

Camp Rosenbaum: 'We all have a vested interest in these kids'

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while a couple of his new friends slowly buried his body in the sand.

"I actually have never been this close" to the ocean before, Gritton said, waiting for his turn with the counselors clad in wetsuits, taking groups of life-vested children to frolic in the waves.

Camp Rosenbaum is full of firsts for kids, who get to play on the beach, build sandcastles, ride horses, visit Fort Clatsop, slide down hills on cardboard boxes, fish for trout, cook s'mores, make leather and bead art and shoot fire hoses.

"A lot of these kids don't even get three meals a day," said Melissa Sonsalla, an employee of Home Forward and Camp Rosenbaum's sole staffer. "Here they do."

Sonsalla said the camp only takes about 60 percent of applicants, mostly from the Portland metro area. The kids who apply represent only a fraction of the more than 1,000 kids in the Portland metro alone who are eligible, she said. Along with their artistic creations, kids get to take home clothes, shoes and books collected by volunteers.

"The advantage we have here is that people are so committed to camp," Sonsalla said, adding that many of the volunteers at camp spend the year doing fundraisers and gathering supplies for their activities, before spending an entire week with the kids.

Hearts and minds

Outside a log cabin at Camp Rilea Thursday, officers Matt Huspek and David McCarthy let kids crawl all over their police cruiser and motorcycles, after taking them through Gang Resistance Education and Training, an officer-taught program covering youth violence, delinquency and gang involvement.

"We're trying to encourage them to have a community that's much better than a gang," McCarthy said, adding it helps giving kids an early positive experience with police.

Sonsalla said Portland police officers, who often worked as guards at the camp, became more involved in the 1990s after seeing the benefit of reaching out to kids early, and started joining the staff as counselors.



Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

Camp Rosenbaum held a camp derby using wooden race cars cut out by Jim Cunningham, former U.S. Air Force pilot and commander of the Oregon Air National Guard, and finished by campers.



Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian
Kids at Camp Rosenbaum trained as firefighters, hauling victims out of burning structures and shooting fire hoses to squelch fires.



Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

On his first trip to the beach, 10-year-old Doran Gritton was buried in the sand and took a dip in the Pacific Ocean.



Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

Alan Welbourn, back, and other Camp Rosenbaum campers share a laugh while riding a bus from Camp Rilea to Sunset Beach for a sandcastle-building competition.



Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

Lori Rosenbaum-Krasnowsky, daughter of Camp Rosenbaum founder Fred Rosenbaum, has attended camp and counseled youth for most of her life. Several Rosenbaums are still involved at the camp.



Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

Counselors at Camp Rosenbaum were greeted by lines of high-fives Friday after revealing their service to campers, who spent the week enjoying summer camp and learning how to be good citizens.

Mo's: Planning Commission's decision may be appealed to the City Council

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The Astoria Planning Commission voted unanimously Tuesday night to approve the project after hearing endorsements from former Mayor Willis Van Dusen and other community leaders, along with objections from some residents worried about the impact of the restaurant on the Astoria Riverwalk, parking and smaller competitors.

Van Dusen said he had tried to bring Mo's to Astoria when he was mayor. He said he had looked at the old train depot by the Columbia River Maritime Museum, the restaurant site at the former Red Lion Inn at the Port of Astoria and at Pier 39, but described the end of 15th Street as the "perfect location."

The former mayor said Van Dusen Beverages, his family's company, had been doing business with Mo's for 30 years. "This is the perfect use," he said. "It's the perfect family. It really is."

Loran Mathews, a civic leader active with the Scandinavian Midsummer Festival, reminded commissioners of plans for a Scandinavian heritage monument at People's Park nearby. He said the Riverwalk, the Astoria Riverfront Trolley and projects like the restaurant help connect the city to the river.

"I think that this will do nothing but enhance that area," Mathews said.

River views

Mo's, according to planners, will have banks of windows with river views and an outdoor patio and dining area. Planners say the chowder production plant will be separated from the restaurant by windows so patrons can watch how the chowder is made.

The restaurant will have 31 parking spaces. The city will meet with Mo's after a year to assess traffic impacts.

