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Fall 2024

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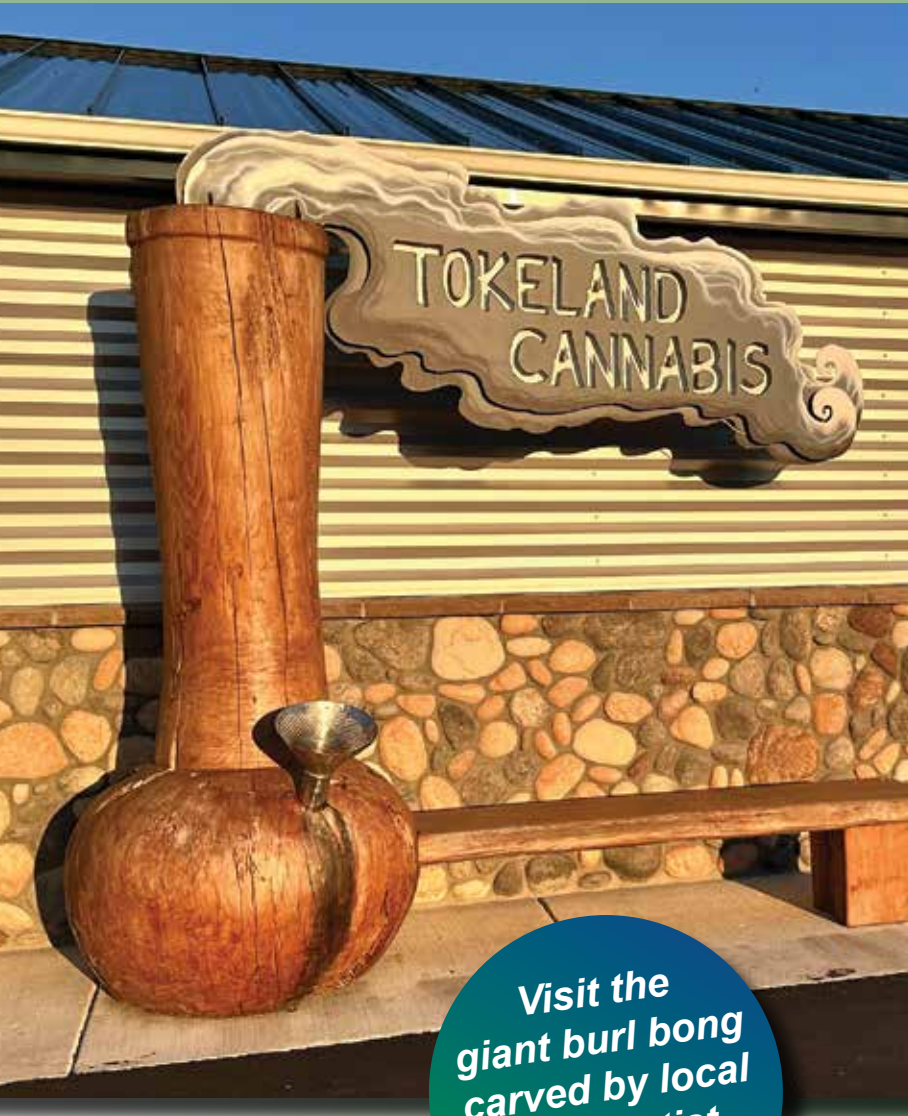
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Photo by Rick Moyer

Snowbird Farm & Cidery creates flavorful hard cider and provides a welcoming place to gather. See story on page 10.

COASTAL *Currents* MAGAZINE

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This issue's front cover features Tim Johnson enjoying a Fourth of July sunset from the water. Photo by Carly Giles, surf photographer. See story on page 15.

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Hoquiam history lives on at Loggers Playday

STORY BY STEPHANIE MORTON
PHOTOS BY RICK MOYER

If you ask Amelia Moir her favorite day, she'll tell you it's Loggers Playday in September. The 21-year-old college student, who grew up in Hoquiam, thinks it may even rival Christmas. "It really is the best day of the year."

Since 1964, the annual Hoquiam hometown celebration takes place on the first Saturday after Labor Day. This year that's Sept. 7. As the name suggests, Loggers Playday celebrates logging's heyday, and it also is a celebration of Hoquiam's history and community spirit.

Named for the accumulation of logs at the mouth of the river, Hoquiam is a Chehalis word meaning "hungry for wood." Hoquiam is a logging town and probably always will be. According to John Larson, director of the Polson Museum, Hoquiam was selected as a lumber mill site by George Emerson, a worker for the Asa Simpson Lumber Company.

"It really is the best day of the year."

— *Amelia Moir*

"That one mill was the springboard," said Larson. More mills followed along with houses and stores and all the infrastructure needed to support this new timber industry. The large crews employed to cut timber lived in the woods, performing many of the skills in their day-to-day lives that are now logging show events.

Modeled after Aberdeen's Splash Festival, which was celebrated on the Fourth of July, the first Loggers Playday occurred at Emerson Field in 1964. According to historic documents, two men, Jack Reynvaan and Bill Anthony, thought of the idea. They had each participated in other logging shows in Sitka, Alaska, and Morton, respectively, and thought Hoquiam would be a good place to host something similar.

The document shows that 16 people were at the initial meeting and each donated \$10 to get the Loggers Playday started on the 75th anniversary of the City of Hoquiam. At the time, the sport of birling or log rolling was extremely popular and fit in with the town's desire to create a festival that celebrated its roots.

(continued on page 6)

Below, Isaiah Obermire and Nicholas Strachota, both of Hoquiam, and Tristan Van Beek of Seymour, Tennessee, right, competed in last year's Loggers Playday.





Amelia Moir and Faith Prosch, both of Hoquiam, competed in Logger's Playday 2023.

Loggers Playday

(continued)

Now, the show takes place at Olympic Stadium, one of the largest, oldest and best-preserved, all-wood grandstands in the country. The stadium was built in 1938 as part of the Works Progress Administration and FDR's New Deal.

It was a huge project, and according to the statement of significance in the National Historical Record: "A half a million board feet of lumber, which was donated by the Polson Lumber & Shingle Mills, was used in the construction of the stadium.

Paul Pendergraft, Hoquiam, flashes a smile to the spectators.



The old growth fir was reportedly logged in Clallam County around Quillayute and was brought into Hoquiam for milling before being transported to the site."

The City of Hoquiam owns the stadium, which gets plenty of use from local sports teams including the Hoquiam High School Grizzlies, said Jarrod Todd, a longtime member of the Play-day committee. The Grizzlies have played many a football game the night before the logging show, making an already tight timeline especially fraught. Playday volunteers begin set up right after the football game ends, working into the morning hours.

And, because the stadium is so historically significant and fragile due to its construction, log show events are somewhat limited, said Todd. They can't tear up the field with heavy equipment.

"At least not any more than we already do," admitted Todd. The city's grounds crew does a fantastic job fixing the field in the days following the show, he added. Moving to a less delicate location is out of the question. And certainly, don't think about moving the show out of Hoquiam.

"Everyone would quit," said Todd laughing.

Tradition runs deep in this Hoquiam festival, now in its 60th year. The schedule for Loggers Playday remains comfortably unchanged. The day begins, bright and early, at 6 a.m., with the Rotary Club of

Hoquiam's pancake breakfast at Our Lady of Good Help.

Time trials for logging events start at 7 a.m. at Olympic Stadium.

After breakfast, folks head to Eighth Street by the river for the truck driving and binder throwing (not notebooks but rather chains or wires used to secure logs on a truck) at 8 a.m.

"Hoquiam is Loggers Playday and Loggers Playday is Hoquiam."

— Jarrod Todd

At 10 a.m. it's time to browse the selection of goods downtown at the vendor fair. Then, it's time to secure a good viewing spot for the Hoquiam Elks Grand Parade at noon. Hometown pride is on full display, wending through downtown — spit-shined log trucks, logging equipment, marching bands, princesses in hickory shirts and hard hats, drill teams, fire trucks — in the annual Elks Grand Parade.

After the parade, which runs about two hours, festivalgoers will want to have a bite. Thankfully, the Hoquiam Lions



Mike Johnson of Philomath, Ore., and Xander Waibel of Wilsonville, Ore., compete in 2023.

put on their famous salmon bake at Washington School at 2 p.m.

The main event, the logging show, begins at 6 p.m., and generally runs for about two hours. Admission to the event is one Loggers Playday button sold by the Playday court princesses or at businesses throughout Hoquiam. Buttons are either \$3 for regular or \$5 for specialty pins that commemorate a person or organization special to Playday.

Jarrodd Todd said the attendance at the show ranges from about 2,000 to 5,000 folks and is entirely dependent on the weather. Rain, of course, will lighten the crowds. After the logging competition, if burn restrictions are not in place, then a fireworks show will light up the sky. Finally, for those who still have the energy, there's a dance at 9 p.m. at the Hoquiam Elks.

At the logging show, professional competitors vie for points and win cash prizes. Some events are self-explanatory like axe throwing and log chopping. Others require a bit more explanation. Bucking is the term for cutting felled trees into log sections. Some events use power equipment like chainsaws in the hot saw and power saw bucking.

In ma and pa bucking, a man and woman use a two-person saw to cut through a log. A two-person saw is also known as a misery whip, and for good reason.

It is hard to cut through logs with an uncooperatively bendy saw that's sticky with pitch.

Then there is a pole climb, choker setting (running cables around logs), double hand bucking and obstacle pole bucking in which a competitor runs on a log, chops the end, and runs back in a timed race.

Springboard chop is one of the more difficult events. Loggers cut notches in poles, secure springboards to fabricate a type of stair and then must chop a block of wood, said Hoki Moir, Amelia's father and Playday fixture.

"Springboard chop keeps spectators on the edge of their seats," Hoki said, and it's one of the events that demonstrates what logging was like back in the day.

The relay race is another exciting event with teams competing in choker setting, axe throw, obstacle pole bucking and power saw bucking.

The tree-topping exhibition is a crowd favorite, unique to Loggers Playday. Eddie "Mooch" Smith climbs about 80 feet to cut the top off a tree and drops the top onto an unsuspecting watermelon below.

