

Local celebs step up

'DANCING WITH THE CLATSOP COUNTY STARS' RAISES FUNDS FOR THE HARBOR ON OCT. 18

By KATHERINE LACAZE
FOR COAST WEEKEND

What do a police chief, a community college president and a high school athletic director have in common?

On the evening of Thursday, Oct. 18, these three local celebrities, plus five others, will dance with professionals from the Utah Ballroom Dance Company at Astoria's Liberty Theatre in hopes of claiming the Mirror Ball Trophy.

The event opens with a Latin dance number to be performed by a group of local children. The first half of the show features the local celebs performing with their professional partners. The audience can then cast votes, and while those are counted, the professionals will put on a showcase.

Though they're competing in the inaugural Dancing with the Clatsop County Stars fundraiser, none of the participants are passionate about competitive dancing per se. They are, however, strong supporters of the event host, The Harbor, a community agency that provides intervention, recovery and advocacy to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking.

"I love The Harbor, and I'd do anything to support them," said Cannon Beach Police Chief Jason Schermerhorn, who served on the nonprofit's board for three years.

His initial response when asked to dance was fear, but "I couldn't say 'no,'" he added.

Schermerhorn will compete against Norma Hernandez, the Clatsop County WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) Coordinator; Charlene Larsen, the 2017 Lady Liberty Award recipient; Astoria High School Athletic Director Howard Rub; The Harbor's Executive Director Molly Pringle; Oregon State Trooper Andy Morgan; the 2018 Astoria Regatta President Julie Flues; and Clatsop Community College President Chris Breitmeyer.

In picking participants, The Harbor wanted representation from various groups and different sectors of the com-



COLIN MURPHEY PHOTO

Jason Schermerhorn and Norma Hernandez practice salsa dancing.

IF YOU GO

Dancing with the Clatsop County Stars

When: 7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 18; doors 6:30 p.m.

Where: Liberty Theatre, 1203 Commercial St., Astoria

Tickets: \$15 to \$35, with tiered seating, available at Liberty Box Office or on theater's website

For more information: call 503-325-3426

munity, Community Outreach Coordinator Ariel Young said.

"It represents what we stand for at The Harbor: trying to connect people with lots of different resources," she said.

Silly for a cause

Much like on the ABC TV series "Dancing with the Stars," each local celebrity will learn a routine with a professional dancer, practicing from Oct. 14

until the night of the event.

Astoria Mayor Arline LaMear, along with Astoria Pride Co-Chair Dida DeAngelis and Astoria Ford owner Dane Gouge, will be guest judges, providing commentary throughout the performance. The winner will be chosen through an audience voting process.

The Utah Ballroom Dance Company frequently partners with nonprofits to put on this kind of fundraiser. When they reached out to Clatsop County organiza-