

# Paddle for National Park Service centennial

ASTORIA — 100 Paddles for 100 Years is an opportunity for people to join in a human-powered water journey in honor of the centennial of the National Park Service.

The public is invited to travel by water into the Lewis and Clark National Historical Park, similar to how members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition travelled during their winter in the local region in 1805-06.

On the evening of Thursday, Aug. 25, experienced canoers and kayakers will meet at the Astoria Recreation Center (the former Astoria Yacht Club site located near the Old Youngs Bay Bridge) for a 5:30 p.m. launch and group paddle across Youngs Bay into the Lewis and Clark River.

Less experienced folks are encouraged to meet at Netul Landing at 5:30 p.m.

and head downstream on the Lewis and Clark River. The two groups plan to meet at the park's Otter Point wetland restoration site, and together they will paddle to Netul Landing where they will be served birthday cake.

Participants need to bring their own kayak, canoe, paddleboard or any non-motorized watercraft and need to wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation

device. If you'd like to join the fun, call the park at 503-861-4425.

The National Park Service was founded on Aug. 25, 1916. Admission to all National Park Service sites is free Aug. 25 to 28 in honor of the National Park Service Centennial. Regular park hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. each day through Labor Day.

100 Paddles for 100 Years



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Paddle to Netul Landing for birthday cake on Aug. 25.

is sponsored by the Lewis & Clark National Park Association, which supports park education and interpretative

activities at Lewis and Clark National Historical Park. For more information, check out [www.nps.gov/lewi](http://www.nps.gov/lewi)

## FILM REVIEW

### 'Pete's Dragon' (pleasantly) stays earthbound

By JAKE COYLE  
AP FILM WRITER

NEW YORK (AP) — After an exhausting summer buffet of set pieces, superheroes and whatever s-word you might use for "Suicide Squad," the gentle "Pete's Dragon" is a welcome palate cleanser. Where other summer movies are chest-thumping, it's quiet; where others are brashly cynical, it's sweetly sincere; where others are lacking in giant cuddly dragons, "Pete's Dragon" has one.

Few may remember the 1977 Disney original, in which a young boy's best friend was a bubbly dragon invisible to others. As part of Disney's continuing effort to remake its animated classics in live-action, "Pete's Dragon" has been confidently reborn as an earnest tale of green-winged wonder.

David Lowery, a veteran of the independent film world and the director of the lyrical crime drama "Ain't Them Bodies Saints," inherits a far bigger film. But his "Pete's Dragon" still maintains the homespun feel of an American fable. Spielberg-light, you might call it.

The film begins, in the "Bambi" tradition, in parental tragedy. Pete's

family is driving through a remote Pacific Northwest forest with Pete nestled in the backseat of the station wagon, reading a children's book about a dog named Elliot. A deer sprints out and, in poetic slow-motion, the gravity of the car's interior is upended. The car flips off the road and Pete staggers from the crash.

Flashing forward six years, Pete (Oakes Fegley) is a wild 10-year-old orphan living in the woods alone except for his magical companion, the dragon Elliot. As far as CGI creatures go, Elliot is an irresistible one. Furry as a fairway, he's like an enormous emerald-green puppy. Far from the "Game of Thrones" dragon variety, he's more adept at chasing his own tail than breathing fire.

He's also the subject of local folklore, mostly as told by Robert Redford's wood-carving storyteller. But it's his forest ranger daughter Grace (Bryce Dallas Howard) that first encounters Elliot and ultimately leads to the dragon's discovery.

Grace coaxes Elliot back into society and into the fold of her family. She has a daughter, Natalie (Oona Laurence) and lumber mill-running husband Jack

(Wes Bentley). It's the push by a logging company — where Jack's brother, Gavin (Karl Urban) is a gun-totting lumberjack — into the forest that simultaneously begins flushing out Pete and Elliot from their home in the trees.

The lush forest (New Zealand subbing for North America) reigns over "Pete's Dragon," a tale scored with soft bluegrass and exuding an environment-friendly love for the beautiful and exotic splendors of nature. When competing interests come for Elliot, they are really fighting for the soul of the forest.

There are Spielbergian gestures here of magic and family and faith, perhaps better orchestrated than Spielberg's own recent try at a Disney film, "The BFG." But it's missing a spark, a sense of danger and maybe a little humor.

The lean simplicity of "Pete's Dragon" is its greatest attribute and its weakness. It doesn't quite achieve liftoff until the film's final moments. But it does at last catch flight, finally soaring beyond its humble folksiness.

"Pete's Dragon," a Walt Disney Co. release, is rated PG for "action, peril and brief language." Running time: 103 minutes. Three stars out of four.

## Family films span generations for actress

By LINDSEY BAHR  
AP FILM WRITER

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Bryce Dallas Howard remembers as a child watching the 1977 film "Pete's Dragon" on repeat until the VHS was worn out. She even hung onto her old "Pete's Dragon" book to read to her two children. So when she heard there was a script for a new take on the fantastical story of a little boy and his dragon friend, she actively sought it out.

What started as sentimental curiosity led to a starring role in Disney's new version of "Pete's Dragon." Howard plays the park ranger who stumbles upon a mysterious boy and becomes his protector as they unearth the mystery of the dragon. The film released Aug. 12.

"This movie is so sentimental for me because it reminded me of a lot of those movies I loved growing up that had real gravitas to them," Howard said.

As the progeny of two generations of entertainers, including her mother, actress and producer Cheryl Howard, and father, actor, director and producer Ron Howard, it's no surprise that movies have been a backdrop in Howard's life for as long as she can remember.

Those films hold a special spot for Howard as reminders

of her family legacy, her emotional development and how she's passing that on to her own children. Howard shares a few of those stories:

### A fairy tale legacy

Howard's grandparents, Rance Howard and the late Jean Speegle Howard, met as teenagers doing a touring children's production in Oklahoma of classic fairy tales. They even married on the tour dressed in their costumes, with her grandmother as Snow White and her grandfather as a huntsman.

"I come from a family who has a very romantic notion of fairy tales," Howard said.

Her grandmother imparted a love of classic Disney animated films through repeated viewings and trips to Disneyland. A talented seamstress, she would also make costumes from her favorites.

### Life lessons

In the films she loved growing up and in this new interpretation of "Pete's Dragon," Howard sees the value in family films that don't shy away from darkness.

"The reality of life is that trauma exists and you can move forward from trauma. You can heal from trauma," Howard said. "That's the power of Disney. It's not just there to entertain; it's there to enlighten. I know they provid-

ed me with a lot of growth ... Children are going to create monsters. If you try to shelter a child completely from all dangers, they're going to be ill-equipped for the world. These movies are kind of giving children the tools to deal with those monsters so that they can learn to face them in their own way."

### Passing the torch

While many parents can't wait to inundate their children with the films they loved from their youths, Howard and her husband, actor Seth Gabel, have a patience and an overriding theory.

"We mess this up all the time, but, if we can, we want to space them out so that the movies come at a time in their life when they're asking themselves similar questions," Howard said. "My son is 9 1/2, he's going into fourth grade, he's really coming into this place where there is independence and mischief and friendships independent from the family, so we just showed him 'Aladdin.'"

For her 4 1/2 year old daughter, it's still all about "Frozen."

"In delaying it, it doesn't just become something that they watched when they were younger. It's something that they really look forward to and understand and hopefully can see the big picture."