"The kids love it," said Hoki. "Well, everybody loves it."

In a separate contest from the professionals, local loggers from Western Washington counties participate in the speed climb, choker setting, power saw bucking, axe throwing and double hand bucking. High point logger wins a prize as does the all-around logger in the professional contest.

When Loggers Playday began, in addition to being a logging showcase, it was also a fundraiser to help injured loggers and their families. The show is still a fundraiser for the many community organizations that take part in the day. In turn, the Elks, the Lions, the Rotary, and the Playday Committee all give back to the community in the form of scholarships, donations and other programs that help people in Hoquiam.

Loggers Playday is in Amelia Moir's blood. "It's embedded in my soul; I love it so much."

At the Moir homestead, atop a hill in

(continued on page 8)

Hoquiam's Logger's Playday 2023 princesses, from left, Paige Shope, Faith Prosch and Kayte Sauer, smile during the parade.



Loggers Playday

(continued)

Hoquiam overlooking the bay, Loggers Playday memorabilia lines the wall in the garage. Trophies. Photos. Tools. Mementos. Hoki Moir flips through a Playday program as if it were a family photo album. Names and photos trigger memories. He said there are people he only sees once a year at Playday. It's like a homecoming.

Amelia's great grandfather, Gordon "Brick" Moir competed in the first Loggers Playday. Her grandfather, Marty Moir, served on the Playday committee and chaired it in 1979. And her dad, Hoki — along with brother Darrin — served on the committee, co-chaired in 1996 and competed in log show events.

Now, it's Amelia's turn to take her place in the Loggers Playday pantheon. She's accompanied her dad to committee meetings and work parties. She's helped set up, kept time, checked in competitors and made sure her dad ate something. One



Trevor Baker of Port Orchard, demonstrates his ax skills.

year, she competed in several log show events including the ma and pa bucking.


Amelia was even Queen of the Playday Court in 2020. Thanks to her, every queen after will wear a jeweled hardhat. (There was an extra one and Amelia spent about 30 hours bedazzling it with rhinestones.)

With all her experiences at Playday, her favorite memory came just last year after the show ended.

"The stands were empty. The lights were off and there's sawdust and chips everywhere," said Amelia. "I was finally old enough to drink a beer after the show with my dad and all my honorary uncles."

Amelia said no matter what, no matter where she ends up — she and her future family will find a way home to Hoquiam and Loggers Playday.

"Hoquiam is Loggers Playday and Loggers Playday is Hoquiam," said Jarrod Todd. This area has always been associated with timber for good reason. Yes, logging has evolved from the dangerous and arduous manual job from days of yore to a safer, more efficient, mechanized and modern industry. Logging is still here. It's just evolved, said Todd. "Trees grow here. Managed or not, trees grow here and always will."

That's a reason to celebrate. 



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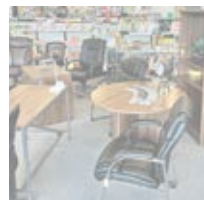
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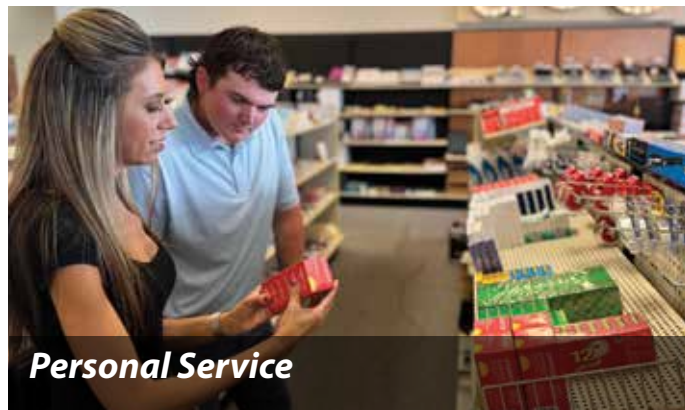
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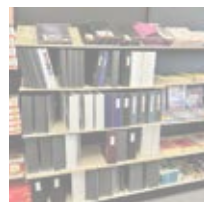
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BRADY

Snowbird Farm & Cidery fast becoming a local favorite

STORY BY GAIL GREENWOOD AYRES

PHOTOS BY RICK MOYER

The more one learns about Raeann and Duncan Edwards, the more it becomes evident that this retired couple's creativity, talent, intellect and work ethic could pave the way for them to be successful in just about any pursuit.

Fortunately for Grays Harbor, after 32 years of living in Fairbanks, raising their two sons and a daughter, they moved to East County, restored a historic barn, purchased farm animals and created a community gathering place. Snowbird Farm & Cidery, 484 Old Monte Brady Road, opened January 2023 as the only cidery in the county and has already become a local favorite.

"I've been surprised how successful it's been, how busy it is," said Raeann on a recent Friday, as, true to her word,



Raeann and Duncan Edwards opened the Snowbird Farm & Cidery in Brady in January 2023 and are enjoying seeing it become a favorite gathering place for people to enjoy their farm and creatively crafted ciders.





customer after customer came into the small tasting room attached to the cider production room, and ordered one of the nine hard ciders on tap, filled a growler or a crowler, or purchased a 16.9- or 32-ounce can of cider to go.

Some of the customers were parents enjoying their favorite hard apple cider as they walked around the farm, while their young kids had a heyday playing with the other kids – baby goats frolicking in the farmyard, as ducks and colorful chickens strutted nearby. A donkey, sheep and a barn cat complete the menagerie that sets the farm scene and entertains children and adults alike.

Raeann said she’s often delighted when a former classmate comes through the door. While Duncan grew up in the Windermere area of Seattle, Raeann’s parents Raymond “Spike” and Rosalie

Blanton were settled in Montesano until she was six, when her family moved to Southeast Alaska. She returned to the Harbor at 12 and graduated from Elma High School in 1983.

Shortly after they married, the couple moved to Fairbanks, so Raeann could pursue a master’s degree in natural resources management. Then she worked in the field for many years before becoming a teacher.

“I still have family here, and I had a cidery in mind. We were getting sick of the 40-below weather in Alaska. We were ready to give up the cold and the dark,” she said as another customer walked in. It was Bailey Cavender of Hoquiam, who stopped by to fill up on her favorite cider flavors. “I like to come out here because I like good cider and I don’t have to go to Olympia,” she said. “I like to feel like I’m supporting a local business, and it’s delicious too.”

“I still have family here, and I had a cidery in mind. We were getting sick of the 40-below weather in Alaska. We were ready to give up the cold and the dark.”

– Raeann Edwards

The idea of creating a cidery came about 10 years ago when the Edwards started making hard cider for themselves and were encouraged by members of Raeann’s hockey team to pursue it as a business.

Even before Raeann retired after spending the last 17 years as an elementary school teacher, they began to look for the perfect spot to locate their cidery. When they discovered the former Glengarry Dairy Farm, just north of Highway 12, east of the Brady Fire Hall, they knew they had found their new home and business.

So, the couple purchased the 15-acre property in 2018, and Duncan, now 62, retired from the Alaska Air National Guard, where he was an aircraft mechanic, came down for months at a time to begin to address the falling down wooden barn that had housed the dairy. Built from 1917-1920, the barn was eligible for a grant from the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation in association with the Heritage Barn Advisory Board.

“I had cables everywhere and ropes and pulleys,” Duncan said, showing the details of the reconstructed building. “Had we not gotten on it, one more windstorm and it was going to go down.”

(continued on page 12)



Aerial photo courtesy of Snowbird Farm & Cidery





Snowbird Farm & Cidery

(continued)

With no background in construction, Duncan is clearly a natural as evidenced by his attention to detail in re-making history into a sturdy, safe building. (The project included lifting the structure to reconstruct its foundation, adding more support, replacing rotting shiplap, painting and much more.)

Maybe someday the beautifully restored structure will house a serving area for the cidery operation, but for now, the former Glengarry barn simply serves as a storage area and a stunning backdrop for customers enjoying a glass of cider outside overlooking farmland with a meandering creek running through a fertile wetland below.

"We've had people bring a picnic and spread out a blanket on the grass and just enjoy the afternoon on the farm," Raeann said. During a beautiful summer or fall weekend

various groups can be found playing yard games while the little ones play in the sandbox or pet the animals.

In addition to the small tasting room, another cozy alternative to the lawn is a small tent on a wooden platform – great for the shade in the summer and warmed by a propane heater when the weather turns.

While Duncan is clearly part of the winning team, Raeann is the primary cidemaker who has figured out the chemistry, creating concoctions to fulfill her dream. She is also the one most likely to serve up her latest recipes.

The varieties offered do change, but typically nine choices are on tap. This day those include Farmstead, Elderberry Honey, Brady Bottom Blackberry Basil, Charming Allis Strawberry Rhubarb, Infused Farmstead Cider and Hoppy Opus and Todd's Peach Granny Ranny's Apple Pie, which is probably the sweetest cider on tap, and certainly a crowd pleaser.

Some people, like Raeann herself, prefer the ciders with more of a hoppy flavor. In fact, Snowbird Farm & Cidery's Hoppy Opus has already won some critical acclaim, earning a "Gold" in Seattle's Sip Magazine's 2024 The Best of the Northwest Cider Awards. And, they just learned of a "Silver" in the 7th Annual Cidercraft Awards through Cidercraft Magazine. The silver designation was given to Lavender Haze, a limoncello, lavender and blueberry cider.

For those who struggle to decide which cider to try, a flight of four 4-ounce tastes is a \$10 alternative, or \$15 for a flight of six.

The alcohol content of their ciders ranges from 6.4 to 6.8 percent. "In most of my ciders you don't taste the alcohol, so you have to be careful," she said, adding that a local beer is also on tap, and "a couple of non-alcoholic ciders and beers are also available, though not our own."

While a trip to the farm makes for a relaxed outing, those wanting to taste the cider, can also find it at Mount Olympus in Aberdeen, Willapa Brewing in South Bend



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and The Bear's Den in McCleary.

