



Sunset Rec turns 50!



The Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District was established for the purpose of providing the first public pool for the Seaside community. The pool officially opened Sept. 28, 1977. Now, it is the site of numerous fitness classes, open swim sessions, and other community activities.

TOP Broadway Middle School students participate in an activity at the Sunset Pool in May. **COUNTERCLOCKWISE, FROM LEFT** A child enjoys preschool in a 2015 class. Bowling in Broadway Park, 2014. Campers at Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District Summer Camp in 2015. The Daddy-Daughter Dance has become a signature event for the Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District. The second family triathlon will be held Saturday, June 22, followed by the district's 50th birthday celebration, which will take place across several sites owned and managed by the district.



Rec district to mark birthday with family triathlon, barbecue, more

By **KATHERINE LACAZE**
For Seaside Signal

At 50 years old, the Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District is one of the earliest of its kind in the state of Oregon.

During the past five decades, the district has evolved significantly from its original purpose of providing a public pool to offering an expanding suite of services and programs for the community.

The accomplishments of the district — and the people who made them possible — will be celebrated this weekend during a community-wide event featuring a variety of activities.

“We feel like this is a really awesome milestone for our district,” Executive Director Skyler Archibald said.

To kick off the day, attendees can participate in the district's second annual Family Triathlon starting at 9 a.m., although preregistration is required by Friday, June 21. At 11:30, the district will host the birthday celebration and a free barbecue. During lunch, staff will recognize a number of people, including past directors and board members, whose leadership was integral to the district's establishment and sustainability.

Families can then choose to attend a free Zumba class

at noon, go to open swim at the pool from 1 to 3 p.m., and participate in a scavenger hunt across the district's facilities. Ice cream will be served in the pool lobby around 3. Also during the day, the district's facilities will be open and free for use.

Archibald said they are looking forward to community members coming out and being recognized for their part in supporting the district, but also touring “around to see what the district is able to provide that maybe they didn't realize.”

The SEPRD Legacy

Starting in 1965, a group of community members began devoting efforts to build a community pool and gathering funds from the PTA, baked food sales, and private donors. When it became clear more funding was needed, the community decided to form a special district.

The vote took place in the fall of 1968, and the district's formation was approved by a slim margin, Archibald. The measure, however, set the permanent tax to fund the district at \$0.92 per \$1,000 assessed property value, which has “allowed us to be stable through that 50 years,” he added.

City-owned parks and recreation departments often have to vie for funding with other departments and important services and

can be a low priority compared to public utilities, emergency services, and law enforcement. The Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District has been fortunate not to be in a similar situation, Archibald said. Rather, having a consistent funding source has enabled the district to be forward-thinking in terms of serving the community and eyeing progress.

“As the community has grown and property values have increased, we've been able to do more and more,” Archibald said.

The district was officially formed Feb. 14, 1969, and the boundaries were similar to what they are today. They mimic the Seaside School District's, excluding the incorporated cities of Gearhart and Cannon beach.

The following few years were spent securing other levies to build the pool, hiring an architectural firm, and selecting the existing site near Broadway Park after public hearings and discussions with the City of Seaside and school district. On Sept. 28, 1977, Sunset Pool opened to the public.

Other momentous occasions in the district's history include taking over management of the Bob Chisholm Community Center for the city and having access to more program space; establishing the Seaside Youth Center; and opening Broadway Field in 2011.

“Our staff is just really grateful to continue to legacy that we have and to honor our community by providing the programs that we do,” Archibald said.

A vision for the future

Looking forward, the district plans to update its strategic plan when incoming board members Lindsey Morrison and John Chapman join in July. They will serve alongside current board members Veronica Russell, Jeremy Mills, and Michael Hinton. Together, they will determine what the board's new priorities will

be for the next several years.

The previous board and district staff agreed they need to add more indoor recreation space. If they can accomplish that in the next few years, Archibald believes that will be another seminal moment in the district's history.

“The district is underserving our population because we don't have enough indoor space to meet the needs of our community to give them healthy and safe places to play and to move and to be active year-round,” he said. “I'm not sure how we'll do it, but I know it will still be a priority.”

For more information about the district's 50th Birthday Celebration activities and itinerary, call 503-738-3311 or visit sunsetempire.com.

Ask us about
**Rewards
Checking!**

503-738-8341



Want a fresh new look for summer? Call your local, neighborhood experts!

We're Budget Blinds, and we're North America's #1 provider of custom window coverings. We do it all for you; design, measure and install — because we think everyone, at every budget, deserves style, service, and the peace-of-mind of the best warranty in the business.

BUDGET BLINDS
Style and service for every budget.*

Call now for your free in-home consultation!

Oregon Coast
503.738.5242

Lincoln City
541.994.9954

SW Washington
503.738.5242

- Blinds
- Shutter
- Shades
- Drapes
- Home Automation

Save up to **20%** on select window coverings

*Applies to selected window treatments from Budget Blinds. Restrictions may apply, ask for details. Valid for a limited time, not valid with any other offers, discounts or coupons. Offer good at initial time of estimate only. At participating franchises only. ©2018 Budget Blinds, LLC. All Rights Reserved. Budget Blinds is a trademark of Budget Blinds, LLC and a Home Franchise Concepts Brand. Each franchise independently owned and operated.