

**SignalViewpoints**

# Kyllo is a local legend in Brazilian jiu jitsu

**SEEN FROM SEASIDE**

R.J. MARX



“A local legend.” That is how Zach Adamson of Adamson Bros. Jiu Jitsu describes Michelle Kyllo.

After a decade of dedication, Kyllo became the first woman on the Oregon Coast to earn her black belt in Brazilian jiu jitsu.

“Michelle is an inspiration to many women here locally and throughout the Pacific Northwest and this is something our community can be proud of,” Adamson said.

Kyllo attended local schools from elementary to high school, graduating in 2009.

“I have always kind of been a little — I don’t want to say tomboy — but when I was in elementary school, primary school, I was always trying to wrestle, scrap with people,” she said. “We’d go to the beach, and I’m like, ‘Let’s play sumo.’ I’ve always been, I wouldn’t say aggressive, but I always liked to mix it up a little bit.”

Her mom always wanted her to be a ballerina. “She put me in dance classes, and I was terrible. I hated it,” she said. “And so when I was 12, I eventually mustered up the courage to say, ‘I don’t want to do this, I want to fight. I want to do martial arts.’”

She started at a studio in Warrenton with taekwon do kickboxing, her introduction to the martial arts.

“I loved it,” she said. “I never really considered myself very athletic. When I did softball I mostly picked daisies in the outfield. I swam for the fun of it. Any other sport did not appeal to me. And I wasn’t good at them. Why would you do something you’re not good at? We’d go to competitions and I would just whoop on everyone. Once I got started with martial arts, I was like, ‘Oh, my God! I’m good at this!’”

When the dojo in Warrenton closed, she joined a mixed martial arts gym in Astoria.

That’s where she met Adamson. “I was just doing kickboxing, although they did have jiu jitsu and grappling,” she said. “But at the time, it was mostly just big, burly shirtless guys doing it. I was 16 and watching, thinking, ‘I will never grapple, I will never do jiu jitsu, I’m just going to stand



**Nate Adamson, Michelle Kyllo and Zach Adamson at Adamson Bros. in Seaside.**

up, punch and kick, and that’s going to be great.”

Fast forward to college.

She attended Southern Utah University, where she studied sociology and psychology with the goal of becoming a counselor or a therapist. It was also there that she trained in the mixed martial arts program. “I just fell in love with the grappling part, the wrestling aspect — more so than getting punched in the face,” she said.

Kyllo was so good in the ring that she drew the eye of show promoters in Las Vegas and Cedar City, on the border of Utah and Nevada, but ultimately decided against it — to the relief of her parents, who while supporting the jiu jitsu aspect, didn’t want to see her get hurt.

After college, her career direction was still unsettled and she moved back to Seaside.

When she saw Nate and Zach Adamson had opened a studio in Seaside, she saw an opportunity to continue on the mat. “I’m like, I gotta try it out,” she said. “And so I came in here, and I was obsessed.”

As she entered tournaments, she found



**Grant and Michelle Kyllo in training.**

that being from the North Coast can be “like being a big fish in a little pond. She had a wake-up call at the International Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Federation world championship in Long Beach, California, in 2019.

“In Oregon and Washington, I compete very well,” she said. “I usually get gold. And then going to California spending \$1,000 and losing in the first round — done. That was my biggest disappointment as a competitor.”

She learned from the experience.

“When you get to compete, you get to really test yourself against others,” she said. “I just kept progressing and progressing on that.”

Kyllo has been competing for more than seven years now.

She works at Bank of the Pacific in Seaside as a customer service representative. Eventually, she may work toward a counseling career, “possibly after I have children.”

She met her husband, Grant, when he took a class from her at Adamson Bros. “He was my student, so I waited till he graduated from my class,” she said. “When he leveled out of the introduction class, we



R.J. Marx

**Michelle Kyllo with medals.**

started coaching together, and that’s how we fell in love. He’s still my favorite training partner.”

Grant Kyllo is now a purple belt.

A Minnesota native, his real passion is farming.

The Kyllos own land in Elsie with goats, chickens, pigs — “the whole everything. That’s what we kind of do.”

She continues classes two days a week with the Adamson Bros. and teaches private and group classes.

“People should come in and give it a try,” she said. “Most fights do go to the ground and you can defend yourself. If you’re looking to lose weight, give jiu jitsu a try. I lost like 40 pounds. Just come and check it out.”

**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

## Missing Patti’s Wicker Cafe

I arrived in Seaside for the Miss America Scholarship Program as I have done for more than a decade, eager for breakfast at Patti’s Wicker Cafe. Imagine my surprise to find it under renovation and no longer serving dry wit and coffee at 6 a.m.! I just wanted to take a moment and pay tribute to a member of your community who was as original as the Oregon Coast itself and who worked through her life to bring happiness and homemade food to the community. She told me her real name once upon a time but it was never an issue to just call her by the name of the cafe she made a bright light in the gray dawn.

Thank you, Patti! You will be missed.