Having the farm open just three days a week has been the perfect pace for this stage in the Edwards' lives, they said. "The nice thing for us is that it's a retirement gig," Raeann said. "We didn't get loans or anything. Our mortgage is paid so our costs are pretty low to run the business."

That gives them freedom to experiment a little, including holding various events. A large pole building on the property is great for events such as private birthday parties and bridal showers as well as big public events including craft fairs

complete with food vendors.

On the docket for the fall are a craft market from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sept. 7 and a paint and sip party from 2 to 5 p.m. Sept. 21. They are also planning a Cider Olympics event in September.


Plans are underway, but dates not set yet for a Fall Festival, a public apple pressing day for people to bring in apples to press and a haunted barn in October as well as another craft market sometime in November.

The big events are fun to plan and exciting to hold, but Raeann said she also just enjoys

being part of people's everyday lives.

"We do have a lot of regulars," she said. "You build a real relationship and friendship with people. To me, the community, that's the best part. People come in and we ask how their kids are, lots of people like to support local businesses."

The Snowbird Farm & Cidery is open from 3 to 9 p.m. Fridays, 1 to 9 p.m. Saturdays and noon to 6 p.m. Sundays.

For more information, go to their website at snowbirdcidery.com. To contact the business, call (360) 593-0018 or e-mail at snowbirdfarmandcidery@gmail.com. 

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HOQUIAM

Surf photographer Carly Giles creatively captures ocean views

STORY BY KATIE MCGREGOR

For many, the challenge of photography lies in perfecting camera settings, lighting and timing. But surf photographer Carly Giles takes these challenges to a new level as she documents the ocean from a unique personal perspective that can only be achieved while she's in the water herself.

"Physically, the most challenging thing is getting into the right spot and staying there. Even if I can touch the ground, the waves push me around and, often times, I'll be just three or four feet from where I want to be before the current moves me," Giles said.

Having grown up on the Harbor, Giles, 34, currently resides in Hoquiam with her husband, Buck, and three children: Henry, John and Gunder. The family is known for being the former owners of the outdoors adventure store Buck's Northwest in Seabrook and the current owners of La Vogue Cyclery in Hoquiam.

But Giles herself is known for photographing surfers and the beauty of the ocean under her business name, Pink Fin

(continued on page 16)

Photo by Carly Giles



Carly Giles, surf photographer.

Photo by Katie McGregor



Grays Harbor local, Zachary Noe, surfs in the Agate Beach Surf Classic in Oregon.

Photo by Carly Giles

Surf photographer Carly Giles

(continued)

Photography. The name came into existence when she was in the ocean photographing surfers one day and somebody asked if she got a photo of them.

“They couldn’t hear me over the waves, but because my fins were pink, I told them to look for Pink Fin.”

Her name and fins are now recognized throughout the surfing community as she frequents the local beaches of Grays Harbor and surf events outside of the area.

Giles has photographed events for Warm Current, a nonprofit organization making surfing more accessible for native youth on the Washington coast, as well as for SEASTR PNW Nonprofit, and the annual Agate Beach Surf Classic in Oregon.

“Every year I shoot the Agate Beach Classic in Oregon. Last year when I was out in the water people recognized me!”

This year she’ll be documenting the Westport Longboard Classic on Sept. 14 and 15. This will be the return of the

“I try to put myself in a spot where I know a wave is going to come, so I can get in there at the right time.”
- Carly Giles

local Classic after a 22-year-long hiatus.

Giles has always enjoyed taking photos and credits growing up with “The Little Mermaid,” “Free Willy” and the rainbow dolphins on Lisa Frank school folders for sparking her interest in the ocean.

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Off of Westport Highway



Giles' sister, Emily Johnson, heads out for a paddle board session at Seabrook.

Photos by Carly Giles

While she played with various cameras and took some classes throughout the years, it wasn't until 2020 when she was out in the ocean on a particularly beautiful morning that she made a comment about wishing she could take photos. Her husband, Buck, responded by saying that they should get her a camera.

Much of Giles' work intimately captures the ocean in its many forms and features interesting shapes, colors and water textures. But she also captures marine animals, surfers and underwater portraits.

Taking photos out in the water requires extra planning. Giles starts her process by checking the surf forecast to see how big the waves are going to be and how much time there will be between sets of waves.

Then she drives out to the beach, dons her colorful wetsuit and pink fins, encloses her camera in waterproof "housing" and gets in the water.

"I once heard somebody say 'be aggressively patient' when it comes to being intentional about waiting for the shot. I try to put myself in a spot where I know a wave is going to come so I can get in there at the right time."

Giles has a similar process for documenting surfers, though that involves more swimming around to follow her subject.

(continued on page 18)



Giles' husband, Buck, surfing.



Giles works hard to stay in position to catch her shot.

Photo by Katie McGregor



Maternity photo of Suzy Sakamoto.

Photo by Carly Giles

Carly Giles

(continued)

"If it's a surf competition I use my longer lens, so I can stay out of the way. But if it's somebody I know, I'll get in closer into more risky positions."

The ocean, unpredictable as always, sometimes has other plans, and Giles ends up with unexpected results.

"One of the things I love about ocean photography and the ocean in general is the lack of control," Giles explained. "I feel like I try to plan out everything in my head but it's freeing when I just have to

let go. I don't know what waves I'm going to get, what the light is going to be like, or what the surfers are going to be like."

In recent years, Giles' work has also taken place in indoor pools where she captures creative portraits, maternity photos, and swim team portrait and action shots.

One of the challenges that comes with this is making sure her camera's settings are just right before she seals it into the underwater housing because they're hard to adjust underwater.


Camera technicalities aside, Giles has

personally developed as an artist as she's found her creative voice and herself. She recalls meeting Aaron Loyd, a prominent surfer and surf photographer from California, and being inspired by both his work and who he was as a person.

"The thing that stood out to me the most, meeting this person that was a big-time professional film surf photographer, was realizing that he was just a person," Giles said. "That gave me a huge boost of confidence knowing that we're all just people and there's no special formula. Meeting him and seeing his work and knowing I have some of the same skills was humbling and empowering at the same time."

Giles doesn't have a standout favorite photo in her own portfolio, but she enjoys seeing how other people look at and interpret her photos. She's currently in the process of creating a coffee table book full of her photos and journal entry blurbs of corresponding information and her thoughts on what it's like to be in the ocean and to be part of something that's bigger than her.

"The ocean gives life but it can also kill you. It's this huge thing but it's also little and full of microorganisms. It's all these things at once and I get to be a part of it."

Carly Giles' work can be found on Facebook as Pink Fin Photography and Instagram under @PinkFinPhotos. Her photos can also be viewed and purchased on her website pinkfinphotography.com, Red Cedar Outfitters in Seabrook, 1 of a Kind Art Gallery in Port Angeles, and at the Seabrook Saturday Market. 



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Harbor sidewalk stars shine brightly

STORY BY RICK ANDERSON
PHOTOS BY RICK MOYER

Grunge music icon Kurt Cobain, football great John Elway, Nobel Prize-winning physicist Doug Osheroff, world-renowned choreographer Trisha Brown and 16th Century English explorer Sir Francis Drake would, at first glance, appear to have little in common.

All of them, however, share at least one distinction. They have all been honored in Aberdeen's Walk of Fame.

Patterned after Hollywood's celebrity-oriented Walk of Fame, the Aberdeen program (sometimes called the Walk of Stars) is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. It honors nationally or internationally known people with Grays Harbor ties by implanting 12-inch stars on downtown Aberdeen sidewalks. Designed as both a tourist attraction and a means of recognizing Grays Harbor's cultural legacy, Aberdeen radio personality Johnny Manson hatched the idea in 2004.

"The Aberdeen Revitalization Movement came to me and asked if I could come up with an idea that would beautify downtown Aberdeen and make people stop," Manson recalled. "So I thought about it and came up with the Walk of Fame, just like Hollywood. They liked the idea and went ahead with it."

The original plan was to install 66 bronze stars downtown, with Bergstrom Foundry of Aberdeen producing the stars.

In that respect, the project has exceeded expectations. Montesano resident Darrell Westmoreland, an Aberdeen native who became a prominent photographer of musical celebrities, became the 92nd honoree when he was recognized during a ceremony that was part of Aberdeen's Founders Day festivities on July 6.

Real estate broker and Harbor historian Tom Quigg, later to become a Port of Grays Harbor commissioner, was part of the project's original committee. While noting that he was active in the process for only a few years, his booklet "The Harbor: A Culture of Success" became the primary resource for selections.

The initial criteria, according to Quigg, was that honorees would have lived or worked on Grays Harbor and have earned "national or international acclaim."

Cobain, Elway, Osheroff and Brown were among the first six to be installed. They were joined in the inaugural class by Aberdeen natives Robert Arthaud, who enjoyed a significant movie career acting under the name of Robert Arthur, and Pat Simmons, a member of the Doobie Brothers musical group.

Subsequent selections have demonstrated a fine sense of diversity. Honorees have come from the fields of art (such as silk-screen specialist Elton Bennett, abstract expressionist painter Robert Motherwell and sculptor Alexander Calder), athletics

(including football standout Mark Bruener, golfer Ann Swanson and boxing trainer George Chemes), literature (writers Robert Cantwell,



John Hughes, Jeff Burlingame and noted children's book author Walt Morey), education (elementary teacher P.J. Curtiss, and Ruth Karr McKee, the first woman to have been appointed to the University of Washington's Board of Regents) and business (such as Boeing Company founder William Boeing, who once operated a timber company in Hoquiam, G.I Joe's founder Ed Orkney and cable television magnates Bob and Elroy McCaw), among other professions.

George Hitchings, a Nobel Prize winner for medicine, is in the Walk of Fame. So are Aberdeen founder Sam Benn, prominent astrophysicist Wendy Hagen Bauer, Congressional Medal of Honor winner Bob Bush, former longtime Quinalt Nation Tribal Chairman Joe DeLaCruz, Washington State Supreme Court Justice Gerry Alexander and the

(continued on page 22)



Stars shine brightly

(continued)

father-daughter champion log rolling duo of Russ and Diane Ellison.

