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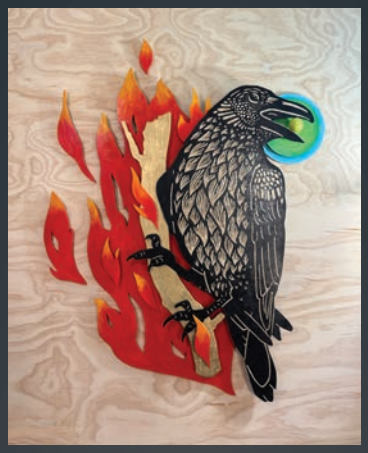

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Harbinger by Sara Gettys

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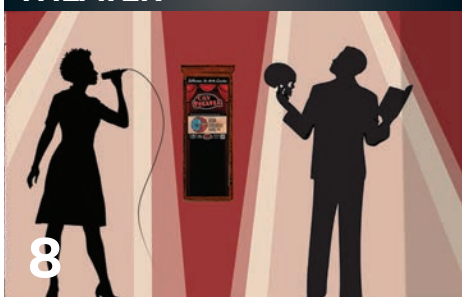
ART

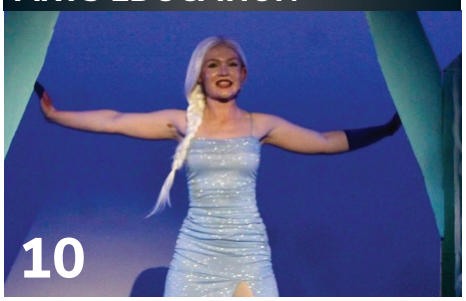
5 *Form a Line at Childhood's End*

THEATER



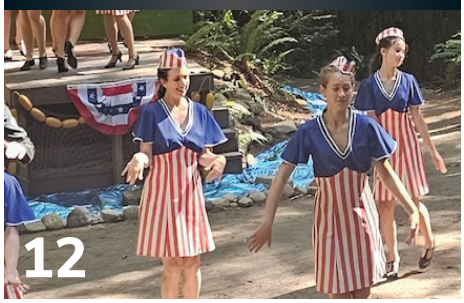
8 *Oly Theater: The Play's Their Thing*

ARTS EDUCATION



10 *Local Arts Education*

THEATER



12 *Kitsap Forest Theater*

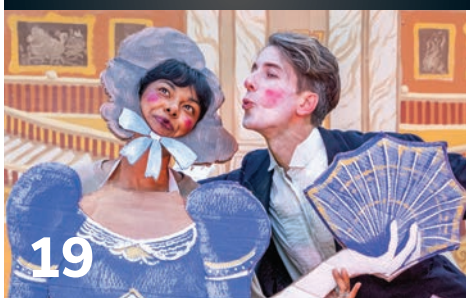
ART EVENT

14 *Isthmus Park's New Welcome Figure*

THEATER

16 *Harlequin Turns Up the Heat!*

THEATER



19 *String and Shadow and other Summer Theater*

EVENT

22 *Welcome to Capital Lakefair!*

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Form a Line at Childhood's End

by Lynette Charters Serembe

Form a Line at Childhoods End is a visual exploration of observations from nature through expression in line.

Line is the way we first learn to make a mark. From crayon drawings of infants to Kathe Kollwitz to a Leonardo da Vinci cartoon, quality of line has varied ways of evoking and portraying our experiences of life around us. Line is subtly seductive in its simplicity or can be bold, dynamic, and dramatic. The emotions we can evoke using line are as varied as any gestural mark possibly could be.

This show at Childhoods End is a collection of artists using line as their primary means of expression. Mainly (but not entirely), they are in a limited color palette to enhance your experience of the line itself. Most of these works are varied responses to nature from the unique perspectives and art journeys of the artists themselves.

Kathy Anderson is a Tacoma artist who studied the arts in New York. Her printed vignettes are skillfully and sensitively observed studies of birds and other creatures; they are embellished with hand painted color. As an observer we feel we are in silent dialogue with the animals she portrays. Each piece is charmingly surrounded, with the interplay of foliage as a framing device, and often an added bold surrounding line. They are reminiscent of Victorian illustrations from dusty old books of the past, neatly packaged windows with old-world charm, looking into a carefree world. Escapism for sure but they provide much needed comfort in our turbulent times.

Nesting Herons by Kathy Anderson

Pileated Woodpecker by Colleen Cotey

Form a Line at Childhood's End Continued

Colleen Cotey's sculptures are knitted wire observations of animals doing their thing in nature, mounted on drift/found wood, flat stone, or metal frames. They are a little like quick-time life drawing studies scribbled in 3D wire with internal lines. They are like an unusual and clever combination of life drawings and yarn bombings, but in worked wire. They capture the liveliness and vivaciousness and playfulness of our outdoor critters lost in their capers and daily life; their feathers or fur being fluffed in the wind.

Sarah Gettys is a local artist working primarily on printed/painted wood block. Her body of work is either carved/painted wood. With her more subdued color palette work, instead of the print, the finished piece is the physical block that has been carved. They have a distinctively mid-century feel with their bold lines and patterned areas. Her more colorful painted works on wood have an unrestricted color palette and involve the use of spray paint, stencil and printing and seem to joyfully embrace a more wildly 80s style. Most of her works sport animals playfully staring back at you in an entertainingly challenging kind of way, making you feel like you are the one being observed.

Julia Janeway inherited her mother's kiln and glaze recipes after her mom passed on. Using the well-loved items of loved ones after they are gone is to keep their memory alive and honor their experiences in life. Janeway's designer ceramic wall-tiles also celebrate life in nature in the beautiful simplicity of folk-art style. Each are small, carefully composed narratives in black and white carved clay resembling wood or lino-cuts, often embellished with flamboyantly colorful borders.

Burrowing Owl and Cactus by Julia Janeway

Catch by Sara Gettys

The patterns she utilizes are simple in design but flow elegantly suggesting movement and drama of the moment.

In this exhibition the materials used show the processes of artmaking. There are prints, the blocks used for printing turned into relief sculptures, wire sculptures that look like life drawings, and plates that look like printing blocks. The whole show is like exploring the interplay of disciplines with a common theme of animals in nature.

WHAT: Form a Line Art Show

WHERE: Childhood's End Gallery,
222 4th Ave. W.

WHEN: July 31- Sept 20

HOW MUCH: Free

LEARN MORE: info@childhoods-end-gallery.com

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The Play's Their Thing, The More The Merrier

An Improbable Peck of Plays Returns—to a new theater near you.

