

A mermaid, chowder, a beard and guitar

Long Beach Razor Clam Festival offers variety

BY PATRICK WEBB

Whoever thought bivalve mollusks could be fun as well as tasty? Organizers of the Long Beach Razor Clam Festival do. The event, which celebrates a favorite regional pastime, offers a range of daytime activities including contests, food and drink tastings and live music. Visitors can also check out a pirate on hand and a mermaid in a tank.

Begin the day with clam digging lessons at the Bolstad Pavilion at 7 a.m. on Saturday and 7:30 a.m. on Sunday. There will also be a clam cleaning demonstration at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday on the Bolstad Beach Approach. Food trucks, vendors, a slide for kids and artists selling handcrafted items, will be set up at Veterans Field on Third Street. North Jetty Brewing will also host a beer and wine garden. The festival's Clam Chowder Taste Off runs on Saturday from noon to 4 p.m., with bragging rights on the line for one fortunate local restaurant. Last year, The Chowder Stop and The Cove Restaurant tied for first place with Castaway's Seafood Grille placing second.

An amateur chowder cooking contest will take place at 11 a.m. on Saturday, with cash prizes totaling \$400. An oyster shucking contest is also planned for noon on Sunday. For those who have been out clamming, Dennis Company Ace in Long Beach, will offer prizes from 8 a.m. to noon for the largest and smallest clams brought into the store.

The Long Beach Peninsula has long been famed for its "world's largest frying pan." One version used to travel around the Northwest, appearing at parades to lure inland visitors to the peninsula. Now it is part of a static display downtown. A replica will also be on hand for organizers to cook clam fritter samples on Saturday afternoon. Previous local figures who have helped cook and serve have included a mayor and a state senator.

A clam festival was a fixture of the peninsula's activities calendar for years, but took a break before a revival nine years ago. Dianna



LEFT: Clam fritters are among treats in store at the Long Beach Razor Clam Festival. At a prior festival, Dean Takko, right, a former state senator, was among those recruited to cook and serve the tasty bivalves. **RIGHT:** Razor clams are a staple of life on the Long Beach Peninsula. Many coastal families share favorite recipes including chowder and fritters. The Razor Clam Festival celebrates them all.



Texas Tribute will perform a concert of ZZ Top hits at the Long Beach Razor Clam Festival.

Knight, office administrator for the Long Beach Visitors and Merchant Services Center, first became involved in 2014 and has been co-chair since 2016.

"Clam digging is a long-standing tradition on the Long Beach Peninsula and the Razor Clam Festival enhances that tradition by adding some good old-fashioned outdoor family fun," Knight said. "We have added more attractions this year, including a large slide,

a live mermaid in a sea tank, food trucks at the Bolstad Approach, and much more," she added. On Saturday, local favorite band The Oyster Crackers will perform the Veteran's Field stage, followed by Texas Tribute, a regional ZZ Top cover band. The Oyster Crackers are a Long Beach Peninsula based musical group whose members blend folk and Americana, much of their material original. The group recently recorded an album and performed virtually, but has now begun resuming live concerts.

The original Oyster Crackers, consisting of Bette Lu Krause, Crystal Mack and Rita Smith, has been augmented by a fourth musician, cellist Phyllis Taylor. Smith, a guitarist who sings and plays mandolin, is delighted that Taylor has joined the group. "I do some instrumentals with her, and Crystal and Bette Lu back us on guitars," Smith said. "It really has added a new dimension to our group."

The Oyster Crackers will perform at

Long Beach Razor Clam Festival

The festival is free and open to all.

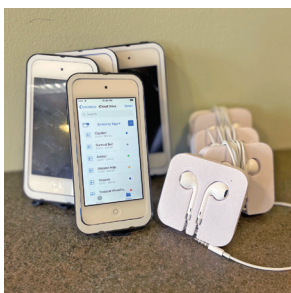
Clamming for those 15 or older requires a license from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, available from local vendors or at www.fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov. Harvesting restrictions apply.

www.longbeachrazorclamfestival.com



1:30 p.m. on Saturday. "We are looking forward to it," Smith said. "Because the people are going to be milling about, and they are going to sit down and have their lunch. People are not going to be listening for two hours solid," she added.

Texas Tribute will perform a selection of ZZ Top classics on Saturday at 4 p.m. Band members perform in shaggy beards to impersonate their longtime musical heroes, and have been known to play slide guitar using a saucepan, a Dr. Pepper bottle or a sake bottle. They are brought to the stage by Texas native Bruce T. Smith of North Coast Records in Seaside. Rae Gordon Band, based in Oregon City, will fill the festival's 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. performing slots on Sunday. Gordon, an award-winning blues singer, will perform with Kivett Bednar on guitar, Scott Franklin on saxophone and Allan Kalik on trumpet. It's bound to be a tasty and memorable lineup.



DISCOVER CRMM through New Tours of the Exhibits

Self-Guided Audio & Tactile Tour now available. iPods and earbuds for free rental - no registration needed. Included with Museum admission. Virtual Verbal Description Tour Friday April 22 4-5PM - Registration Required. Visit crmm.org/accessibility for details.

COLUMBIA RIVER MARITIME MUSEUM

3D Theater • Museum Store • Model Boat Pond

OPEN DAILY 9:30 TO 5:00 • 1792 Marine Drive, Astoria, OR • 503.325.2323 • www.crmm.org

COAST GUARD RESCUE MISSIONS: VERBAL DESCRIPTION TOUR