There have also been a few out-of-the-box selections, such as champion unicyclist Steve McPeak and Gertrude Backstrom, the first woman to win the National Rifle Association's Sharpshooter title.

Many of the recipients have strong Grays Harbor ties. The relationship of others to the area is more tenuous.

Sir Francis Drake, for example, presumably spent little quality time in Aberdeen. But he is credited with being the first European to enter Grays Harbor in 1579.

Football Hall of Fame quarterback John Elway only spent a few childhood years on the Harbor while his father (Jack Elway, himself a Walk of Fame inductee,) coached at Grays Harbor College. Legendary football coach and television commentator John Madden lived in Aberdeen for less than a year as a player at GHC.

The selection criteria, in fact, has changed several times over the years.

Former Daily World editor and publisher John Hughes received a star in 2022.



At one stage, celebrities with a connection to any part of Grays Harbor County were considered. National radio-television sports talk host Colin Cowherd, one of the inductees, grew up in Grayland and graduated from Ocosta High School. Basketball star Rod Derline and two-time U.S. amateur golf champion Marvin "Bud" Ward hailed from Elma.

When the Beyond Grays Harbor organization took over operation of the program a few years ago, however, the Walk of Fame became more Aberdeen-centric.

"When we started, we wanted (honorees) to be from Aberdeen and to

"It's a way to show people that Aberdeen has a positive influence on the rest of the world."

– Karen Rowe

have contributed in a positive way to society," said Aberdeen business owner and former city councillor Karen Rowe, a committee member for three years. "You had to have Aberdeen connections, either coming from Aberdeen or working in Aberdeen."

Although there are a few exceptions, most of the stars are located on Wishkah and Heron streets between F and K streets. One perk for living inductees is that they can choose the location of their stars.

Westmoreland's choice, logically enough, was outside the Music Project building on Wishkah. Jeff Burlingame, an Aberdeen native who has written national award-winning biographies, selected Market Street in front of the Aberdeen Timberland Library, because he spent considerable time in the



Darrell Westmoreland's daughters, Corrie Westmoreland-Vairo and Darnell Sue Lindahl, join him as he receives the latest star.

library growing up and considered it a natural location for an author of books. The star honoring former Daily World newspaper editor and publisher John Hughes (currently the chief historian for Washington's Secretary of State office) is located outside the Old World Building on I Street, where he began his long journalism career.

Further changes are in store for the Walk of Stars program. After years of being run by a succession of non-profit entities, the project has been transferred to the City of Aberdeen's Historical Preservation Commission in an effort to bring more stability to the process.

"The city is stepping up to continue the legacy," city community development representative Lindy Dansare Mahon wrote in an e-mail. "The City of Aberdeen will continue managing the ordering and installation process. In addition, the Historical Preservation Commission will be working with the community to maintain, improve and hopefully expand on the existing program."

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Although no longer on the selection committee, Karen Rowe is hopeful the stars will continue to shine in downtown Aberdeen.

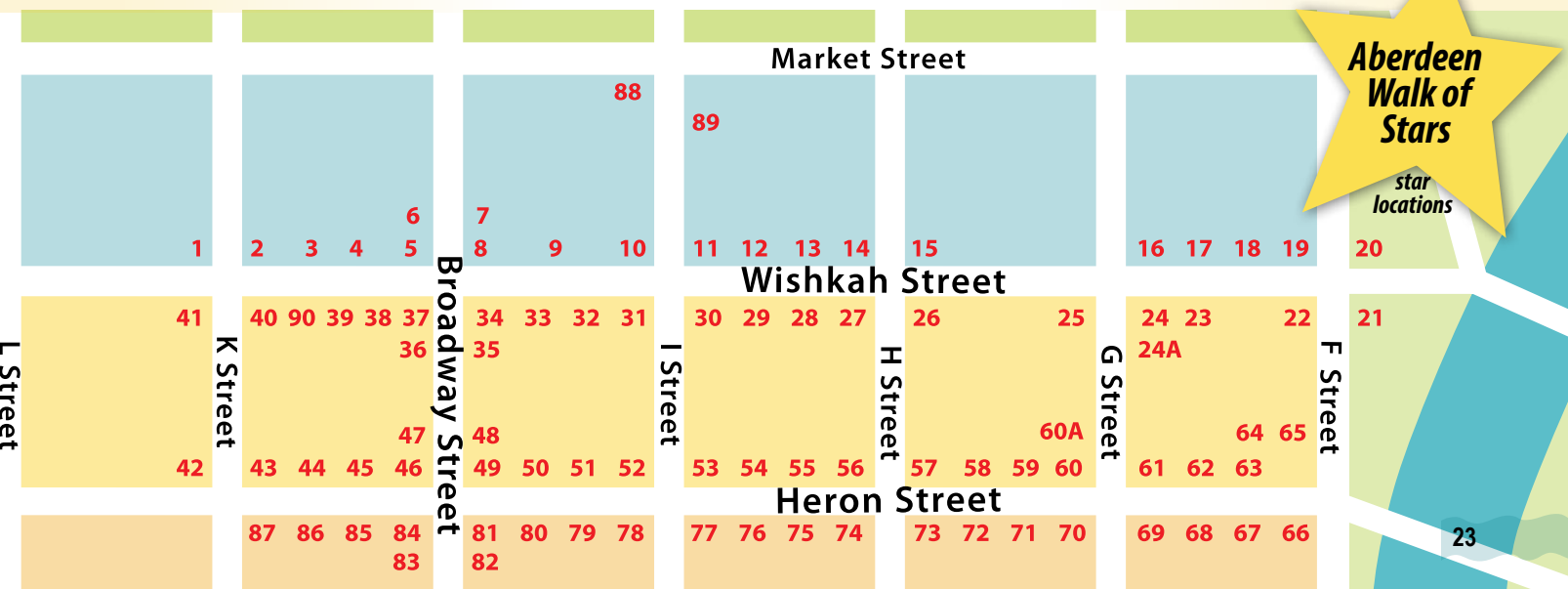
"It's a way to show people that Aberdeen has a positive influence on the rest of the world," she said. 

Aberdeen Walk of Stars Honorees

Numbers correspond to the sidewalk location of the star, shown on the map below. Find more information about each of the honorees at www.ouraberdeen.com. Click on "Walk of Stars."

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Gertrude Backstrom | 7. Clemons Tree Farm |
| 2. Don Baker | 8. William "Bill" Boeing |
| 3. Gerry Alexander | 9. Walton Butts |
| 4. Henry Neff "Heine" III | 10. Walt Morey |
| 5. Sam Benn | 11. John Elway |
| 6. Ralph Faulkner | 12. Colin Cowherd |

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 13. Sir Francis Drake | 32. Samuel Chamberlain | 51. Gail Brown | 71. Marvin "Bud" Ward |
| 14. Kurt Cobain | 33. Rip Caswell | 52. Sun Min | 72. Tracy M. Kosoff |
| 15. Eldon A. Bargewell | 34. Robert Cantwell | 53. Edward M. "Ed" Orkney | 73. Ann Swanson |
| 16. George Hitchings | 35. Aberdeen Elks Band (#593) | 54. Ark G. Chin | 74. Emisire Shahan |
| 17. Jack Elway | 36. Walter E. Brown | 55. Freddie Steele | 75. Phyllis "P.J." Curtiss |
| 18. Victor Grinich (Grgurinović) | 37. Alexander Calder | 57. Paul Stritmatter | 76. Wendy Hagen Bauer |
| 19. John Goddard | 38. Karl Benderson | 59. Reece Dano | 77. Krist Novoselic |
| 20. Mark Bruener | 39. Jim "Jimmie" Anderson | 60. Russ and Diane Ellison | 78. Roxanne Sparks |
| 21. The Lady Washington | 40. Lee Friedlander | 60A. Rudd Lawrence | 79. Fred Hillier |
| 22. Elton Bennett | 41. Leo Lomski | 61. Bruce Snell | 80. David Haynes |
| 23. Albert Johnson | 42. Robert Motherwell | 62. Marcus E. Raichle | 81. Doug Osheroff |
| 24. John B. Kinne | 43. Rueben Fleet | 63. Curtis Messer | 82. Ruth Karr McKee |
| 24A. Trisha Brown | 44. Orris E. Albertson | 64. Steve McPeak | 83. Russell V Mack |
| 25. George Chemes | 45. Kenneth G. Bixler | 65. Ryan Dokke | 84. Bob & Elroy McCaw |
| 26. Rod Derline | 46. Joe De La Cruz | 66. Terry T. McGillicuddy | 85. Evie Hatfield Hansen |
| 27. Captain Robert Gray | 47. Robert Moch | 67. Steve Lamoreaux | 86. Sylveanus "Vean" Gregg |
| 28. Steve Girard | 48. E.K. "Ned" & Lillian Bishop | 68. Frank Lamb | 87. John Madden |
| 29. Ralph Flowers | 49. Pat Simmons | 69. Rudd Weatherwax | 88. Jeff Burlingame |
| 30. Robert E. "Bob" Bush | 50. Neil "Buzz" Cams | 70. Robert Arthaud (Arthur) | 89. John Hughes |
| 31. Jack Bowers | | | 90. Darrell Westmoreland |



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From left: Leah Justine performs at the Ocean Shores Cinema. Comedian Adam Pasi takes the stage in front of a sold-out crowd. Olson Bros band plays to a lively audience.

OCEAN SHORES

Harbor's last picture show revived with community commitment

STORY BY ANGELO BRUSCAS

Pat Patton knows small-town movie theaters having worked in them since he was a teenager on Bainbridge Island. Stephen Buck knows hardware because his family has operated Ace Hardware/Buck Electric in Ocean Shores for decades.

Together, the two have revived the only surviving first-run movie venue in Grays Harbor – Ocean Shores Cinema. (The Riverside Cinemas in Aberdeen closed in 2022.)

Patton and Buck have overhauled the cinema's three theaters, and now the Harbor's last picture show is the first place people on the coast go for big-screen family entertainment, music, comedy, fresh popcorn and even an "adult beverage."

