

# How we get fish sticks

## Author studies why Oregonians don't eat local seafood

By Rebecca Herren  
Seaside Signal

There is more to fishing than simply choosing the right bait and reeling in the fish. The purest attribute of a true fisherman is the ability to stretch the truth, from increasing the size and weight of the fish to delivering a lengthy monologue at the local brewery about the giant fish that got away; envisioning the protagonist of the 1954 science fiction film "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea."

Telling a tall fishing tale certainly follows a time-honored tradition, but this fish tale is of a different sort. It's the one in pursuit of answering the question, "Why Oregonians don't eat enough locally caught seafood?"

This question and others prompted a conversation with Jennifer Burns Bright during a Feb. 16 Oregon Humanities Conversation Project program at the Seaside Public Library.

Bright is an agriculture and travel writer. After moving to Port Orford, she wanted to do something different. She wanted to write about seafood. "It's been an aspect of our food system that I didn't know much about and so little is known about our local seafood."



REBECCA HERREN/SEASIDE SIGNAL  
**Jennifer Burns Bright at the Seaside Library.**

The presentation "Fish Tales: Traditions and Challenges of Seafood in Oregon" brought to light the relationship consumers have with the variety of products provided by the sea that some people may be unaware, cultural traditions related to fishing and understanding the ocean's bounty and challenges.

One attendee shared her experience on the difficulty of buying fish directly from the docks. Bright explained how regulations have changed from years past; meaning in present day, the daily catch

mostly goes to one buyer or company. "To sell directly, fishermen need to have a re-sell license or they can buy their fish back from the folks who are buying the fish off the boats and sell that to local consumers." Most fishermen, she said, "don't want to bother because of too much red tape."

A slide presentation balanced the conversations with graphs and figures. According to one, Oregonians eat about 15 pounds of seafood a year compared to 53 pounds of beef, 58 pounds of chicken and 175 pounds of grain. A 2014 study indicated that in America, people eat 15 pounds of seafood per person: 4 pounds of shrimp, 2.5 pounds salmon, 2.5 pounds of mostly canned tuna, over 1.5 pounds of tilapia, followed by pollock, basa, cod, catfish, crab and clams.

"Seafood consumption in the United States totals 90 percent imported," said Bright. "Ten percent is domestic or both because there is no way to classify fish that's caught locally to the fish that's shipped out to Canada or China then bought back as ready-made cod fillets or fish sticks," adding that the percentage could be higher and is impossible to track.

Top countries the U.S. imports to are: China, Thailand, Canada, Indonesia, Viet Nam and Ecuador. Shrimp being the greatest percentage at 33 percent followed by 22 percent for canned tuna and salmon; 45 percent fresh water fish, ground water fish, crab and squid make up the rest. Additionally, one half of the 90 percent of consumed imports are farmed — mostly from overseas.

Bright explained the process of farming fish and how they're grown, noting this type of farming is not always healthy as one slide of an overseas tilapia farm revealed a large algae bloom. "Often this results in polluted conditions and disease because the fish are grown very close together and the algae bloom depletes the oxygen in the water."

Currently, as Bright pointed out, there's some concern over imported farm salmon due to an epidemic of sea lice that has wiped out much of the salmon from the Nordic countries like Scandinavia and parts of Russia, creating a shortage. "Because of this, salmon will become more expensive and less available when purchased at grocery stores," adding that this affects farmed salmon and

eventually could affect all salmon.

As a whole, the farm seafood industry was \$1.4 billion in 2013, one-seventh of the total domestic seafood market.

Equally, the U.S. exports about 90 percent of its seafood to the global market. One third is exported for human consumption and two-thirds for other uses: animal food, fertilizer, thickeners and calcium sources for supplements.

"Our trade is dominated by a few large companies," said Bright.

Pacific Seafood and Pacific Choice being the biggest making \$1 billion dollars in 2015. They have 18 seafood processing plants in this area and are the sole buyers of seafood in seven west coast cities. "When the boats come in they can only sell to one buyer. There's one company that owns all the equipment, the trucks, the shipping containers, the dock, the lift; so you don't have a choice."

This, according to Bright, has created anti-trust lawsuits including the recent crab strike.

In 2015, Oregon's sea-

food exports totaled \$53.6 million to countries such as Canada, Japan, Ukraine, Malaysia and China. Oregon's most valuable seafood is its "little pink shrimp, which is mainly grown here," she said, followed by Dungeness crab, albacore, sable fish and rockfish.

More conversations touched on subjects of where people buy seafood, marketing strategies that appeal to consumers, healthy eating, ideologies and values.

But the evening didn't pass without hearing a few seafaring tales. Stories of catching a 10-foot thrasher shark or the one about catching nine barracuda off the coast of Mexico; a sturgeon so big it could feed a family for a year; an old fisherman who taught children how to net, boil, peel and eat shrimp; and how to keep live carp fresh in preparation for Christmas dinner. And, lastly, the one about a young, inquisitive girl who detested carp so much she needed to find out what type of fish were really in fish sticks.

Bright is scheduled to speak at the Astoria Public Library on April 12.



# School board, architect shape new campus

Plans from Page 1A

DAY CPM, a Beaverton-based Owner's Representative consulting firm, was contracted in January to administer construction management services on behalf of the district throughout the project.

Before the school board meeting, the district hosted an informal meet-and-greet event for staff, administrators, board members and a few community members to make contact with the representatives from DAY CPM, who then gave a presentation during the meeting.

The presentation included a history of the firm, which was established in 2002; a summation of the firm's values; and an overview of the firm's experience with K-12 projects, which are "definitely part of our wheelhouse," said Mike Day, bond program manager.