By James O'Barr

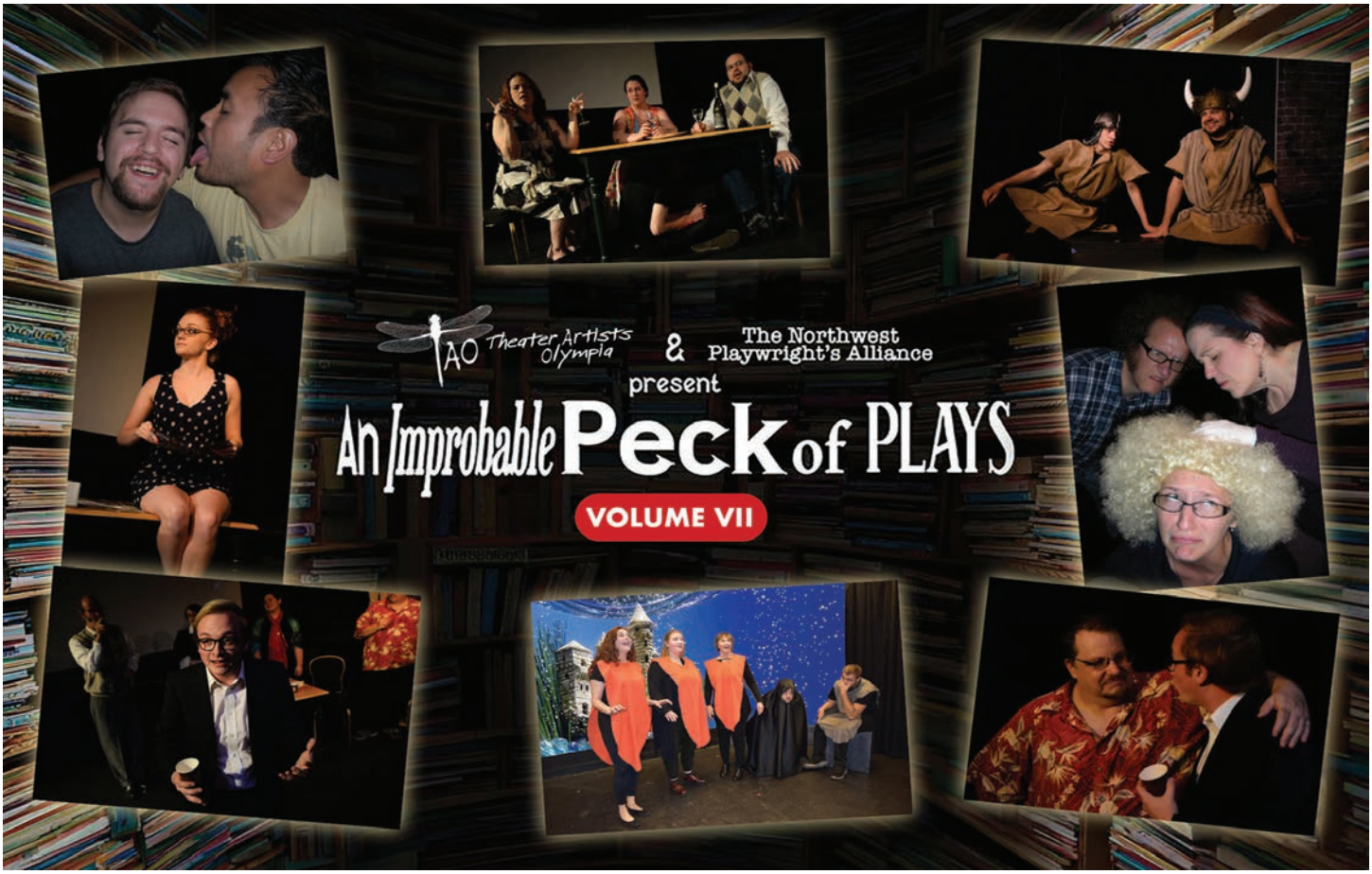
Theater Artists Olympia, for over two decades the South Sound's avatars of edgy, often original and provocative yet accessible theater, has found what is hoped to be a stay-put home in downtown Olympia. After several years of making do in a variety of venues, the last of which was that store front at the Mall, the new Oly Theater, located in the Jefferson Street Arts Center (formerly the Johansen Olympia Dance Center), is open and ready to delight, elate, and surprise long-time audiences, and to challenge new ones.

Thanks to a grant from the City Council's Inspire Olympia program, the Dance Center's rehearsal space has been transformed by TAO stalwarts pug Bujeaud, Michael Christopher, John Serembe, Marko Bujeaud, Dennis and Gail Rolly, Peter Brimms, George Dougherty, and assorted volunteers into an intimate, easily adaptable, 77-seat studio theatre. They opened in late April with a three-week run of *Anna Considers Mars*, a near-future sci-fi comedy by the S.F. Bay Area's star-spangled young playwright Ruben Grijalva. In mid-May, Annie Elizabeth, a no-holds barred stand-up comic, came up from L.A. for a one night stand.

Come June 12,13, and 14, Olympia's own Elizabeth Lord will be directing *Crazy Dinner*, a new musical by the performance collaborative Nightmayor (fun fact: a "mayor of nightlife" has been appointed or elected in cities around the world, from Amsterdam to Ulyanovsk). Based in both Olympia and Seattle, Nightmayor started life as a punk rock band that morphed into a theatre collective known for its original, eccentric musicals, of which *Crazy Dinner* is the latest.

In late August, TAO will be bringing back one of their signature productions, *An Improbable Peck of Plays, Volume VI.* which they have been staging in collaboration with The Northwest Playwrights Alliance since 2012, when "home" was the late, lamented Midnight Sun. According to Bryan Willis, Artistic Director of the Northwest Playwrights Alliance, the Peck of Plays concept evolved over many years in Olympia and elsewhere, featuring collections of short plays, usually about 10 minutes in length, with a variety of themes and styles that offer opportunities for playwrights, directors and actors to try, and audiences to experience, a creative theatrical kaleidoscope that quickly changes from the ridiculous to the sublime.

Design mockup by John Serembe and Lynette Charters



Design by John Serembe

Commenting on the choice of the whimsical title (a peck is, more or less, eight of something), TAO Artistic Director pug Bujeaud says, "We felt that the title gave us leeway as to the number of plays in a show—the first year there were seven, some years it's been nine, this year we'll have eight. It's also allowed us to make unusual pairings—comedy with tragedy, absurdity with realism, melodrama with farce. It could be anything." Must be where the "Improbable" comes in.