Three years ago, the Ocean Shores Cinema was up for sale, with Far Away Entertainment deciding to sell the property at 631 Point Brown Ave. N.W. At one point, the city of Ocean Shores had even considered the theater as a site for a police station and city jail.

The Bucks had moved into their new 33,000-square foot Ace/Buck Electric building adjacent to the theater in 2019. When the theater building was first listed, they considered purchasing it, but declined. Then a more persuasive case was made in 2021 and the deal was made.

"The reason to keep it a theater is because it is so good for the community," Buck said. "It makes the community more whole or more complete."

He then hired Patton, who had worked in movie theaters beginning in 1999, to run it.

"I am constantly trying to think of new ways to bring more people into the theater as a place to come together, whether it's for a movie or a live event, a corporate rental of the space, birthday parties, all of that."

– Pat Patton

"I became an assistant manager of a five-plex theater in Bainbridge, and they also had a small art-house theater," Patton explained. "I always wanted to be the projectionist and run film. So, I worked my way into that, and one day the general manager got let go, and they handed me the keys and said, 'It's yours.' I became the general manager at 19, and I have been doing it ever since."

For the next 20 years, Patton expanded his movie theater experience juggling

responsibilities at eight theaters for Far Away Entertainment, which operated movie venues from Anacortes, Stanwood, Bainbridge, Seattle (the Varsity and Admiral theaters) to Ocean Shores.

Being one of the more remote theaters in Far Away's group, Ocean Shores Cinema seemed headed for the same fate as other Grays Harbor theaters. But, once it was clear there was no one else interested in continuing to use the Ocean Shores building as a theater, the Bucks reconsidered.

"We weren't interested in running a movie theater; we were just moving into our own brand-new building, so we had our hands full," Stephen Buck recalled.

But then, Jim Donahoe, Windermere Real Estate's commercial development specialist on the North Beach, contacted him. Donahoe had been instrumental in the group of business leaders that had helped build the cinema to begin with as part of the Ocean Shores Development Association. The group included Steve Buck Sr., promoter Roger Brooks, and was led by Donahoe's brother George, also a longtime real estate broker. Securing city funding, the group spurred development of the theater, a new hotel, the McDonald's and several other projects.

Years later, when Far Away Entertainment wanted to sell the building and the

(continued on page 28)

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Harbor's last picture show revived

(continued)

business because it now saw Ocean Shores as literally too far away from its Bainbridge headquarters, Donahoe hoped someone would want to keep it as a theater.

So, the broker turned back to Steve Buck and his sons, Stephen and Joe: "We had many conversations about how they had always been community-focused, and that it would be a natural

purchase for them to make. They said they were willing to try and, if it didn't work out, they could always convert it into a warehouse," Donahoe said.

The fact that the theater lies directly south of their Ace Hardware building was key, Stephen Buck explained. At least, owning the building would give some control over what would happen to the theater.



Pat Patton and Stephen Buck teamed up to save cinema.

The purchase also occurred during a time of transition for Ace/Buck Electric. Stephen Buck was made president of the company when his father, Steve Buck, retired after 43 years running the Ocean Shores business and the former Ace/Buck Electric in Hoquiam – turning over operations to his sons.

"(Pat's) exactly who you want to run a small-town community cinema. And now he's bringing in live entertainment. I couldn't have asked for something better. I'm thrilled."

– Jim Donahoe

"And once we got the cinema, we said, 'Maybe if it was run a little more hands-on, with a little more love and attention, a theater would still fly,'" Stephen Buck said.

Patton at the time was still working for Far Away and was called in to help consult with the new owners.

The first task was repairing the building. Patrons had complained about chilly conditions during winter and the seats were worn and uncomfortable. Making building repairs was something the Buck family had plenty of experience and resources to manage, but they knew they needed a guiding hand to run the theater.

"At the time, we thought this movie business is not necessarily working, but maybe it would do well if we had

(continued on page 42)

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Mushrooms are such fungi

Delicacies feted at Quinault Ra

BY GAIL GREENWOOD AYRES

Delightful, delicious and sometimes dangerous, mushrooms are a fascinating member of the fungi family that freely flourishes in Grays Harbor.

The Quinault Rainforest hosts more than 1,400 different species of mushrooms, of which roughly 25 are edible and several are poisonous, according to local experts. Popular delicacies include chanterelles, king bolete, lobster mushrooms, chicken of the woods and matsutake. Pacific Northwest poisonous mushroom varieties include death cap, destroying angel and galerina.

The Quinault Rainforest Mushroom Festival, set for Oct. 5, is a great place to learn more about these tasty tidbits, including how to identify which ones are easy to find and safe to eat. The free festival is from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Lake Quinault School, 6130 Highway 101 North in Amanda Park, and will include speakers, contests, identification tips, education, workshops and food vendors.

In addition to the free event, which even includes activities for children, a limited number of Quinault Rainforest mushroom forays and workshops are available for \$50 per person. Registration is online.

Author Langdon Cook, whose books include "The Mushroom Hunters" and "Fat of the Land," will present a keynote talk, "Patch to Plate," at 10 a.m. It will feature a slideshow of local edible fungi in their natural habitat and presented in finished dishes. The Seattle resident has been profiled on the Travel Channel, in Bon Appetit, WSJ Magazine, Whole Living, and Salon.com, with his own writing appearing in numerous local, regional and national newspapers

and magazines including The National Geographic and Sunset.

While other mushroom festivals have been featured at Lake Quinault in the past, two organizers, Barbara Smith and Corinne Srsen, have breathed fresh life into the festival and plan to accommodate more attendees at the new, larger location.

For the past three years Smith had organized a "mini mush fest" as her fascination with the "amazing fungi in the Quinault Rainforest blossomed into a love for mushrooms."

"Our shared enthusiasm for mushrooms sparked a brilliant idea: reimagining the Quinault Rainforest Mushroom Festival."

— Barbara Smith

Festivalgoers examine mushrooms in the wild last year.



inforest Festival

“Last year, serendipity led me to Corinne, and our shared enthusiasm for mushrooms sparked a brilliant idea: reimagining the Quinault Rainforest Mushroom Festival,” Smith explained.

“The Quinault Rainforest and its festival at the lodge was my first introduction to mushrooms in the Pacific Northwest and their beauty. I was immediately hooked on fungi,” Srsen said.

After meeting Smith last fall and learning of the “mini mush fest” at the Rainforest Resort Village, she eagerly seized upon the opportunity to partner with her and the group, Foraging with Friends.

“This new friendship and our love of mushrooms sparked our fresh approach to this year’s Quinault Rainforest Mushroom Festival, emphasizing public accessibility to the festival and community involvement,” Srsen said.

In addition, The Coastal Shores and Spores Mycological Society sprouted


“As the saying goes in the mushroom community, ‘You can eat every mushroom once, but some, only once.’ Always avoid consuming any mushroom you can’t confidently identify.”
– Corinne Srsen

from an idea from those who attended last year’s mini “mush fest.”

So, with encouragement from the South Sound Mushroom Club, Srsen initiated the new club in Ocean Shores this past April. The mushroom club took root and has since become the newest affiliate of the North American Mycological Association (NAMA). Currently, monthly meetings take place at the Ocean Shores Public Library, but beginning in 2025, the club will alternate meeting spots between Hoquiam and Ocean Shores, the women said.

“Everyone in the public is welcome to attend the free meetings, but membership is encouraged,” said Srsen. The next meeting is set for 6 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 17, at the Ocean Shores Public Library. For details on upcoming meetings and membership, visit shoresandspores.com or follow Coastal Shores and Spores Mycological Society on Facebook.

“To encourage safe foraging, folks should consider joining a local mushroom club for proper identification, said Srsen. “As the saying goes in the mushroom community, ‘You can eat every mushroom once, but some, only once.’ Always avoid consuming any mushroom you can’t confidently identify,” she said.

For more information about the Quinault Rainforest Mushroom Festival, e-mail qrmushfest@gmail.com, or contact Barbara Smith at (360) 660-5228 or Corinne Srsen at (253) 838-6150. 

Photos courtesy of by Barbara Smith and Claire Sides



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GRAYS HARBOR

Autumn theater on the Harbor

If it's live theater you are looking for, the Harbor doesn't disappoint! Drama productions in Grays Harbor this fall include the following.



Driftwood Players
120 E. 3rd St., Aberdeen

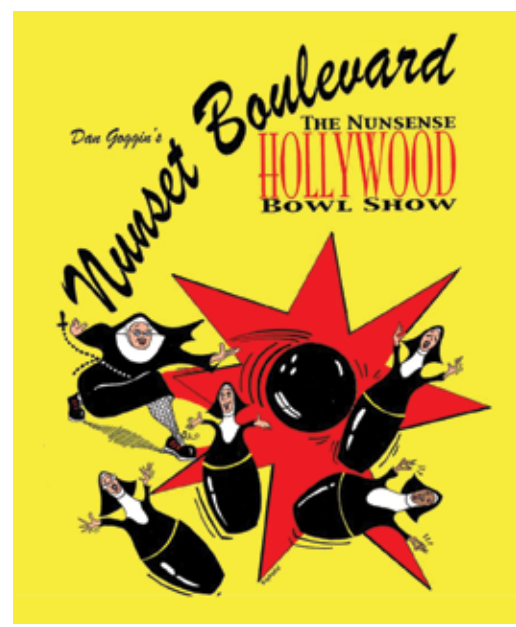
The Driftwood Players have two plays scheduled for this fall. First, "The Play that Goes Wrong" will debut in September, then "Nunset Boulevard" begins its run at the end of November.

"The Play That Goes Wrong," is a British farce written by Henry Lewis, Jonathan Sayer and Henry Shields of Mischief Theatre Company. The show follows the inept and accident-prone Cornley Polytechnic Drama Society after it benefits from a sudden, large inheritance. The troupe embarks on producing an ambitious 1920s murder mystery and is delighted that neither casting issues nor technical hitches currently stand in its way. However, hilarious disaster ensues and the cast members start to crack under the pressure, as they struggle to get the production back on track before the final curtain falls.

