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ONE DOLLAR

A SCANDINAVIAN TRADITION

FESTIVAL CELEBRATES 50 YEARS WITH FAMILY, FOOD AND KRUMKAKE



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Brightly-colored outfits were an integral part of the Scandinavian Midsummer Festival held over the weekend in Astoria.

By **KATIE FRANKOWICZ**
The Daily Astorian

The Astoria Scandinavian Midsummer Festival celebrated its 50th year over the weekend by landing an official Oregon Heritage Tradition designation and collecting nearly 400 signatures in support of building a monument in downtown Astoria.

The festival now joins two other designated traditions in Clatsop County — the Astoria Regatta, founded in 1894, and the Cannon Beach Sandcastle Contest, founded in 1964 — as well as over a dozen other traditions across the state including the Pendleton Roundup and the Oregon State Fair.

The heritage designation is reserved for events that are at least 50 years old and that represent “what it means to be an Oregonian,” according to festival organizers.

To land the designation, the festival also needed to show the Midsummer Festival has appealed to a “broad spectrum of the public,” was not just any ordinary celebration, that it gives the public ways to participate and that it “adds to the livability and identity of the state.”

For decades now, the festival has served as a sort of annual reunion for Clatsop County residents who can trace their heritage back to some of the original Scandinavian settlers as well as those who have “married in,” said Loran Mathews, former Astoria Scandinavian Heritage Association president.

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Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

The tug-of-war competition made a return to the Scandinavian Midsummer Festival this year.



MORE INSIDE

People sculpt sand into art in Cannon Beach.

Car show cruises into Seaside.

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Parks fee comes back for review

A \$3 monthly charge on water customers

By **KATIE FRANKOWICZ**
The Daily Astorian

Residents will get another chance to voice their opinions on a new fee on water customers as the city works through the details.

The fee intended to raise money for Astoria's struggling Parks and Recreation Department is on the agenda again for tonight's City Council meeting.

The monthly \$3 per water meter fee would raise an estimated \$117,000 a year — money some councilors hope could help rebuild a department that has had to slash programs this year. The city continues to search for ways to sustain its roster of programs, the Astoria Aquatic Center, and numerous parks and rebuild a bare-bones parks staff.

City councilors are not expected to vote on the fee tonight.

City staff is still figuring out how to go about imposing such a fee. They need more time to determine how the fee would be

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Graduates shine at Patriot Hall

Ceremony shows off college's new building

By **EDWARD STRATTON**
The Daily Astorian

For the first time in more than 40 years, Clatsop Community College held graduation on campus.

The ceremony took place Friday inside the mostly finished, three-story, cavernous gymnasium of the \$16 million Patriot Hall redevelopment, a project paid for through state bonds and local property taxes.

The graduation, including 158 two-year degrees and one-year certificates, highlighted the local and state investment in the college. Chris Nemlowill, the co-owner of Fort George Brewery, was the commencement speaker and spoke of his own journey to making an investment in Astoria.

The graduates, coming from communities throughout Clatsop, Columbia and Tillamook counties and Pacific County in Washington state, ranged from teenagers to those in their 70s. They included a variety of university-bound academic transfers, as well as firefighters, vessel operators, nurses, medical assistants, historic preservationists, welders, auto mechanics and computer designers.

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An unorthodox journey ends with a college degree

Kuhl's persistence rewarded at graduation



Sarah Kuhl felt silly about being so excited for her graduation Friday from Clatsop Community College with an associate degree in general studies.

Kuhl, 39, recently watched her daughter cross the stage to receive a bachelor's from Hawaii Pacific University, and one of her two sons graduate from the eighth grade at Broadway Middle School.

“I realized the other day I never graduated from anything,” she said. “I quit my school career when I was in seventh grade. I realized I never got to go to an eighth-grade graduation, and I never got to go to a high school graduation.”

Kuhl, from Santa Cruz, California, has had a rather unorthodox and challenging journey from living on the streets to donning her cap and gown.

Kuhl said she grew up in a

family living a somewhat pagan lifestyle. In the seventh grade, Kuhl said, she, her mother and her younger sister ended up living on the streets, finding anywhere they could sleep for the night, from a friend's couch to the beach. Kuhl moved out on her own by age 15, working two jobs and 16 hours a day to scrape together enough cash to make rent, lying on rental applications about being 18 and learning Spanish through her jobs along the way.

At 15, Kuhl took the GED exams and passed with little practice. Around that time, she met her husband, Steve.

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Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

Clatsop Community College graduate Sarah Kuhl gets a rose from President Christopher Breitmeyer after receiving her associate of general studies Friday.