Northwest Playwrights Alliance's Bryan Willis is still in the process of pulling together the scripts for the show. Auditions for the actors are scheduled for July 6, 7, 8, and 9, with rehearsals starting the following week. The directors, however, an all-star assemblage of Northwest theater talent, are already on board. They include Kate Ayers, Teresita Brimms, pug Bujeaud, Andrew Gordon, John Longenbaugh, Gabriel McClelland, Dennis Rolly and Brennan Tucker.Tickets are now available of the TAO website.

WHAT: An Improbable Peck of Plays: Theater Artists Olympia & The Northwest Playwrights Alliance

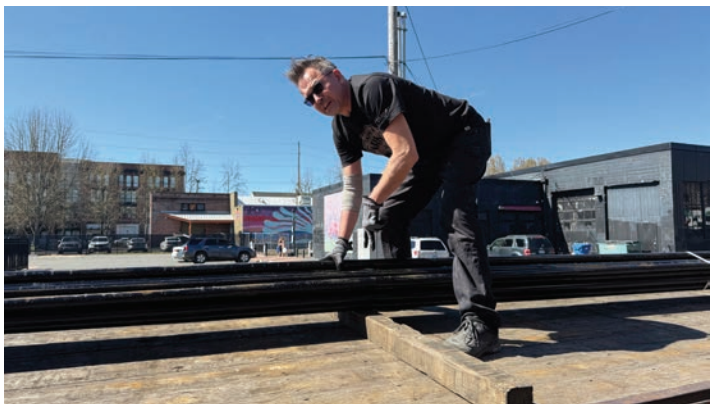
WHERE: The new Oly Theater, 412 Jefferson St. SE

WHEN: Friday, August 21 to Sunday August 30. Fridays amd Saturdays at 7:30 p.m., Sundays at 2 p.m.

HOW MUCH: $20

LEARN MORE: olytheater.com, info@olytheater.com youtube.com/@theaterartistsolympia6480

Gail Rolly, Jamie Crawford Kidd, pug Bujeaud and Dennis Rolly helping to create Oly Theater



TAO President Michael Christopher loading in the lighting grid.
Photos by Heather Christopher

Local Arts Education

By Rachel Benton

Every article published at Oly Arts relies on the active participation of artists in our society. Oly Arts' reliable and consistent presence in this community shows that there will always be a story to share, none of which would be possible without the important contribution of arts education in our public schools. It is within these spaces that students gain access to the arts and develop a love for these traditions while finding ways to innovate their craft and keep it alive.

Arts education has always been a target for budget cuts, often resulting in limited opportunities for students in schools. This issue remains relevant in Washington state today.

Oly Arts invited arts educators from North Thurston, Olympia, and Tumwater school districts to comment on the impact of the arts in students' lives and describe the importance of the arts in our society.

This is what they had to say:

The Impact of the Arts on Student Lives

"Sometimes, the only chance students have to create art is in the classroom when they come to school, especially those who live in high poverty or attend a Title I school. As an art teacher, I can see how students crave to make art and get their hands in paint or clay.

Art can help students be successful in school when they could be struggling in other areas. It can be the reason that a student is willing to get out of bed and come to school. The arts serve an important role in student development, mental health, and finding a balance in life." Demetria Schweizer, Art Specialist, Lydia Hawk Elementary.

"Participation in an arts program can transform a student's confidence. At the start of the year, I often see students who are very afraid to take risks in front of their peers. By the end of year, those same students are enthusiastic volunteers for every activity. Many former students have told me that my class brought them out of their shell and helped them feel more confident in all aspects of their lives." Jennifer Valera, Theatre Director, Aspire Performing Arts Academy.

Students in Capital High School's Theatre program "let it go" in their production of Frozen. Photo courtesy of Kristina Cummins.

Opposite: Timberline High School's Chamber Choir warms up with Choral Director Terry Shaw before competing in state competition. Photo courtesy of Terry Shaw.

"The arts allow students to explore their creativity and discover themselves. Arts education sets students up to be inventive, engaged, flexible thinkers, and provide an invaluable lifeline for many who are looking for belonging at school." Austin Bennett, Theatre Director, Olympia High School

Arts Education is Vital to Today's Society

"Humans have been expressing themselves through mark making and imagery since they first walked the earth. The arts is a language that transcends borders and connects people locally and globally. Through art, we gain understanding of different cultures, peoples, and histories. The arts are cross curricular with foundations in math, science, history, reading, and writing. Anyone can make art, and it's the process that makes us human." Stefanie Ramsay, Art Teacher, Reeves Middle School

"The arts give students a meaningful break from constant screen time and digital distractions. Through the arts, students develop focus, discipline, collaboration, and problem-solving skills in ways that are difficult to replicate elsewhere. Arts education strengthens creativity and critical thinking while helping students connect with their peers and express themselves in a deeply human way." Austin Schlichting, Orchestra and Choir Director, River Ridge High School

"More than ever, our students need the opportunity to find their authentic voices and learn to build healthy connections. Arts programs instinctively provide social and emotional learning for all people, and help them navigate this changing and dynamic world." Kristina Cummins, Theatre Director, Capital High School

"The next generation of instrumentalists, vocalists, actors, and visual artists are being taught and trained in schools right now. Almost all artists begin their artistic journey in schools. I have seen a drop in arts education over the past decade. Without arts education, our society will not have anyone to fill the artistic roles already in place. We will lose artists in a very short period of time. The arts fulfill the most important forms of self-expression. Without arts offerings in schools, people may never experience the joy in creativity or music making, or of emoting and coping in a healthy and productive way."
– Terry Shaw, Choir Director, Timberline High School

Kitsap Forest Theater: Fabulous Travel Destination

by Molly Gilmore

A visit to the Kitsap Forest Theater, an hour from Olympia, is as much about the place as the plays. Next up at the outdoor theater, on a 466-acre nature preserve near Bremerton, is *Oliver*, opening July 25.

The productions, often old-fashioned musicals on a grand scale, boast strong production values, winning performers and well-played live music. But the theater itself — surrounded by Douglas fir trees that filter the sunlight — is arguably the star of every show.

"The space is magical," said Gala Lindvall, a producer for the theater, owned by the Mountaineers. "As you walk down to it, it's like it was 100 years ago. We take audiences on a journey away from regular life."

For those coming from a distance, the drive is the first leg of that journey. The enchanting part begins when you arrive at the theater. There's a 10-minute hike to the performance space. Along the trail, decorations themed to each show set the stage. (There's a wheelchair-accessible shuttle bus, too.)

