

Get your ticket for Iron Chef Goes Coastal

SEASIDE — Tickets are on sale for the ninth annual Iron Chef Goes Coastal, which will take place at the Seaside Convention Center on Tuesday, Nov. 1. The event is the signature fundraiser for United Way of Clatsop County.

Tickets are required and can be purchased at clatsopunitedway.org or by calling 503-325-1961. General admission is \$35, and reserved seating is \$75. All proceeds benefit the United Way of Clatsop County and the agencies they serve.

This Iron Chef-style competition pairs four of the region's top chefs randomly into two teams, which compete in a live one-hour cook off requiring the use of a secret ingredient. This year, Jonathan Hoffman will compete to defend his 2015 Iron Chef Goes Coastal title against Fordinka Kanlic of Drina Daisy Bosnian Restaurant, Jason Lancaster of the Cove restaurant, and John Sowa of Sweet Basil's Cafe.

In addition to the live competition, 12 North Coast restaurants will compete for



PHOTO BY ANDREW TONRY

Jonathan Hoffman, left, winner of last year's Iron Chef Goes Coastal, will compete to defend his title this year.

votes in the People's Choice competition; the winner gets to compete in next year's live battle. The 12 restaurants are: Bridgewater Bistro, Cannon Beach Hardware Pub, Fort George Brewery, Fulio's, Maggie's on the Prom, Newman's at 988, Osprey Cafe, Pickled Fish, Silver Salmon, Street 14 Cafe, Twisted Fish and Wayfarer.

And for dessert, Sea Star Gelato will be defending its 2015 Best Dessert of Clatsop County title against 3 Cups Coffee House, Cannon

Beach Christian Culinary School, Frite & Scoop, and Schwietert's Candy and Cones. Attendees also get to taste and vote in this competition.

Reserved tickets allow entry at 5 p.m., and General Admission tickets allow entrance at 6 p.m. The live, main show starts at 6:30 p.m.

For more information, contact United Way of Clatsop County at 503-325-1961 or uwccdirector@pacifier.com, or visit www.clatsopunitedway.org

Piecing together the past

Author to speak about elementary students, letters from World War II and a mystery

SEASIDE — The Astoria chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution will host author Gail Elliott Downs, who will share her book "The Black Suitcase Mystery: A World War II Remembrance."

The program will take place at 2 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 30 at the Seaside American Legion, located at 1315 Broadway. The program is free and open to the public.

Published in 2015, Downs' book is an intriguing story unearthed by 10 year olds in 1991 from a small black suitcase containing almost 200 letters written prior to and during World War II. Downs inherited the suitcase from her great aunt. A librarian at Mark Twain Elementary in Missouri, Downs led her fourth grade students through the letters as a means of researching the past with primary documents. The students' excitement as they read the letters for the first time convinced her that the suitcase held the key to understanding and uncovering people and events that had both historical and personal significance.

The letters in the suitcase told a story of love and war, and the students had to piece together the order of events. At age 8, George Elliott Rich started writing the letters to his mother, Hazel, in 1929 after she had contracted tuberculosis. The two were separated for many years, seeing each other for only one week in 1942, just before George joined the Army Air Corps and became a radio operator/waist gunner on a B-24 Liberator



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Author Gail Elliott Downs will speak Oct. 30 about a black suitcase, over 200 letters, and a story from World War II uncovered by elementary students.

Bomber. George married in 1943 and his wife, Wanda, also wrote letters to Hazel. George was killed in action over German-occupied Poland while flying on his 50th mission.

Hazel carefully saved all George's correspondence, and the black suitcase became a time-capsule of his life and a treasure chest of first-hand accounts that occurred during a pivotal period in history.

The suitcase project started as a simple school library assignment but quickly expanded; students poured over the letters for four years, learning about B-24 Liberator bomber crews and unraveling the mystery. Students put on annual World War II history displays on Memorial Day, met Tuskegee Airmen veterans, participated in Valentines for Vets and raised over \$12,000

to schedule a fly-in of a fully restored B-24 Liberator Bomber.

"In the beginning, none of us could have predicted the astounding course this project would follow," said fifth grade teacher Leslie Brann. "Visualize several classes of 'cool' fifth graders. What could possibly entice them to spend hour after hour immersed in reference books, aviation manuals, and fiction stories about children who lived in the 1940s?"

The project eventually received local, state and national recognition, including four national educational awards, inclusion in the Congressional Record and recognition from President Clinton. Downs' school became the first elementary school in the nation to be designated a World War II Commemorative Community.

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