

FESTIVAL RETURNS



Photos by Lydia Ely/The Astorian
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: The festival featured the traditional raising of the maypole. • Festival attendees shopped at the Darkmoon Faire booth. • People danced around the maypole on Saturday at the Astoria Scandinavian Midsummer Festival at the Clatsop County Fairgrounds. The annual festival returned as an in-person event after pandemic disruptions. • People danced while the band Varelse played Scandinavian folk music.



Library director to step down

Pearson has served in role since 2016

By NICOLE BALES
The Astorian

Jimmy Pearson, who has served as director of the Astoria Library since 2016, will step away from the role on Friday.

Pearson called the move a semiretirement and a bittersweet decision.

“(The coronavirus pandemic) no doubt has caused all of us to reevaluate our lives and where we’re at,” he said. “And it’s time.”

“I’m feeling very proud of what we’ve accomplished here as a team. We were open during the pandemic for people.”

City Manager Brett Estes said Pearson’s vision has given insight to what the library can look like in future years.

“Jimmy over the years has been able to bring new life and energy into the library and has been great to work with,” Estes said. “I’ve enjoyed working with him and having his opinions on how the library could become a new and reinvigorated place.”

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SEASIDE

Upgrades planned for busy intersection

The goal is to enhance safety and traffic flow

By R.J. MARX
The Astorian

SEASIDE — Improvements are planned at U.S. Highway 101 and Broadway to help enhance safety and traffic flow in the busy intersection.

The \$5.2 million effort is one of eight projects selected for the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program’s enhance funding from 2024 to 2027. Projects in this category are aimed at reducing congestion and improving freight mobility on state highways.

“This project is years in the making

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First lady of Cathlamet has a mission

Olson finds her voice through poetry

By PATRICK WEBB
Chinook Observer

CATHLAMET, Wash. — Dayle Olson is a quiet dynamo.

If on trial for being a poet, she would blissfully plead guilty, inevitably in a rhyming couplet.

“I have found the best time to write is in the quiet of the morning,” she said. “This is when my writer’s mind is most nimble and receptive. I keep a notebook and pencil next to the chair where I



have my morning coffee, then let my mind float as I watch the river from the window. If a chain of words starts to string together in my head, I listen. If I like the possibilities, I write it down and let the rest of the poem follow.”

Editing is fine tuning. “They usually don’t change much. Sometimes they don’t change at all. They come out like a baby, fully formed, with all their fingers and toes. Sometimes I read them to David, and sometimes he suggests a word to change.”

David Olson, her wed-later-in-life husband, is the mayor of Cathlamet, but would rather be a Shakespearean actor — quoting Polonius before exiting offstage to tackle budgets and potholes.

“This above all: To thine own self be true.”

Thus in Cathlamet, a blue-collar riverfront community of 572 with a Scandinavian flavor and a libertarian bent, the delightfully old-fashioned writer is leading the fray. It is far from a one-woman campaign. Websites like Poetry Wahiakum, created during COVID restrictions, and now in-person gatherings, are exemplifying the power of verse to bring people together to share the joy of words.



Patrick Webb/Chinook Observer

Dayle Olson, of Cathlamet, acknowledges that her career in radio polished the clarity of her diction and helps when reading poetry out loud.

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