The trail opens an hour before shows, and many people come early to picnic. Refreshments are for sale on site, too; only cash is accepted. Stadium-style folding seats are available to rent, or bring your own, or a cushion.

Those who are up for a little more hiking can take the 1.5 mile roundtrip jaunt to Big Tree, a Douglas fir more than 30 feet in circumference.

The Kitsap Forest Theater was created from a natural amphitheater in 1928, and the first show on the land, known as the Rhododendron Preserve, was a roving production of Robin of Sherwood in 1923. (Since then, there were only four years without at least one show, three during World War II and the fourth in 2020.)

Fiddler Cast (Fiddler on the Roof in 1998): Nestled in the woods, the Kitsap Forest Theater, which focuses on such family-friendly musicals as Fiddler on the Roof, is set in a natural amphitheater with terraced earth seats. Photo courtesy of The Mountaineers Players.

Bigfish 2025: Sunlight streams through the forest, spotlighting the action in 2025's *Big Fish*. Photo by Skip Albertson.

Beyond the setting, there is something about the shows themselves that transports the viewer to another reality, one separated by mile, and seemingly by decades from computers and cell phones. Last summer's Big Fish, a musical adapted from Daniel Wallace's 1998 novel and the 2003 film, and 2024's Cinderella, with contemporary comic touches, had a wholesome charm, feeling somehow as though they'd been produced in Brigadoon.

The spectacular setting draws actors, crew and audiences from all over Western Washington and beyond. On performance weekends, many of the cast and crew stay on the property and enjoy communal meals, hiking, swimming at nearby Wild Cat Lake and singing around the campfire.

WHAT: Kitsap Forest Theater

WHERE: 3000 Seabeck Hwy., Bremerton

WHEN: Oliver: July25 and 26 and Aug. 1, 2, 8, 9, 15 and 16, Miss Holmes: Sept. 5-7, 12, 13, 19 and 20 Performances are at 2 p.m. The trail to the theater opens at 1 p.m, and those needing to ride the wheelchair-accessible shuttle bus must arrive by 1 p.m. for a guaranteed ride.

HOW MUCH: $12-$25 in advance, $15-$30 at the door, with children under 6 admitted free

LEARN MORE: https://www.foresttheater.com/

(360) 456-4999 venablespest.com

Isthmus Park's New Welcome Figure Marks the Region's Past, Present and Future

By Molly Walsh

Photo by Molly Walsh

Olympia's Isthmus Park is a gateway to downtown Olympia with views of both the State Capitol and Olympic Mountain Range on the horizon. A little over two acres in size, the park features a number of seasonal installations, including a pump track from spring to autumn, and Oly on Ice in the late fall,into winter. Currently a place of recreation, the land and water around Isthmus Park carry many stories across the generations, and sits at the junction of historical, ecological and cultural significance.

At the beginning of June, a new Welcome Figure carving by Squaxin Island Tribe artist and carver, Andrea Wilbur-Sigo, became a permanent installation at Isthmus Park. Named *Həʔapus sqʷəbay Mother of Restoration*, Wilbur-Sigo's carved figure connects themes of cultural heritage, local history and conservation into a towering 13-foot cedar wood carving. The Welcome Figure stands in a recently-renovated portion of Isthmus Park that borders 4th Avenue, and is complete with fresh landscaping.

At the earliest stages of this project, Wilbur-Sigo had been immersed in research related to Squaxin Island Tribe history. This included study of the Fish Wars, a series of protests throughout the 1960s and 1970s, which were led by local Native American tribes.

During this time, state fishing regulations were not honoring treaties with a number of indigenous tribes in the region, and denied them the right to fish in their traditional waterways. The Fish Wars culminated in the milestone "Boldt Decision" in 1974, which upheld treaties and granted tribes who were part of the treaties the right to half of the fish harvest in their traditional waterways and shared stewardship of state fisheries.

This regional history and Wilbur-Sigo's familial ties to the area helped to inform the location of the Welcome Figure. Isthmus Park rests on the traditional lands of the Squaxin Island Tribe, and nearby waterways have ties to the Fish Wars. In the late 1960s, Native American activist and environmentalist Billy Frank Jr., participated in a "fish-in" protest in the waterways near the 5th Avenue Dam, and was apprehended by police.

The Welcome Figure also helps to mark a renewed future for the region, as the State of Washington, Squaxin Island Tribe and other community partners embark on the Deschutes Estuary Restoration Project, part of which features the removal of the 5th Avenue Dam and the recovery of key salmon habitat.

This Welcome Figure at Isthmus Park is part of a greater accord between the City of Olympia and Squaxin Island Tribe. Renewed in 2021, the five-year accord aims to build bonds between governments and cultures, including a commitment to bolstering public art.

In addition to the accord with the City of Olympia, the Squaxin Island Tribe recently purchased a large property on Plum Street in downtown Olympia that currently houses the Lee Creighton Justice Center. The Squaxin Island Tribe has future plans to transform the property into a hotel and event space. According to Wilbur-Sigo, the Welcome Figure will help to mark a new chapter in the partnership between the Squaxin Island Tribe and the City of Olympia.

Wilbur-Sigo brought two decades of experience in carving and public art commissions to the design and execution of the Welcome Figure. *Həʔapus sqʷəbay Mother of Restoration* was crafted from Alaskan old-growth cedar wood. Wilbur-Sigo continues a familial custom to use wood that has naturally fallen or has been salvaged.

Using old-growth cedar is both traditional and functional. The tightly-packed rings of centuries-old cedar wood are necessary to help a carving have proper structure and longevity. Once a log is selected, the wood needs to be properly prepared, including peeling back the softer outer layers. In these initial stages, Wilbur-Sigo also reflects on the greater story that she wants to tell through the carving.

Wilbur-Sigo hopes the Welcome Figure can help educate community members about the history of the region, Squaxin Island Tribe heritage and the importance of habitat restoration for salmon, kelp and other wildlife.

A Welcome Figure traditionally has a human form that helps to greet passersby. For *Həʔapus sqʷəbay Mother of Restoration*, Wilbur-Sigo envisioned a grand, royal figure adorned with jewelry and regalia. The Welcome Figure also ties together Wilbur-Sigo's personal family heritage and Squaxin Island Tribe heritage. Wilbur-Sigo was particularly inspired by her and her family's extensive diving experience, incorporating seascapes and undersea life into her carving.

Həʔapus sqʷəbay Mother of Restoration holds a paddle, with a baby on her back in a basket. In homage to salmon and kelp restoration projects taking place in local waterways, Wilbur-Sigo has added salmon and kelp to the bottom portion of the carving.