Directed by Brady Duffy with director in training Ryan Colburn, the Driftwood Player's rendition of "The Play That Goes Wrong" starts off the 2024-2025 theater year with a champagne opening at 7:30 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 28. Other performances will be at 7:30 p.m. Oct. 4, 5, 11, 12, 18 and 19. Sunday matinee shows are set for 1:30 p.m. Oct. 13 and 20.

The musical comedy, "Nunset Boulevard," is the 7th show in playwright Dan Groggin's "Nunsense" series. This time the Little Sisters of Hoboken go to Hollywood! All the nuns have traveled west to make it big in show biz. However, their concert "at the Hollywood Bowl" turns out to be a gig at the Hollywood Bowl-A-Rama.

Directed by Brad Duffy, the Driftwood Players will present the comedy at



7:30 p.m. Nov. 29 and 30; Dec. 6, 7, 13 and 14, with matinee shows set for 1:30 p.m. Sundays, Dec. 1, 8 and 15.

Tickets are \$20 and available online at aberdeendrftwood.com. In addition, they can be purchased at Valu Drug in Montesano, The Tinderbox in Aberdeen, Harbor Drug in Hoquiam and The Dusty Trunk in Ocean Shores. If available, tickets can also be purchased at the door.

Students presenting a current student ID card at the door, can purchase "rush" tickets for \$10, if seats are available. Flex passes for the 2024-2025 season can be purchased online, or by contacting Sue Keltner at (360) 532-8243.

(continued on page 34)



Autumn Theater on the Harbor

(continued)

Plank Island Theatre Company Bishop Center for Performing Arts Aberdeen

"Lost Girl," by Kimberly Belflower, will be co-produced by Plank Island Theatre Company and Grays Harbor College's Bishop Center for Performing Arts this fall. The performances at the Bishop Center will be at 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, Nov. 1, 2, 8, 9, with the Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. Nov. 3 and 10.

The story is set in Neverland when Wendy decides that she must find Peter to reclaim her kiss and move on with her life. This coming-of-age exploration of first love and lasting loss continues the story of J.M. Barrie's beloved character – the girl who had to grow up.

In addition, Plank Island's improvisation troupe will begin performing monthly at the Driftwood Playhouse. For dates and other information, follow the theater on Facebook and Instagram.



Poster art by Shannon Weidman


Also, Plank Island Theatre Company continues to offer free improvisation workshops from 7 to 9 p.m. most Sundays at Tectonic Comics in downtown Aberdeen.

Stage West Community Theatre Ocean Shores

The Stage West Community Theatre's next show will be performed in December.

This fall, open auditions for "Looking at Christmas" will take place from 6 to 8 p.m. Oct. 23 at the Ocean Shores Lions Club, 832 Ocean Shores Blvd. NW. Male and female roles for a variety of ages are available, but performers must be at least 14 years old. Rehearsal will run Oct. 27 through Dec. 4.

It is recommended that prospective performers read the script prior to auditions. The script can be requested from Lori Hardin at stagewesttheatre@yahoo.com.

Performances of **"Looking at Christmas"** will be Dec. 6, 7, 8, 13, 14 and 15. In the show, the main characters, lost in their own troubles, meet on the street near magnificent holiday store windows one snowy night. As they stroll together looking at the store displays, the audience not only learns a bit about them, but also about the display window characters. 

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Area artwork displayed at GHC Fall Gala

The public is invited to the 2024 Annual Fall Gala at Grays Harbor College from Nov. 8 – Jan. 10 in the art gallery inside the college's library building.

This juried art show features work from adult visual artists from throughout Grays Harbor and Pacific counties.

The Fall Gala is free and open during library building hours, 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Fridays. Most of the art will be available for purchase.

The show premieres with an opening night reception at 6 p.m., Friday, Nov. 8. Many of the featured artists are expected to be on hand.

During the opening night reception, attendees will vote for their favorite piece of art, which will determine the viewer's choice award. The winning artwork will be featured in publicity for next year's Fall Gala. 



Jade Black of Ocean Shores received the People's Choice Award for her self portrait at the 2023 Annual Fall Gala at Grays Harbor College.

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Shall we dance?

Classes help kids move to the music

BY STEPHANIE MORTON

“My kid likes to move!” said Ashley Wahl of Ocean Shores. So, yes I am a dance mom.”

Wahl’s nearly 9-year-old daughter, Micky, has taken a dance class for almost every style of dance: ballet to jazz to lyrical to zero gravity. Ocean Shores doesn’t have a dance studio, so Wahl drives the 36-mile round trip to the “city.” It can be rough commuting to Hoquiam, but the dance mom says it is worth it.

“She’s happy and in a different environment,” said Wahl. “We just have to drive, and we understand that. But it’s all about finding fun.”

For other kids who like to move, fortunately, several Grays Harbor studios offer classes for children of varying ages, experience levels and interests.

Grays Harbor Dance

Kayli Colgrove, Hoquiam, (360) 581-0358
Facebook: graysharbordance

It’s all in the family at Grays Harbor Dance, the oldest dance studio on the Harbor. Director Kayli Colgrove “inherited” the dance studio from big sister Lindy Dansare-Mahon who opened GHD in 2007. Her kids often help teach classes, and daughter Katri Colgrove is an instructor, herself. Mom, Holly Parker, does costuming and even came up with the motto for the studio, “Dance in Step, Walk in Peace.”

The studio offers traditional ballet, contemporary, jump, lyrical, K Pop and Grays Harbor Dance’s own style called high energy or Zoom.

Colgrove stresses that all choreography and costuming is age-appropriate and family friendly. “We’re definitely more conservative in our style with teaching, costuming, and music. We try to keep



Grays Harbor Dance students onstage during a recital.

Courtesy of Grays Harbor Dance

things very clean and wholesome.”

Colgrove offers a boys only dance class featuring character movements where students may act out fight scenes or other action sequences to express their creativity.

“They are ninjas, pirates, Jedis. Absolutely everything. They get to be boys and they get just as much focus on them as the girls only classes,” said Colgrove. “If I could get the word out that boys can come and dance like a ninja. Be a Jedi. We will give you a light saber!”

Two recitals are performed each year

and are performed at the adjacent 7th Street Theatre. Fall season runs from August to December and ends with a Christmas recital; and spring season runs from January to May and ends with a Mother’s Day recital.

Colgrove said her classes are available to children from 3 to 17. Group classes of up to 15 are available with tuition beginning at \$65 a month for a single class. Multi-class and multi-child discounts are offered. Costume and recital fees are additional. Private lessons are also available.

(continued on page 38)

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Shall we dance?

(continued)

Maija Nordin Dance Studio
Hoquiam, Raymond, (360) 208-3468
Facebook: Maija Nordin Dance Studio
maijanordindance@gmail.com

Maija Nordin has been dancing since she was 4 years old and has been teaching dance since she was 14. She learned the dance teacher ropes as a teenager working for Gail Russell at Gail Russell Dance Academy in Aberdeen. She eventually took over the business as Maija Nordin Dance Studio. The studio will soon be relocating from Aberdeen to Vasa Hall in Hoquiam. Nordin also has a studio space and offers classes to children in Raymond.

Nordin loves teaching and helping students grow. Some of the things she focuses on include body confidence, technique and the value of hard work.

"I'm focused on just providing a safe and fun space for kids. That's my ultimate goal," said Nordin. "Dance is important and wonderful, but we want to create a family here. The kids can always talk to me. We want the parents to feel comfortable and confident that their kids are in a good space."

Nordin teaches the French style of ballet, lyrical, jazz, among other styles. The dance season runs from September to May, with a big break for the holidays and also

Students from Maija Nordin Dance Studio.





Grays Harbor Dance students and director Kayli Colgrove dance onstage during a recital.

Courtesy of Grays Harbor Dance

“You don’t have to have the traditional, typical, professional build in order to dance beautifully. I just want my students to know they are beautiful, and they can learn.”

– Lori Oestreich

for summer. A recital is performed every other year with a showcase presented in the alternate year.

The showcase is offered for more experienced students who may be auditioning for a particular dance role. “We do student-led choreography; they pick a mentor; they have to pick the costumes; and the lighting and they have to write a biography to be put in the program,” said Nordin. “They learn about how much production goes into it.”

Courtesy of Maija Nordin Dance Studio



www.Coastal-Currents.com

Nordin said she accepts ages 4 to 18, with no more than 12 students in each class. Monthly tuition begins at \$50 for 4-year-olds, and \$60 and up for older students and multiple classes.

MAO Dance Center
Chera Smith, Aberdeen, (360) 591-1253
Facebook: MAO Dance Center
maodancecenter@gmail.com

Located in Hoquiam, MAO Dance Center is one of the dance schools on the Harbor with a competitive dance team. The team competes at least four times a year and has gone to regional and national events. Director Chera Smith said the competition aspect helps kids build self-esteem and confidence, but it is intensive. Classes for strength and conditioning are three hours long and the team dances all day on Sunday.

“They want to compete,” said Smith. “The way the team works together, all the kids want to be here. They want to win.”

MAO is short for “Move As One.” The name was proposed by Smith’s father for the dance studio her daughter wanted to open. The name is not only fitting for a dance squad but also describes the tight-knit family business, where everyone works together to keep things running.

MAO Dance Center offers recreational classes including tap, ballet, tumbling, jazz, lyrical, hip hop and musical theater. Look for more intensive ballet classes soon and a new, professional ballet teacher has signed on. Tuition begins at \$60 per month and classes are open to children as young as 4. Private classes are offered as well. The school puts on an end-of-the-year recital.

Fall 2024

The LEX Dance Complex
Jade Craig, Hoquiam, (360) 581-6155
thelex-dancecomplex.squarespace.com
Facebook: The LEX Dance Complex
thelexdancecomplex@gmail.com

Jade Craig opened LEX Dance Complex dance studio last year in a now-or-never moment and it paid off.

“This last year has probably been one of the best years of my life, opening that studio,” said the new business owner.

“I have created a lot of bonds with the

(continued on page 40)

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COASTAL Currents MAGAZINE

Shall we dance?