Bancroft said Mo's could employ about 30 full-time and 50 part-time workers. She did not say when the restaurant might open.

The chowder production plant will help the chain build capacity, Bancroft said, since all the chowder is now made in Newport. Mo's, founded by Mohava Marie Niemi in 1946, has locations in Newport, Otter Rock, Lincoln City, Cannon Beach, Florence and PDX.

Some are uneasy

When people learned in June that Vintage Hardware would have to move to make way for a Mo's, many rallied behind the local antique shop and complained about the influence of a chain restaurant on downtown Astoria, which prides itself as eclectic.

Vintage Hardware has found a new home at Bargains Galore on Marine Drive, but some are still uneasy about Mo's.

Dan O'Donnell, a web developer who lives on 15th Street, worries about parking and riverfront access for pedestrians and bicyclists. His main objection to Mo's, though, is the production plant, which he called a "clam chowder factory."

He questioned whether the plant is really an accessory use for the restaurant, since it would take up roughly 40 percent of the space, and wondered about odor and truck traffic.

"That's not an accessory usage. That's setting up a factory downtown," said O'Donnell, who might appeal the Planning Commission's decision to the City Council.

The Planning Commission has allowed similar production facilities as accessory uses to retail operations on the riverfront, most notably for Buoy Beer Co. off Eighth Street, so there is precedent.

Dave Pearson, the president of the Planning Commission, was bemused anyone would object to a chowder plant on a riverfront that was once crammed with canneries.

"Making chowder in Astoria? It's hard to believe we'd ever discuss that in a town that had 38 canneries at one time along the waterfront," Pearson said. "This is as minimal impact as it gets in my view for manufacturing on the waterfront. It kind of fits with our heritage."

'Dodged a bullet'

Commissioner Sean Fitzpatrick, however, was conflicted. The new restaurant and production plant is in the Urban Core, the unfinished portion of the Riverfront Vision Plan, which guides land use on the river.

In the discussion over the other sections of the Riverfront Vision Plan, Fitzpatrick said, "virtually everyone that has spoken has said no hotels, no condos and no restaurants on the north side of the trolley tracks."

Commissioner Jan Mitchell, who, like Fitzpatrick, wants the city to complete the Urban Core as soon as possible, said the city may have actually "dodged a bullet."

A decade ago, when real estate speculators were eyeing the banks of the Columbia River, the space where Mo's plans the restaurant and chowder plant had a green light from the city for a condo project that would have exceeded maximum building height.



Photos by Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

Young people ride in a roller coaster ride at the Clatsop County Fairgrounds on opening day of the fair on Tuesday.

Fair: Festivities conclude Saturday evening with Market Animal Auction

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Traveling with reptiles is a family business for the Ritchey's. Paulette's husband, Richard, goes around the northwest with various critters to show-off at schools, libraries and birthday parties. Some fairgoers shuddered when looking at the full-grown rattlesnake rattling its tail behind the glass, but others stood on step stools to get a closer look.

"Most times the kids are gung-ho, but if they're scared, it can help them overcome their fears," Paulette said.

The traveling reptile zoo is just one of many attractions this year, including carnival rides and games, food, music, a tractor pull, talent shows and the annual mutton busting event for children to attempt to ride bucking sheep around a stadium.

This year's theme, "Go For the Blue," draws from the upcoming Rio Olympics is meant to encourage participants who enter art or show an animal. The auctions going on



Axel Peon prepares to ride an amusement attraction during opening day of the Clatsop County Fair on Tuesday.

throughout the course of the fair will be a place to show cattle, rabbits, chicken and other animals that have been raised by local 4H groups.

In preparation for the upcoming shows, the young livestock owners jumped in and out of the animals' pens, on Tuesday, to feed them, shave them or shovel their droppings.

The annual fair will run

until Saturday evening when concludes with the Market Animal Auction.

Another flagship event will include a performance by country singer Craig Morgan on Thursday evening.

Whether you're looking to spin upside down, hold an alligator or ride a sheep, different thrills await at the fair that's been a part of Clatsop County for over a century.