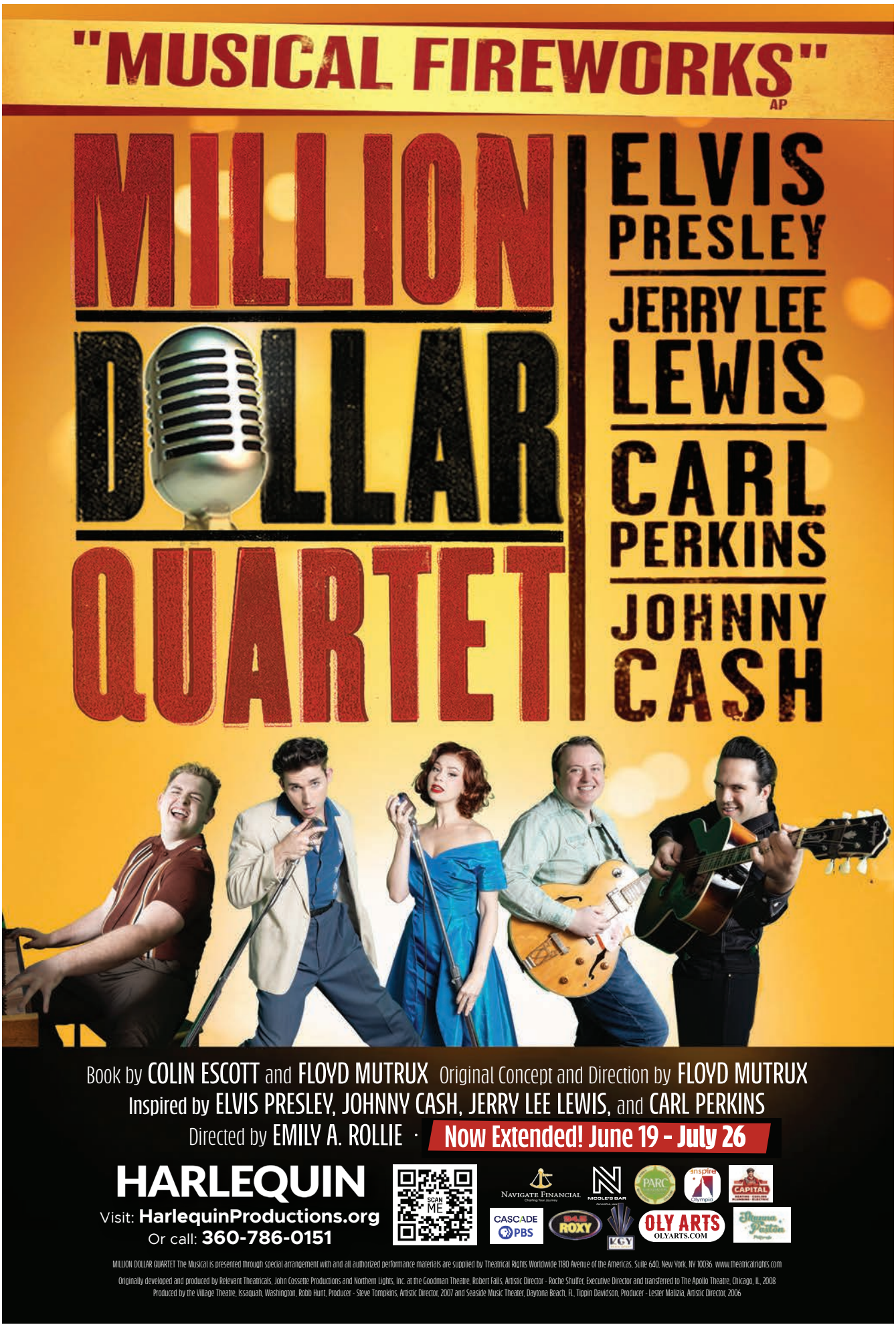
Over the years, Wilbur-Sigo's carvings have been installed across Western Washington, including Seattle. Through the Welcome Figure, Wilbur-Sigo is looking forward to having a piece displayed on her and her family's homeland. She also imagines the potential education, awareness and meaning that the Welcome Figure will provide to community members for generations to come.

A dedication ceremony for *Həʔapus sqʷəbay Mother of Restoration* took place on the afternoon of June 4. Community members, members of the Squaxin Island Tribal Council and members of the Olympia City Council gathered at Isthmus Park in celebration of the new Welcome Figure.

WHAT: *Həʔapus sqʷəbay* Mother of Restoration wood carving

WHERE: Isthmus Park, downtown Olympia

Photo by Molly Walsh



Photography by Shanna Paxton Photography, Poster design by John Serembe

Harlequin Productions Turns Up The Heat with Million Dollar Quartet

By Rachel Benton

On December 4, 1956, a "twist-of-fate" brought Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Carl Perkins into the same space for a once-in-a-lifetime jam session at Sun Studio. Just imagine what that jam session must have been like!

Historical memory, nostalgia, and imagination will be brought to life as Harlequin Productions takes audiences back to that incredible night with the Tony nominated musical *Million Dollar Quartet*!

Harlequin Productions describes *Million Dollar Quartet* as a show "packed with heart, history, and hit after iconic hit. This musical is an electrifying celebration of talent, fame, and raw sound that takes audiences inside the night that changed music forever."

Filling the "Blue Suede Shoes" of these icons is brave and noble endeavor, and Oly Arts is excited to see Ben Bailey as the King of Rock 'n' Roll — Elvis Presley, Nathan Roberts playing the man in black — Johnny Cash, Wyatt Brownell as Jerry Lee Lewis—Killer, to life. Along with Maverick McCarl and Carl Perkins.

This show will feature 20-plus classics that everyone loves including "Blue Suede Shoes", "Matchbox", "Who Do You Love?", "Folsom Prison Blues", "That's All Right", "Sixteen Tons", "Hound Dog", "Down By the Riverside", "Peace in the Valley", "I Walk the Line", "Great Balls of Fire", and "See You Later Alligator".

In a recent social media sneak peek video, *Million Dollar Quartet* Director Emily Rollie shared, "This is an actual historical moment that we get to see inside of through the memory of Sam Phillips [record producer and founder of Sun Records], who brought them all together in the first place."

Rollie continued, "We have a great opportunity as a community to be part of that moment, and be part of the party that emerges from these characters playing together … audiences will get to see incredibly talented and fabulous performers singing, acting, and playing instruments in a show that is very challenging … it is something not to be missed!"

Video previews and more are still being shared on Harlequin Productions' social media and email newsletters, visit harlequinproductions.org to learn more.