**Clint Kaster  
Portland**

**PUBLIC MEETINGS**

**Contact local agencies for latest meeting information and attendance guidelines.**

**TUESDAY, JUNE 21**

**Community Emergency Response Team,** 5 p.m., 989 Broadway.

**Seaside Planning Commission,** work session, 6 p.m., 989 Broadway.

**Seaside School District Board of Directors,** 6 p.m., 2600 Spruce Dr.

**MONDAY, JUNE 27**

**Seaside City Council,** 7 p.m., 989 Broadway.

**TUESDAY, JULY 5**

**Seaside Community Center Commission,** 10 a.m., Bob Chisholm Community Center, 1225 Avenue A.

**Seaside Library Board,** 4:30 p.m., 1131 Broadway.

**Seaside Planning Commission,** 6 p.m., 989 Broadway.

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 6**

**Seaside Improvement Commission,** 6 p.m., 989 Broadway.

**Gearhart City Council,** 7 p.m., www.cityof-gearhart.com.

**THURSDAY, JULY 7**

**Seaside Parks Advisory Committee,** 6 p.m., 989 Broadway.

## Land conservancy to hold picnic at Circle Creek

The North Coast Land Conservancy is holding a barn picnic at noon on June 22 at the Circle Creek Conservation Center, located at the end of Ripplet Road in Seaside.

This is a bring-your-own-picnic event, and those attending are reminded to bring a blanket and chairs. There is live music and two guided hikes along the Wetland Walk and the Legacy Loop at Circle Creek. To join in one of the walks, be sure to wear hiking shoes or boots.

There is also a wine pull as a fundraiser to support coastal conservation. Twenty-five bottles of wine are available for \$20 each. Attendees can pull a wrapped wine bottle at random from a selection of high-end, moderately priced wines. Payment may be made with cash, check or a credit card.

For information, go to [nclctrust.org](http://nclctrust.org).

## Sou’Wester Garden Club to meet

Sou’Wester Garden Club will meet June 22 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Bob Chisholm Community Center at 1225 Avenue A in Seaside. The program will feature induction of Officers and visiting members’ gardens.

## Guitarist to perform at Coaster Theatre

Virtuoso guitarist Aaron Larget-Caplan returns to the Coaster Theatre Playhouse at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 18 for a concert, “Dreams and New Creations.”

The performance features explorations of Spanish dances and masterpieces by Isaac Albéniz and Francisco Tarrega, new transcriptions of keyboard music by J.S. Bach, music from Larget-Caplan 2020 and 2021 New Lullaby Project albums, and some of his most recent compositions.

Admission is \$25; tickets can be purchased at the theater box office, 503-436-1242, or online at [coastertheatre.com](http://coastertheatre.com). Discount tickets are available to anyone staying at a Cannon Beach hotel, vacation rental or RV park. Discounts are available only through the box office. Call or visit the box office for more information.

At this time, everyone must show proof of vaccination or a negative COVID test

**NEWS BRIEFS**



**Guests at a previous Circle Creek picnic, presented by the North Coast Land Conservancy.**

to enter the Coaster Theatre the day of the concert. Face masks are optional but encouraged.

## ‘Make Music Day’ in Seaside, Astoria

Join the worldwide celebration of music on June 21 at Make Music Clatsop County.

Make Music is a free celebration of music around the world. Launched in 1982 in France as the Fête de la Musique, it is now held on the same day in more than 1,000 cities in 120 countries.

Completely different from a typical music festival, Make Music is open to anyone who wants to take part. Every kind of musician — young and old, amateur and professional, of every musical persuasion — pours onto streets, parks, plazas, and porches to share their music with friends, neighbors, and strangers. All of it is free and open to the public.

Make Music Clatsop County is getting its start this year and joins Salem as the second

host chapter in Oregon. The festival is a program of the Arts Council of Clatsop County, a nonprofit organization dedicated to uniting the community by providing new experiences to support and encourage an appreciation and understanding of how music Venues in Seaside, Astoria and Cannon Beach will join in the one-day festival this first year. Both artists and venues will have a profile on our website.

Venues and performers can register and create their profiles at [clatsopcounty.makemusicday.org](http://clatsopcounty.makemusicday.org). Performances are posted to a live, interactive map on the website.

## Local students earn honor roll

Blair Wood, a third grader from Seaside, and Blue Young, a fifth grader from Gearhart, were among students who earned honor roll earned honor roll recognition for superior academic achievement during the first semester of the 2021-22 school year from Willamette Connections Academy.



**PUBLISHER**  
Kari Borgen

**EDITOR**  
R.J. Marx

**CIRCULATION MANAGER**  
Shannon Arlint  
**ADVERTISING SALES MANAGER**  
Sarah Silver-Tecza

**PRODUCTION MANAGER**  
John D. Bruijn  
**SYSTEMS MANAGER**  
Carl Earl

**CONTRIBUTING WRITERS**  
Skyler Archibald  
Joshua Heineman  
Katherine Lacaze  
Esther Moberg  
**CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER**  
Jeff TerHar

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