

ASTORIA PRIDE

CELEBRATION OF LGBTQ COMMUNITY SHOWS HOW FAR THE CULTURE HAS COME

By **HEATHER DOUGLAS**
FOR COAST WEEKEND

LeRoy Adolphson, the owner of a local salon, will be serving as a grand marshal in the Astoria Pride Riverwalk Parade on Sunday, June 11. It will be a meaningful occasion for the 69-year-old Astoria native, who said he hated the town when he was young.

“It wasn’t fun being gay and bullied every-day in school,” he said. “I couldn’t wait to get out of Astoria someday.”

But, in his lifetime, Adolphson has seen Astoria — and the larger culture — make tremendous progress.

The Pride Riverwalk Parade is the finale of the second annual Astoria Pride, a celebration of the LGBTQ community taking place Friday through Sunday, June 9 to 11.

Organized by the Lower Columbia Q Center, the festivities begin with Friday night events at The Liberty Theatre: “Cocktails with the Queens” at 6:30 p.m., followed by the Pride Gala in the historic venue at 8 p.m. Performing in the elegant space is a “dream come true” for many of the entertainers, said Marco Davis, chair of the Q Center, a nonprofit, nonpolitical organization.

From 1 to 7 p.m. Saturday, the Pride Block Party takes place at the foot of 21st Street, offering live music, drag performances, a Pride pop-up shop and a kids’ activity area. Then, from 9 p.m. to midnight, a free all-ages dance party takes place at the Astoria Arts and Movement Center.

On Sunday is the Astoria Pride Riverwalk Parade. Day-of registration begins at 10 a.m. The parade begins at 12:30 p.m. at the Columbia Maritime Memorial Park and heads east to the foot of 21st Street, where a short rally will be held.

Adolphson will be joined by fellow grand marshals Jeralyn O’Brien, an Astoria resident, U.S. Coast Guard veteran and founding member of the Q Center; and Portland’s Darcelle XV, the Guinness Book of World Records’ Longest Performing Drag Queen.

BANDING TOGETHER

Donna Galich, chair of Astoria Pride, said the event “gives an awareness to this part of the community.”



“I WAS SO HAPPY WHEN THE FIRST PRIDE PARADE HAPPENED HERE IN ASTORIA. IT WAS AMAZING.”

COLIN MURPHEY/THE DAILY ASTORIAN

LeRoy Adolphson puts the finishing touches on a client’s haircut at his salon in Astoria.



PHOTO BY DWIGHT CASWELL

Marco Davis, chair of the Lower Columbia Q Center



COLIN MURPHEY/THE DAILY ASTORIAN

David Drafall, left, treasurer of the Lower Columbia Q Center, shares salon space with Adolphson.