(Left to right) Maverick McCarl, Wyatt Brownell, Becca Bailey, Ben Bailey, and Nathan Roberts. Photo by Shanna Paxton Photography.

A show as special as this demands extra attention to detail and inspires intentional audience experiences. All audience members will experience magic and wonder from their seats, but Harlequin Productions is also currently offering special Backstage Pass VIP Tickets with these perks for those looking to be fully immersed in the show. These benefits include:

- Early backstage admission with a VIP pass and lanyard.
- Backstage tour of the Million Dollar Quartet set with the opportunity for photos and selfies.
- A seat for the pre-show on-stage sound check (it's essentially a private performance)!
- A collectible tote bag full of goodies, including a show poster signed by the cast, a collectible coaster, a collectible cup, and a tasty treat!

This will be the celebration of a lifetime and an event you do not want to miss. Hurry and get your tickets today before the show sells out!

WHAT: Tony nominated musical *Million Dollar Quartet* directed by Emily Rollie at Harlequin Productions

WHEN: June 19 - July 26. Friday and Saturday shows at 7:30 p.m., Sunday Matinees at 2 p.m..

WHERE: The State Theater, 202 4th Avenue E, Olympia

HOW MUCH: Prices range from $39-$99. Available for purchase online or at the Harlequin Productions box office.

LEARN MORE: harlequinproductions.org (360) 786-0151

Keeping Community in Tune

THE PARC FOUNDATION IS PROUD TO SUPPORT THE ARTS, CULTURE, AND COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE THAT BRING THURSTON COUNTY TOGETHER.

PARKS ARTS PARC FOUNDATION Thurston County RECREATION CULTURE

At the **PARC Foundation of Thurston County**, we invest in programs and partnerships that expand access to parks, arts, recreation, and culture throughout our region.

Through partnerships with **Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater, Yelm, and Tenino**, the PARC Foundation helps remove barriers so more individuals and families can experience the joy of community - from live theater to youth recreation and cultural events.

Because everyone deserves a chance to be part of the show.

YOUR SUPPORT MAKES A DIFFERENCE:

- Expanding access to arts and cultural programming
- Funding recreation and wellness opportunities
- Providing scholarships
- Strengthening community partnerships

STRING & SHADOW PUPPET THEATER

Presents:

Night at the Grand Opera

Come enjoy an evening of outdoor theater and giant, spectacle puppetry in westside Olympia. Brought to you by String and Shadow Puppet Theater, "Night at the Grand Opera" is a frenzied romp through a candlelit night at the Opera. Rococo extravagance is fashioned with elaborate cardboard sets that collapse and unfold to reveal the many great dramas of the opera house (not all of which happen on stage.) Love triangles, converging revolutionary plots, art-loving flies and disaffected vermin are brought to life with cardboard and paper-mache. Fun for the whole family! Bring your own chair or blanket, arrive early for a spot up front!

WHAT: String & Shadow's *Night at the Grand Opera*

WHEN: July 24-August 2, Friday & Saturdays at 7:30pm, Sundays at 4pm & 7:30 p.m.

WHERE: Decatur Woods Park, 1015 Decatur Street SW

HOW MUCH: $20-$35 Suggested Donation.

LEARN MORE: stringandshadow.com, stringandshadow@gmail.com

Kai Johnson, Donald Palardy

Kelsey Magnuson Photo credits: Jo Arlow

2026 Summer Theatre

ANIMAL FIRE THEATRE COMPANY

WHAT & WHEN: Shakespeare's ***Love's Labours Lost***: Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings from July 3-26 at 7pm.

WHERE & HOW MUCH: Wonderwood Park, 5304 32nd Ave SE, Lacey. Free, donations accepted.

LEARN MORE: animalfiretheatre.com

HARLEQUIN

WHAT & WHEN: ***Million Dollar Quartet***: June 19 - July 26. ***Sweat:*** August 8-9, ***Barefoot In The Park***. August 21 - September 6 Check website for times.

WHERE & HOW MUCH: The State Theater, 202 4th Ave E, Olympia. Check website for cost.

LEARN MORE: harlequinproductions.org

ANNEX THEATRE (SEATTLE)

WHAT & WHEN: ***Figure Drawing for Dummies***: August 14-29. Check website for times.

WHERE & HOW MUCH: 1100 E Pike St, Seattle
Check website for cost.

LEARN MORE: annextheatre.org

OLYMPIA LITTLE THEATRE

WHAT & WHEN:
Dead Man's Cell Phone. Runs September 12-28,
Check website for times.

WHERE & HOW MUCH: Olympia Little Theatre, 1925 Miller Ave NE, Olympia. Check website for ticket prices.

LEARN MORE: olympialittletheater.org

CHILDREN'S THEATER EXPERIENCE • CTE

WHAT & WHEN:

The Arts Festival - July 16 -July 18.

Spotlight - *The Lion The Witch and the Wardrobe* - July 23-25. Check website for times.

Showcase - ***Shrek Jr.:*** July 30 - August 1 Check website for times..

WHERE & HOW MUCH: Kenneth J. Minnaert Center, SPSCC, 2011 Mottman Rd SW, Olympia. Tickets for shows are free with requested donation.

LEARN MORE: CTEkids.org

OLY THEATER

WHAT & WHEN:
An Improbable Peck of Plays A TAO annual offering returns! 8 short plays, 8 directors! Runs August 21st to August 30th, Friday/Saturday at 7:30 p.m., Sundays at 2:00 p.m.

Aaron Foster Stand-up comedy. Because what's funnier than a middle aged man's take on mental health, mid-life regrets, and Paul Rudd? One night only: October 15.

WHERE: The New Oly Theater at the Jefferson St. Arts Center, 412 Jefferson St SE. (In the former Johansen Olympia Dance Center)

LEARN MORE: olytheater.com

LAKEWOOD PLAYHOUSE (LAKEWOOD)

WHAT & WHEN:
The Revolutionists Runs September 12-28.

WHERE & HOW MUCH: 5729 Lakewood Towne Center Blvd SW, Lakewood. Check website for ticket prices.

LEARN MORE: Lakewoodplayhouse.org

TACOMA LITTLE THEATRE

WHAT & WHEN:
The Outsider. Runs August 28 - September 13th.

WHERE & HOW MUCH: Tacoma Little Theatre, 210 N I Street, Tacoma. Check website for ticket prices.

LEARN MORE: tacomalittletheatre.com

PARAMOUNT THEATER (SEATTLE)

WHAT & WHEN:
Hells Kitchen: Runs July21- 26 Check website for times

WHERE & HOW MUCH: 911 Pine Street Seattle. Check website for cost.