## Project planning and timelines

Project Manager Mitali Kulkarni presented "just a snapshot" of the approximate timeline for the process, emphasizing "there are several pieces that go into making the schedule from the start to the end."

As with any large-scale project, she said, "the foundation is good planning. So that's what we're going to start with."

Project planning and design likely will take most of 2017, although some logging at the project site also is scheduled. In 2018, design will progress and major construction — including a remodel and expansion of Seaside Heights Elementary School — will start. The construction will continue throughout 2019, with expansion finishing that year. Construction on the other facilities should be substantially completed during the first half of 2020, allowing the high school and middle school to start moving in. The goal is for the campus to open for the 2020-21 academic school year.

"Once we get into more details, we will have the more complicated schedule published, but this gives you an idea of what the construction timeframe is," Kulkarni said.

## A glance at the delivery method

The district has chosen the construction management/general contractor method for the school project.

In this project delivery style, the construction manager provides input throughout the design process. As the design finishes, the construction manager may become the general contractor through negotiations with the school district.

**"The foundation is good planning. So that's what we're going to start with."**  
Project Manager Mitali Kulkarni

The complexity of Seaside's project, Kulkarni said, makes it well suited for the delivery method, which emphasizes collaboration, fiscal transparency, eliminating overlap of services and providing the best overall value.

Through the use of dynamic cost-control modeling, the project's budget and expenditures are constantly updated and tracked, not only for real costs, but also for trends. The benefit of doing so, Kulkarni said, is by detecting a negative upward trend early, "you have the opportunity to correct the course and bring it down."

Portland-based Dull Olson Weekes-IBI Group Architects is providing design and architecture services for the project. The next step is finding a general contractor.

A public hearing will take place at the board's next meeting, March 21.

After approval, the board can bring a contract manager and general contractor on board.

Selection will be a collaborative process involving DAY CPM and school board members, staff and community members serving on a panel.

"This is a very important decision for the district," Day said.

Ron White, a community outreach coordinator with DAY CPM, said the firm intends to emphasize community engagement throughout the project.

They brought surveys to the meet-and-greet event and the school board meeting to collect input from attendees. Future engagement may include town hall and neighborhood meetings. The firm also intends to communicate through a project website that will run through the school district's Web portal.

In other news:  
• Hannah Sirpless, a senior associate with Pauly, Rogers and Company, presented via conference call results from the district's 2015-16 audit. The firm issued an unmodified opinion and concluded there were no significant deficiencies or material weaknesses. "In short, it's a clean audit," Sirpless said. As part of their report, the firm offered a few best practices the district could pursue to help mitigate risk in future years. Best practices are not significant deficiencies, but suggestions on behalf of the firm, Sirpless said, adding, "it's impossible to have everything perfect within a district, especially a small district, so our best practices are just our comments and items we want the board and management to be aware of."  
• The board unanimously approved a resolution to adopt the Oregon Short Term Fund Board's short-form investment policy, which will allow the district to invest proceeds from the sale of its general obligation bonds for longer than 18 months. Since the project's completion is scheduled for beyond 18 months, adopting the policy lets the district make more profitable investments with some of the bond funds that aren't needed up front, business manager Justine Hill said. The sale of the general obligation bonds — valued at about \$99.7 million — was finalized Feb. 28 and the funds will be delivered mid-March.

• The board unanimously authorized Hill and Superintendent Sheila Roley to be signatories of a new local government investment pool account that will be set up for funds relating to the school construction project. The district has two other accounts through the pool, administered by the Oregon State Treasury. The new account "is going to be specifically for the bond," to keep funds separated, Hill said.

# Bark park gets formal debut

## Almost the entire park was made using recycled materials

By R.J. Marx  
Seaside Signal

No more barking up the wrong tree for visitors to Seaside.

Travelers and local residents with Fido in tow will be able to bring their pets to Seaside with a pit stop at the new dog park on U.S. Highway 101, just north of Broadway Middle School.

The park received its official ribbon-cutting Friday, Feb. 24, as Mayor Jay Barber wielded the scissors, joined by Public Works Director Dale McDowell.

"We're dedicating a first for Seaside, our first dog park," Barber said. "A lot of us think our dogs are among our most important citizens in Seaside. It's small, but it's a beginning, where people can bring their dogs and have a place to let them run and play."

The park was conceived by McDowell, who was presented with a small area along the highway overgrown with sticker bushes and collecting garbage. With a location near Broadway Middle School, the visitors' center and City Hall, beautification was in order. But the small park, owned by the Seaside School District, the city, the Oregon Department of Transportation and housing some Pacific Power and Light utilities, defied easy categorization.

"When I was on the Parks Advisory Commission, they were looking for a location for a dog park," McDowell said. "So it was a matter of getting everybody to get together: what can I do to put a little dog park in here?"

McDowell brought the concept to the Planning Commission, the Parks Advisory Committee, then the City Council for approval. "It took us six days to put it together," he said. "It was just due diligence," he said. "I wasn't asking for the world."



R.J. MARX/SEASIDE SIGNAL

## Rinaldo investigates the "hydrant" in the dog park.

Six weeks later, in late July, the plan was approved. The park will be maintained by the Public Works Department and patrolled by the city's dog control officer.

Cost was minimal. "The entire park, other than the gravel and the signage, and the concrete for the post, is recycled material," McDowell said. "All the fencing, the fire hydrant, the benches, the garbage can is all recycled material. Last week, I went down to the spay and neuter thrift store and found the two dog dishes, and I brought those up here on Sunday."

"I think the total cost was about \$200," Barber said at the dedication. "Dale's a wonderful person to find material that can be recycled and reused. People coming through town will see it and be able to stop and let their dogs run and play here. We may need to put some signage out on the highway. Coming in you can see the 'Woof Waste' placard. The best signage is to have a bunch of dogs running around."

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