

# THE RAINBOW CONNECTION

Astoria Pride celebrates LGBTIQ+ community June 8–10



COLIN MURPHEY PHOTO

Participants in the 2017 Astoria Pride Parade make their way down the Astoria Riverwalk.

By **KATHERINE LACAZE**  
FOR COAST WEEKEND

Coming from a conservative upbringing in Utah, Cannon Beach resident Richard Bowman used to assume Pride events were “a way of flaunting one’s sexuality.”

“But being away from Utah, and seeing what Pride is really about, it’s exactly the opposite,” said Bowman, who is serving as a Cannon Beach ambassador for the Lower Columbia Q Center, the nonprofit, nonpolitical

organization behind the third annual Astoria Pride: Follow the Rainbow. “It’s about acceptance and love and not throwing anything in anybody’s face.”

In fact, the Astoria Pride Committee emphasizes that anyone — from the Lower Columbia region and beyond — is welcome to participate in the three-day festival, taking place Friday, June 8, through Sunday, June 10. Whether you’re single, married, in a partnership, a parent, a member of the LGBTIQ+ community or

an ally, LCQC Astoria Pride Chair Marco Davis encourages everyone to “come with an open heart and an open mind.”

“I love building community, and I love education through life experience,” he said, adding that if the broader public is welcome “to explore and witness our culture and where we come from as a queer community, it makes it more understandable and knocks down the barrier.”

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