LEARN MORE: seattle.broadway.com

TACOMA MUSICAL PLAYHOUSE

WHAT & WHEN:
Hairspray: The Broadway Musical Runs July 10- August 2. Check website for times.

WHERE & HOW MUCH: 7116 6th Ave. Tacoma. Check website for ticket prices.

LEARN MORE: tmp.org

SEATTLE REP (SEATTLE)

WHAT & WHEN:
Freak The Mighty: Runs July 30 - September 6. Check website for times.

Lost Girl: Runs August 7 - 16. Check website for times.

WHERE & HOW MUCH: 155 Mercer Street Seattle. Check website for cost.

LEARN MORE: seattlerep.org

TAPROOT THEATRE

WHAT & WHEN: ***Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat***: July 8-August 15. ***Conscience***: Septembe 16-October 24. Check website for times and cost.

WHERE: Jewel Mainstage, 204 N 85th St. Seattle

LEARN MORE: taproottheatre.org

Welcome to Capital Lakefair!

Neil Turner

As the 2025–26 Capital Lakefair President, it is my honor to welcome you to this year's festival.

We are proudly celebrating our 69th year, and our theme, "Let the Medieval Magic Begin," reflects both the fun and the rich tradition that Lakefair has brought to our community for nearly seven decades.

For the past few years, I've had the pleasure of being the "Float Dude," helping drive the float in several parades every year. This year, I'm honored to step into the role of President. I look forward to continuing the work that makes Lakefair such a special part of Olympia's summer.

Capital Lakefair began 69 years ago as a small community celebration designed to bring people to the waterfront and revitalize the downtown area. The very first festival was held in 1957 and featured the "Lady of the Lake," who rode on a boat during the parade. Since then, Lakefair has grown into a beloved multi-day tradition where families and friends come together to enjoy delicious food, carnival rides, live entertainment, and an unforgettable parade.

Lakefair would not be what it is today without the generous support of our community members and local businesses. We are committed to providing a fun, safe, and memorable celebration for everyone.

I warmly invite you to join us as we celebrate 69 years of Lakefair. The festivities begin on Wednesday, July 15, and wrap up with my personal favorite, the Fireworks Show on Sunday, July 19.

Thank you for being part of this incredible tradition.

Neil Turner, President, Capital Lakefair

WHAT: Capital Lakefair

WHERE AND WHEN: Heritage Park July 15-19.
Carnival July 15-17, 2024 (Noon-10 p.m.), July 18-19 (Noon-11 p.m.) and July 20 (Noon-Midnight)
Senior Day (50+) events near the entertainment main stage on Friday, July 18, 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

HOW MUCH: Free. Ride tickets available for purchase onsite.

LEARN MORE: lakefair.org

OUR 2026 GRAND MARSHALL

Kellie McNelly

Kellie McNelly

Capital Lakefair has selected Kellie McNelly, Executive Director of ROOF Community Services, as the Grand Marshal for the 69th annual festival, themed "Let the Medieval Magic Begin." A Thurston County native and graduate of Capital High School and Saint Martin's University, McNelly has dedicated nearly three decades to serving the Rochester community. She joined ROOF Community Services in 1996 as a part-time program assistant and became Executive Director in 2008.

ROOF Community Services has provided essential support to the Rochester community for more than 33 years and is the area's only multi-service agency. Through its programs, ROOF helps some of the community's most vulnerable children, individuals, and families, serving nearly 30,000 client interactions each year. McNelly's long-standing commitment to community service makes her a fitting choice to lead this year's Lakefair parade.

Capital Lakefair on a Budget

Think Capital Lakefair has to cost a fortune? Think again.

There are actually many ways to enjoy Capital Lakefair on a budget, although we can't promise you won't find something irresistible in the Arts & Crafts area.

Start with free transportation. Intercity Transit offers free rides, including the express bus from Lacey, with convenient drop-off locations just a short walk from all the activities at the park.

Wednesday evening kicks off with the always-popular High School Battle of the Bands. The entertainment is free, the energy is incredible, and it is always exciting to see talented local musicians take the stage.

Thursday features Discount Ride Night at the carnival, making it the perfect opportunity for families and friends to enjoy the rides while keeping costs manageable. Later in the evening, the Coronation of the Queen returns, bringing back classic Lakefair traditions along with a few surprises and special moments.

Friday night welcomes the annual Car Show, featuring more than 150 classic cars along Deschutes parkway. The evening also includes outstanding live entertainment on stage, with NINETEEN 80 FOUR closing out the night.

Saturday is one of Lakefair's signature events, the Grand Parade down Capital Way. The pre-parade begins at 4:45 PM, followed by an evening of live entertainment and community celebration.

Sunday concludes the festival with the spectacular Grand Finale Fireworks show beginning at 10:15 PM over downtown Olympia.

One of the highlights of Lakefair each year is the Arts & Crafts area, filled with talented vendors offering unique handmade items, artwork, décor, jewelry, and gifts. It is always a favorite stop for visitors.

And of course, there is the legendary Food Row on Water Street, where local nonprofit organizations serve a wide variety of incredible food while raising funds that support important community programs and activities throughout the year.

Capital Lakefair continues to offer affordable family fun, entertainment, traditions, and community spirit for visitors of all ages.

Presenting The 2026 Lakefair Royal Court

One of the biggest changes this year is that we have not announced the Queen, it will be done at Lakefair on Thursday @ 6:00 P. M. It was a long standing tradition that the Queen was announced at lakefair, but that changed about 15 years ago. We are bringing it back this year with some added excitement!

Photo credit: Boston harbor Photography

Claire Byers

Claire represents Avanti High School, the daughter of Jessica and Christopher Byers. A curious and ambitious scholar, Claire is charting her own exciting path through Running Start toward a future in nursing. When she's not conquering her studies, she shares her time and kindness with young campers at Camp Cispus, furry friends at the local animal shelter, and through her involvement in 4-H, helping children, animals, and her community learn, grow, and thrive. A bright leader with a heart full of care, Claire shines wherever she goes!

Claire Olmstead

Claire represents Olympia High School. She is the daughter of Eric and Heidi Olmstead, and brings energy and determination to everything she does at school. A standout athlete, she competes in track and field as a javelin thrower and races through cross country with endurance and determination. Claire is also a dedicated musician, skillfully playing both the violin and viola. In the classroom, she challenges herself by taking AP English and AP History, reflecting her love of learning and curiosity about the world. Committed to giving back, Claire serves as a Camp Cispus counselor, guiding fifth graders through summer adventures with care, patience, and a sense of fun. Looking ahead, she plans to pursue a future in education, combining her passion for mentorship with her dedication to making a positive impact. Whether on the track, in the orchestra, or at camp, Claire approaches every challenge with heart and determination.