(continued)

kids, and I created a safe space for them. It's an open opportunity for the kids on the Harbor."

It was not painless, though, as the studio was named for her friend, Alexa, who passed away, also in the last year.

"I needed something that was going to resonate with me and carry on her name. She loved to dance, and I loved to dance. I thought 'Lex Dance Complex' had a nice ring to it and it is a way to keep her in my life," said Craig.

Lex Dance Complex offers lyrical, jazz, tap, contemporary, cheer, musical theatre and acro (a form of gymnastics). Students range from 3 to 18, and there is also a competition team. Classes begin at \$55 a month and have about eight kids per class with a maximum of 15. Students perform in an end-of-year recital, which gives them an opportunity to perform with their peers, said Craig.

The recreational/recital season runs from September to June, with some summer classes offered. Competition runs year-round with four events attended, including nationals.



Students from Maija Nordin Dance Studio pose in their dance leotards.



Courtesy of Grays Harbor Dance

Tuition begins at \$105 monthly, and classes are typically two hours, three times per week.

Courtesy of Maija Nordin Dance Studio


Stage opportunities for students include performing as a ballet troupe for the opera workshop held at the Bishop Center for Performing Arts. At other times, the studio space inside the Polish Club serves as a black box theater.

Craig said her classes are open to both boys and girls. She would like to encourage more boys to come and dance. "It's not just for girls. Boys are dancing, too," said Craig.

Turning Pointe Classical Ballet
Lori Oestreich, Aberdeen, (360) 591-4315
Facebook: turningpointe.classicaldance

Turning Pointe Classical Ballet offers intensive classes for older, more experienced students who may be on a more serious track, said Lori Oestreich, director. Additionally, Oestreich teaches the Vaganova or Russian method at her school, and classes include technique, pointe and conditioning. Students attend class year-round, including summers.

Oestreich has been a ballet dancer since she was a child, performing with the Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet Company. Her love of ballet began with a hazy yet beautiful memory of her grandmother's stories of watching the great Anna Pavlova dance.

"I don't know if I dreamed it, but I remember wanting to be part of that beauty," said Oestreich. "And that's what I want my students to know. You don't have to have the traditional, typical, professional build in order to dance beautifully," said Oestreich. "I just want my students to know they are beautiful, and they can learn." 



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Harbor's last picture show revived

(continued from page 28)

somebody who knew what they were doing, and who could do it full time," Buck said.

When they offered Patton a full-time job, he jumped at the opportunity, relocating his family to Ocean Shores.

Since its purchase, the theater's renovations include a new roof, heating system, carpet, inside paint and upgraded signage.

In addition to the new look, the Bucks added reclining seats with trays and cup holders and revamped and upgraded concessions. They also obtained a beer and wine license and have local brewery selections on tap.

"We wanted to provide another offering while keeping it a family place. It's not a bar, it's like being at the pizza place," Buck said. "It's good for the whole family to visit the theater, and yes you can have an adult beverage while you're there."

Buck and Patton continue to look for innovations to enhance the use of the theater, as well as to cater to the local community and Grays Harbor at large.

They have hosted a "Dungeons & Dragons"

costumed game night to go along with the 2023 movie, produced local spots for businesses and organizations to air before the movie previews and added "Terrific Tuesdays" with \$5 tickets before 5 p.m. and \$6 tickets after 6 p.m. each Tuesday for all patrons.

"We are saying, 'Thank you' locally," said Patton. The smiles that those folks have on Tuesdays. The lobby in between movies can seem like a reunion."

"The reason to keep it a theater is because it is so good for the community,"

— Stephen Buck

Buck has been an enthusiastic supporter of the new ventures Patton has brought in. The first comedy night was a sellout, and performances by Leah Justine, the Olson Bros and Cody Beebe have showcased the theater's versatility, creating a venue where audiences and performers can interact in a more intimate setting.

"One of the things we talked about with

Pat was that we're going to make a lot of changes, and we're going to make a lot of effort. We'll have lots of ideas, and some of them will work and some of them won't," Buck said, turning to Patton. "But at the end of the day, Pat, we have to make a dollar. Someday."

Thankfully, customer support has grown steadily.

Post-Covid pandemic, Ocean Shores Cinema saw its first big rebound with the simultaneous offerings of



"Barbie" and "Oppenheimer" after the new seats and heat upgrades had been completed.

The theater can be reserved for private showings or group events, and other possibilities, such as a film festival, may materialize in the coming year.

"The theater is at the mercy of Hollywood. If movies aren't being made, we still have the space to fill," Patton said. "Every year, there is an ebb and flow of movies. So, I am constantly trying to think of new ways to bring more people into the theater as a place to come together, whether it's for a movie or a live event, a corporate rental of the space, birthday parties, all of that."

Using a theater for music and comedy was something Patton had wanted to try for many years working in the corporate theater chain world.

"I did the research and came to Steve with my information. We chose Wednesdays, because it's normally a slow day for movies. Comedy was the first thing that came to mind because you don't have to have a big sound system. Back then, it was month-to-month, so we said, 'Let's see what we can get going.'"

"We've had some real good acts. We've had some amazing comedians come through here, and musicians now," Patton said. "I'm constantly trying to find new acts or new people."

Currently booked for the fall are comedians Brent Lowery and Quinn Fitzgerald on Sept. 7; and a musical performance Sept. 20 by Zan Fiskum,



Cody Beebe performing at Ocean Shores Cinema.

who appeared on season 18 of "The Voice."

Buck grew up watching movies at the DNR Theater in Aberdeen and the 7th Street Theatre in Hoquiam, which now shows "yesterday's blockbusters," but no first-run movies. He has patronized Ocean Shores Cinema since it opened in 2000.

"And once we got the cinema, we said, 'Maybe if it was run a little more hands-on, with a little more love and attention, a theater would still fly,'"

– Stephen Buck

"I've often brought the kids here and we've rented the place for birthday parties and many other times. When 'Harry Potter' would come out, we would rent the theater and bring 20 or 30 family members, and they would let us have a private showing on a Sunday morning."

Buck leaves the movie selections to Patton whom he said "understands our customers."

"I have the benefit of being a part of this theater in some way, shape or form for so long that I kind of knew the clientele already and knew what the customer base was interested in," Patton agreed, adding that he seriously considers the movie requests from customers when he chooses the movies for the theater's three screens. The largest has 96 seats and the other two have 60 seats each.

"Boys in the Boat" was one of those movies that proved to be a hit after it was booked based on local requests and connections. A key part of the movie – about the University of Washington rowing team that won the gold medal in Hitler's Germany before

World War II – is coxswain Bob Moch from Montesano.

"We almost didn't get it," Patton recalled. "When I found out we had someone locally who was a part of that team, I said, 'We have to have this movie!' That movie did really well."

The cinema's customer base has seasonal changes, with summers bringing a more diverse crowd of North Beach locals intermingled with tourists on vacations, daily visitors from Grays Harbor and youngsters on break from school.


"We'll get family reunions where people will bring 10 to 15 people in, which is really cool to see," Patton said of the summer crowds.

Patton is a weekly guest on local KOSW 89.9 FM radio in Ocean Shores and previously hosted a series called "Let's Go to the Movies" on North Beach Community TV.

"The one thing I liked most when I came to work for Steve is that he doesn't care about becoming rich, it's more about serving the community," Patton said. "That's what I admire about him. That's his focus, serving the community first and everything else will follow."

Real estate broker Donahoe expressed gratitude that the cinema is still running.

"The Bucks made the investment that was necessary and they did one thing really good: they made a good hire," he said. "He's exactly who you want to run a small-town community cinema. And now he's bringing in live entertainment. I couldn't have asked for something better. I'm thrilled."

For more information about the Ocean Shores Cinema, go to oscinema.com; visit facebook.com/oceanshorescinema; call (360) 289-1234 or e-mail oceanshorescinema@gmail.com. 



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SEPTEMBER

(AUGUST 30) - SEPTEMBER 1 . AAOS Arts & Crafts Festival . Ocean Shores . Convention Center, Associated Arts of Ocean Shores event, featuring beautiful art, lively music & delicious food.

SEPTEMBER 1, 7, 14, 21, 28 . Grays Harbor Raceway . Elma . Evening racing with Sprint cars, Limited Sprint, IMCA Modified, Super Stocks, Hornets, Street Stock, Midgets & more.

SEPTEMBER 6 . First Friday Art Walk . Aberdeen Art Center . Enjoy live music on stage, artist demonstrations, snacks & new art. 5 - 8pm.

SEPTEMBER 6, 13, 20, 27 . Friday Market . Elma Noon-6pm . 222 W Main St.

SEPTEMBER 7 . Loggers Playday . Hoquiam Celebrates logging's heyday, & Hoquiam's history, community spirit. 7am time trials, noon parade, 2pm salmon bake, 6pm main logging show at Olympic Stadium. (see pg. 5).

SEPTEMBER 7, 8 . 'The Philadelphia Story' . Hoquiam . Seventh Street Theatre. 1940 movie. Sat. 7:30pm, Sun. 2pm.

SEPTEMBER 7, 14, 21, 28 . Seabrook Sunset Concert . September Encore Series . Live music in Seabrook's Sunset Amphitheater Park. 3-5pm.

SEPTEMBER 11 . Stand-up Comedy Series . Ocean Shores Cinema . Live comedy with Brent Lowery & Quinn Fitzgerald, 7pm.

Harbor . An exclusive tour of industries in Grays Harbor's port cities by Greater Grays Harbor Inc. Registration closes Sept. 4. 8am - 4pm.

SEPTEMBER 13, 14, 15 . Renewed Antique Show . Ocean Shores . Convention Center.

SEPTEMBER 14 . 'There's No Place Like Home' Family Promise Benefit . Aberdeen Rotary Log Pavilion. Dinner & auction to benefit local families facing homelessness, 5pm.

SEPTEMBER 13-15 . Westport Longboard Classic . The surf community reunites for this soulful PNW tradition after a 22-year hiatus.


SEPTEMBER 15 - OCTOBER 31 . Boat Basin Salmon Derby . Westport . Dockside salmon fishing. Great locally donated prizes, Westport Marina.

