

Fall Fun Fest: Families enjoy costume fun, Halloween treats at recreation center

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She estimated about 200 attendees filtered through the event over the course of the afternoon, not to mention the 30 volunteers who were integral to running the festival, from checking people in and collecting COVID-19 waivers to overseeing the pumpkin-decorating and other activities.

“Those events are so huge, you really can’t do it without the volunteers,” Ousley said.

Community

Among the volunteers were young people from Seaside High School’s Key Club and Seaside Middle School’s Builders Club, both of which are affiliated with Kiwanis International.

Volunteering for local events, such as the Fall Fun Fest, “shows that kids can play a part in their community,” said Jennifer Gooch, faculty advisor for the Builders Club. “It’s good to give them that feeling of what it’s like to give back.”

The festival was the first event for which club members have volunteered this school year, with other community-based activities, like beach cleanups and fund-raising for the recreation district’s scholarship program, on the horizon. The club is focused on rebuilding and recruiting new members after not being as active last school year because of the pandemic.

Club president Mya Feehey, who’s been in a club two years, spent the afternoon running carnival games and handing out prizes to exuberant young participants.

“It’s nice to see when people are smiling and that you’re making their day,” she said. “I just like helping others.”

Sixth-grader Juliana Olsen, who was overseeing the photo booth with her friends Isabella Page and Lila Thornburg, shared a similar sentiment about her experience volunteering for the festival.

“I love seeing how happy the little kids are,” she said.

In addition to the high school and middle school students, several district staff volunteered for the festival. It was also supported by a few key community sponsors, including TLC Fibre Federal Credit Union, Damarcom Inc. and TD&M Enterprises, Beach Books, Costco and Safeway. The Wildlife Center of the North Coast and Seaside Public Library had booths set up in the gym where kids could pick up a free coloring page and book.



The Fall Fun Fest included the traditional cake walk — or cupcake walk — with cupcakes donated by Safeway.



Costumed kids at Fall Fun Fest.

Using the recreation center

According to Ousley, being able to host the event in their own space — rather than renting the Seaside Civic and Convention Center like last year — was beneficial for the organizers. Not only is the new recreation center large enough to host hundreds of attendees, but they also were able to start setting up days in advance and they saved on rental fees.

“From an event-planning perspective, it was great for me,” she added.

In light of the pandemic, there was also space for attendees to spread out. The organizers originally anticipated having to do staggered admittance, like last year, to ensure there weren’t too many people in the building at one time, but the organic flow throughout the afternoon made it unnecessary.

“It kind of happened nat-



Photos by Katherine Lacaze

Seaside middle schoolers Lila Thornburg (right) and Isabella Page assist Katharine Parker and her daughter Chloe at the photo booth at the Fall Fun Fest.



ABOVE: An entry from the virtual pumpkin-decorating contest. LEFT: Young children showed up in costumes for the Fall Fun Fest, which involved a cupcake walk, carnival-style games, pumpkin-decorating and more.

Additionally, recreation staff have decorated pumpkins that are now on display at the Sunset Pool. Community members are invited to stop by, view the dozen or so pumpkins, and cast a vote for their favorite one as part of People’s Choice contest.

“That was a fun way to include our staff and do a little bonding,” Ousley said. “We do things for the community and then we also try to lift our staff’s spirits as well by doing these fun things.”

urally, just as far as people showing up over the four hours we had the event,” Ousley said.

Although the festival itself is over, the recreation district is still conducting its virtual pumpkin-decorating and costume contests. Local families can submit entries to Ousley, via email, through Friday, Oct. 29. A small panel of judges will review the entries and winners will be announced early next week.

“With COVID, you have to adapt a lot and use technology to get things done,” Ousley said.

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Pumpkin drop: Pet parade begins at 10 a.m. Saturday

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The event went viral on television and social media, Seaside Downtown Development Association board member Ruth Swenson said. “Nothing like killing a giant pumpkin out in the middle of the parking lot to make people want to watch. If you ever want to get attention, drop a big pumpkin.”

The pumpkin will drop again this year, this time on the beach, from the Turnaround into a “very big pool of water,” she said.

Crane operators Ben Olson and Chuck Godwin, both of Seaside, dropped last year’s 1,328-pound pumpkin from 40 feet. They will be back to drop this year’s pumpkin.

The pool will be populated with plastic ducks and beavers, Swenson said, emblematic of the Oregon college rivalry.

Contest participants are asked to guess the distance the animals will splash out of the pool, with the closest guess winning a \$500 prize, Swenson said.

“We’re going to have all our beavers and ducks actually in the pool and then when the pumpkin drops it will hopefully push some of them out of the water,” she said. “It’s kind of a science



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Last year’s 1,328-pound pumpkin at the top of its arc.

project all on its own, so a good educational moment for your kids.”

The pumpkin drop is only one of the Seaside Downtown Development Association’s signature Halloween Happenin’s events.

Sign-in for the pet parade begins at 9:30 a.m. at Seaside Slushies & Dogs, 550 Broadway. The parade begins at 10.

“March your dog family or pet or duck or goose or goat, or chicken or horse — we’ve had them all before — feel free to dress that animal up and walk it to the

Turnaround,” Swenson said.

The Halloween Carnival, with fun, games and pumpkin carving at the Turnaround, takes place from noon to 3 p.m.

The giant pumpkin drop will be viewed from the Turnaround at 3 p.m.

Trunk or Treat follows as decorated cars line up downtown between Columbia and the Turnaround to give out candy to trick-or-treaters on Saturday from 4 to 5 p.m.

On Sunday, viewers can gather at Quatat Park at 11:30 a.m. for the Witches Paddle at noon.

UPCOMING EVENTS

If it’s Halloween, it must be Christmas. The Seaside Chamber of Commerce introduced a full schedule of holiday events, coming on the heels of the Halloween season with events throughout November and December.

The Christmas tree decoration is CEO Brian Owen’s favorite, with his opportunity to get a lift in the city’s bucket truck, the “beginning of a festive season.”

The Parade of Lights, sponsored by Pacific Power, takes place the day after Thanksgiving, on Friday, Nov. 26. Crowds line up at 6 and the parade starts at about 7 p.m.

A holiday artisan fair takes place at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center on Nov. 26 and Nov. 27.

The tour of lights, sponsored by Grocery Outlet, with driving guides to homes and businesses with holiday displays.