian Dancers and the Katrilli Dancers will be fun to watch with their colorful costumes and fancy steps.

Friday and Saturday also will feature field games, an art exhibit, photo displays, arts and crafts, a Viking ship, Finnish war memorabilia, food demos, class reunions and more. There will be authentic foods to try and a salmon dinner.

Sunday will end the festival with a worship service at 10 a.m. followed by coffee and pulla.

Pets are not allowed on the school grounds with the exception of service animals. All school facilities are handicapped accessible. Handicapped-accessible parking is located in front of the school and in the back closest to the gym.

Parking for all others is at the State Patrol and DOT



PHOTO BY NATALIE ST. JOHN

The festival includes photo and genealogy displays.

offices at the entrance to the schools, and across SR 4 by the coffee kiosk. Parking is also available at the Naselle churches: Assembly of God, Lutheran, and Congregational. Pacific Transit provides shuttle service to the school.

For specific times and schedules, visit www.nasellefinnfest.com. For more information, call Mike Swanson at 360-484-3388.

CULTURAL PROGRAMMING SERIES

Friday, July 29

10 a.m., Commons – "This is My Childhood: Finland at War" film

11:10 a.m., Room 203 – The Finnish Civil War & Finland in WWI by Wayne Beals

11:10 a.m., Room 204 – You Say You're Finnish – So Just How Did You Get That Way? by Bill Lagerroos

1:35 p.m., Room 203 – Kalmar Nyckel-Finns of New Sweden by Frank Eld

1:35 p.m., Room 204 – Ship Jumpers & Mail Order Brides by Irene Martin

2:50 p.m., Room 203 – The Finnish Settlers of Longview/Kelso by Carolyn Caines and Maila Cadd

2:50 p.m., Room 304 – Short films for children

2:50 p.m., Library – Beginning Genealogy by Robbie Johnson

4 p.m., Appelo Archives Center – Reception for performers

Saturday, July 30

11:35 a.m., Room 203 – The Finnish Settlers of Longview/Kelso by Carolyn Caines and Maila Cadd

11:35 a.m., Room 204 – Journeys to Peaceful Hill by Bryan Penttila

11:35 a.m., Room 304 – Home and Hall, the Legacy of Finnish Americans in the 21st Century by Jim Kurtti

12:55 p.m., Room 203 – Kalmar Nyckel-Finns of New Sweden by Frank Eld

12:55 p.m., Room 204 – Visiting Finland: It's More than Meets the Eye by Victoria Stoppiello

2:10 p.m., Room 203 – The Finnish Civil War & Finland in WWI by Wayne Beals

2:10 p.m., Room 204 – Our Sami Ancestors-Shamans, Drums, & Healing by Gary Anderson

3:25 p.m., Room 203 – Beginning Finnish for Youth by Haleigh See

3:25 p.m., Room 204 – Journeys to Peaceful Hill by Bryan Penttila

3:25 p.m., Library – "Successes and Frustrations Tracing Family Genealogy" by Robbie Johnson



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