SEPTEMBER 18 . Community Resource & Health Fair . Ocean Shores . Connect with people & organizations that can help you – rental assistance, food, home help, etc. Ocean Shores Lions Club. 10am-2pm.

SEPTEMBER 20 . Zan Fiskum in Concert . Ocean Shores Cinema . Live music, 7pm.

(Continued on page 46)

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SEPTEMBER 11 . Annual 9/11 Walk to Remember . Westport . American Legion walk beginning at Grays Harbor Lighthouse, at 11am.

SEPTEMBER 13 . Showcase Grays



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SEPTEMBER 20 . Eclectic Outlaw Tour, Joel Gibson Jr. Montesano . Solo acoustic music performance at Gepetto's, 7pm.

SEPTEMBER 20, 21 . 'Police Academy' . Hoquiam . Seventh Street Theatre . 1984 movie. Fri., Sat. 7:30pm.

SEPTEMBER 21 . Operation Shore Patrol . Westport . Beach cleanup hosted by Region 2 of the Pacific Northwest 4-Wheel Drive Association.

SEPTEMBER 26 . Thursday Night Rock Show . Hoquiam . La Catrina Night Club, featuring Black Shepherd & Greg Rekus, 9pm.

SEPTEMBER 27 . Live Music Dakota Robins . Elma . ShuJacks Bar & Grill, 8pm.

SEPTEMBER 27-29 . West Coast Shorts Film Festival . Ocean Shores . Left Coast Shorts is an audience-judged international short film festival with 3 venues. Shilo Inn.

SEPTEMBER 28 . Reach the Beach . Westport Cyclists start in Lacey & end at Westport with a beach celebration. Riders choose 25, 44, 77 or 100 miles.

SEPTEMBER 28 . Bigfoot Brewfest . Seabrook Great drinks, food, games, tournaments, and live music. Sat. 2 - 6pm.

SEPTEMBER 28 . Montesano BrewFest Fleet Park . Local beer, wine & cider, live music by The Six, food, cornhole tournament. Sat. 5 - 9pm.

OCTOBER

OCTOBER 4 . First Friday Art Walk . Aberdeen Art Center . Enjoy live music on stage, artist demonstrations, snacks & new art. 5 - 8pm.

OCTOBER 4 . Harvest Gala . Harbor Regional Health . Aberdeen . Rotary Log Pavilion. Catered dinner, silent & live auction. Support our community hospital, 5:30pm.

OCTOBER 4, 5, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20 . "The Play That Goes Wrong" . Aberdeen . Driftwood Theatre, Fri., Sat. 7:30pm, Sun. 2pm. (see pg. 33).

OCTOBER 5 . Quinault Rainforest Mushroom Festival . Lake Quinault School . Learn to identify which ones are easy to find and safe to eat. Workshops, contests, identification tips & food vendors. 9am-5pm.

OCTOBER 5, 6 . 'The Birds' . Hoquiam . Seventh Street Theatre. 1963 movie. Sat. 7:30pm, Sun. 2pm.

OCTOBER 11 . Author Talk: with John Hughes . Aberdeen . Aberdeen Timberland Library. 'Lightning Boldt and the Legacy of Tribal Sovereignty.' Special guest, Chairman Ed Johnstone of the Northwest Indian Fishing Commission, 2pm.

OCTOBER 11 . Cranberry Festival Cook-Off . Grayland . Cranberry dishes, Grayland Community Hall, Noon-5pm.

OCTOBER 12-13 . Cranberry Harvest Festival . Grayland . Bog tours, cranberry cook off, pancake breakfast & firefly parade. Grayland Community Hall.

OCTOBER 19 . Walk of the Undead 98520 . Aberdeen . Expect fun with a side of Spooky! The ultimate zombie experience, downtown Aberdeen.

OCTOBER 19-20 . Urban Unglued Freaks at the Beach Halloween Market . Ocean Shores . Convention Center. A market full of weird & unusual.

OCTOBER 25, 26 . 'Young Frankenstein' . Hoquiam . Seventh Street Theatre. 1974 movie . Fri., Sat. 7:30pm.

OCTOBER 21-27 . Celtic Music Feis . Ocean Shores . Music & fun at Galway Bay Irish Pub & OS Convention Center. Irish bands, choirs & dancers from US, Canada & Ireland. 7 days, 20+ bands, 10 stages, 3 venues.

OCTOBER 26-27 . Nightmare Before Christmas . Spooky holiday shopping for handmade art & treasure. Cranberry Museum, Grayland.

OCTOBER 28 . Dia De Los Muertos . Aberdeen Art Center . Day of the Dead Celebration. 7 - 10pm.

NOVEMBER

NOVEMBER 1 . First Friday Art Walk . Aberdeen Art Center . Enjoy live music on stage, artist demonstrations, snacks & new art. 5 - 8pm.

NOVEMBER 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10 . Fall Drama 'Lost Girl' . Bishop Center . Aberdeen . Grays Harbor College co-produced with Plank Island Studio. Long after returning from Neverland, J.M. Barrie's beloved character, Wendy, must find Peter. Fri., Sat., 7:30pm, Sun. 2pm. (see pg. 33).

NOVEMBER 2 . Day of the Dead themed Burlesque Show . Tokeland Hotel . A party like Tokeland has never seen before. 8-10pm.

(continued on page 49)

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FALL DRAMA

November 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10

Friday, Saturday 7:30pm

Sunday 2:00pm Long after returning from Neverland, J.M. Barrie's beloved character, Wendy, must find Peter in order to move on with her life.



November 24 Sun. 7:00pm

Grays Harbor Symphony

Enjoy *A Winter Nightcap* theme with tenor vocal soloist Robert McPherson. Conducted by Dr. William Dyer.

December 5 Thurs. 7:00pm

GHC Jazz Concert

Jazz Band and Jazz Choir, will perform a lively evening of jazz, directed by Dr. William Dyer and Kari Hasbrouck.

December 8 Sun. 2:00pm
Civic Choir & Concert Band

Civic Choir's Fall theme is *Winter Gifts*, directed by Kari Hasbrouck. Concert Band's theme is *Pops!* from all genre's & eras, with a splash of holidays mixed in, directed by Tiffany Maki.

Grays Harbor Opera Workshop
PRESENTS

Iolanthe

December 14, 15

Saturday 7:30pm,

Sunday 2:00pm

In Gilbert & Sullivan's, *Iolanthe*, the most beloved of all the fairies committed an unforgivable crime: marrying a mortal. Now she returns from 25 years in exile. Directed by Ian & Joy Dorsch.



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NOVEMBER 2, 3 . 'Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory' . Hoquiam . Seventh Street Theatre . 1971 movie . Sat. 7:30pm, Sun. 2pm.

NOVEMBER 8 - JAN. 10 . Annual Fall Gala . Aberdeen . Grays Harbor College library gallery. Juried art show, open weekdays. Opening night reception 6pm, Nov. 8. (see pg. 36)

NOVEMBER 9 . British invasion comes to the Harbor . Hoquiam . Seventh Street Theatre. The Rolling Stoned (Rolling Stones Tribute) and Whiskey Creek (Lynyrd Skynyrd tribute) . Sat. 8pm.

NOVEMBER 11 . Hoquiam High School Veterans Day Concert . Hoquiam . Seventh Street Theatre Mon., 2pm.

NOVEMBER 16-17 . Country Christmas Bazaar Elma . Grays Harbor Fair & Events Center. Don't miss this wonderful collection of creative vendors!

NOVEMBER 22, 23 . Sasquatch Summit Research Conference . Ocean Shores . Quinault Beach Resort & Casino.

NOVEMBER 24 . Grays Harbor Symphony 'A Winter Nightcap' . Bishop Center . Aberdeen Grays Harbor College. Guest tenor vocal soloist Robert

McPherson. Conducted by Dr. William Dyer. 7pm.

NOVEMBER 29, 30, DECEMBER 1 . Winter Fanta-Sea All Handmade Market . Ocean Shores . Convention Center.

NOVEMBER 29, 30 . 'Dr. Seuss' The Grinch' . Hoquiam . Seventh Street Theatre. 2018 movie. Fri., Sat. 7:30pm.

NOVEMBER 29, 30, DECEMBER 1, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15 . "Nunset Boulevard" . Aberdeen . Driftwood Theatre, Fri., Sat. 7:30pm, Sun. 1:30pm. (see pg. 33).

NOVEMBER 29 - DECEMBER 21 . Jolly Days . Seabrook . Saturday's: Glass Float Find, ice skating rink, Tree Lighting 11/29 6pm, Holiday Market 11/30 at Town Hall with 5pm snow drop.

DECEMBER

DECEMBER 5 . GHC Jazz Concert . Bishop Center . Aberdeen . Grays Harbor College. Jazz Band & Jazz Choir. A lively evening of jazz, directed by Dr. William Dyer and Kari Hasbrouck. 7pm.

DECEMBER 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15 . "Looking at Christmas" . Ocean Shores . Stage West

Community Theatre. The characters, lost in their own troubles, meet on the street near magnificent holiday store windows one snowy night. (see pg. 33).

DECEMBER 7 . Santa by the Sea . Westport . US Coast Guard will deliver Santa to Float 6 at 10:30am, then to Westport Maritime Museum to greet kids.

DECEMBER 8 . GH Civic Choir & Concert Band Bishop Center . Aberdeen . Grays Harbor College. Directed by Kari Hasbrouck & Tiffany Maki. 7pm.

DECEMBER 13-15 . Festival of Lights . Montesano . Parade on Dec. 14.

DECEMBER 14, 15 . Grays Harbor Opera Workshop, Iolanthe . Bishop Center . Aberdeen Grays Harbor College. Directed by Ian & Joy Dorsch.

More events to come! The winter issue will be in your mailbox on Dec. 1. Meanwhile, check our website at www.coastal-currents.com for the latest information on Harbor events.

Do you have a Grays Harbor event you would like to have considered for inclusion in the winter issue of Coastal Currents? Please e-mail the info by Nov. 1 to ccads19@gmail.com. Event column sponsorships available. 



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