Jazmin Reyes Rivas

Jazmin represents Capital High School. She is the daughter of Lorena Rivas and Emmanuel Reyes. A passionate and curious learner, Jazmin thrives in the challenging IB Program, currently taking IB Psychology, Chemistry, History of the Americas, and Language and Literature, earning college credit while still in high school. When she finds a little spare time from her studies, she enjoys reading, sewing, baking, and showing her skills on a competitive soccer team. Beyond academics, she serves her community through Olympia Parks and Recreation. With determination, heart, and big dreams, Jazmin is setting her sights on becoming a lawyer, ready to make a difference with justice and care.

Isabella Valerio

Isabella represents River Ridge High School and is the daughter of Victoria and Mark Valerio. A bright and determined leader, Isabella is building her future through running start in pursuit of a career in law. When she's not focused on her studies, she's busy making an impact as the Deputy Mayor of the Lacey City Youth Council and as an officer of the National Junior Honor Society. With her sights set on law school, Isabella is already sharpening the skills of a future advocate. Outside of her leadership commitments, Isabella truly finds her voice literally. An active member of the choir, she has a beautiful singing voice and a passion for music that shines every time she performs. Whether leading with logic or lifting spirits with song, Isabella brings heart, harmony, and ambition to everything she does.

Capital Lakefair 2026 - Events

HIGHLIGHTS

Wednesday, July 15, 2026 | Opening Day
Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at Noon
Food Row opens on Water Street
Carnival opens
Entertainment: Battle of the Bands takes the stage

Thursday – July 16, 2026
Discount Carnival Ride Day 5 rides for $25
Arts & Crafts area open throughout the day
Coronation of the Queen at 6:00 PM- brings back the tradition after 16 years!
Entertainment: AJA, DJ TWOAM

Friday – July 17, 2026
50 Plus in the Park 9:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.
Car Show hosted along Deschutes Parkway hosted by the Thurston County Corvette Club, starting at 5 P.M. Proceeds benefit the Strophy Foundation
Food Row and Arts & Crafts continue throughout the day
Entertainment: Baby and the Nobodies, Hüligan, Skank Toronado

Saturday – July 18, 2026
Grand Parade down Capital Way, Pre-Parade at 4:45 PM
Special guest appearance during the parade
Entertainment: Positrac, Nineteen 80 Four

Sunday – July 19, 2026 | Closing Day
Final day for Food Row favorites
Last chance to visit Arts & Crafts
Entertainment: Hogue & Moore Band, Exit 88
Grand Finale Fireworks Show at 10:15 PM

2026 FOOD ROW

Welcome to Lakefair's Iconic Food Row!
A beloved tradition where delicious food meets meaningful causes—all served by local non-profits raising funds to support their vital missions. Come hungry, leave inspired (and maybe a little full). Every bite at Lakefair Food Row helps lift our community.

COMMUNICATIVE
Supporting Latino families through language access and empowerment. Enjoy authentic tacos, burritos, sopes, nachos, and refreshing aguas frescas.

FAST N FRESH
Fueling scholarships one plate at a time! Dig into crispy gyros, chicken fritters, and golden fries—fast, fresh, and seriously satisfying.

OLYMPIA HOST LIONS
Serving the community since 1935. Grab their famous Lions Cheeseburgers and classic hot dogs—you'll see why they're a staple.

PACIFIC OHANA
Celebrating Pacific Islander culture with Hawaiian pulled pork, teriyaki chicken, and crowd-favorite lumpia.

54 STEVENS RACING
Supporting shelters and students while serving up funnel cakes, cotton candy, and kettle corn—fair treats done right.

RED LANTERN ASIAN FUSION
Bubble tea, chow mein, fried rice, potstickers, spring rolls—and yes, maybe a donut to finish it off.

OLYMPIA EAGLES LADIES AUXILIARY
Giving back locally with strawberry shortcake, Italian sodas, and energizing Lotus drinks.

OLYMPIA HINDU TEMPLE & CULTURAL CENTER
Help welcome them with michi bajji, samosas, and rich masala chai.

CAMPERS COFFEE
Caffeine with a cause—every drink supports services for the homeless.

HUNGARIAN KITCHEN
Supporting scholarships with their famous Hungarian elephant ears (sweet or savory… tough choice).

THURSTON COUNTY DEMOCRATS
Try the legendary Demoburger—add grilled onions or double up if you're brave.

THURSTON COUNTY REPUBLICANS
Serving pulled pork sandwiches, nachos, and crispy fries that don't mess around.

2026 LAKEFAIR

Live. Local. Legendary.

ENTERTAINMENT SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAY, JULY 15TH

HIGH SCHOOL BATTLE OF THE BANDS

THURSDAY, JULY 16TH

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM	ESB Solo
2:30 PM - 3:15 PM	The Mistaken
3:45 PM - 4:30 PM	Talent Show Tryouts
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM	Crowning the 2026 Lakefair Queen
7:00 PM - 7:45 PM	AKA
8:15 PM - Close	DJ TWO AM

FRIDAY, JULY 17TH

9:00 AM - 2:30 PM	50 Plus in the Park
4:00 PM - 4:45 PM	Semi-Gloss
5:15 PM - 6:00 PM	The Proffits
6:30 PM - 7:00 PM	Baby and the Nobodies
7:45 PM - 8:30 PM	Hüligan
9:00 PM - Close	SKANK TORNADO

SATURDAY, JULY 18TH

1:00 PM - 1:40 PM	Motorcar
2:10 PM - 2:50 PM	Still Got It Band
3:20 PM - 4:00 PM	The Stonettes
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM	Capital Lakefair Parade
6:30 PM - 7:20 PM	Elevator Operator
7:40 PM - 8:10 PM	Positrac
8:30 PM - Close	NINETEEN 80 FOUR

SUNDAY, JULY 19TH

1:10 PM - 1:55 PM	Dogger
2:25 PM - 3:10 PM	Spencer Lendon
3:45 PM - 5:25 PM	American Legion Band
5:55 PM - 6:40 PM	Backlash
7:10 PM - 7:55 PM	Hogue & Moore Band
8:20 PM - Close	EXIT 88

2026 LAKEFAIR

Legacy · Community · Community

Let the Medieval Magic Begin!

Thurston County

Good Times. ★ Great Music. ★ Unforgettable Memories.

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FREE

Lacey in TUNE

MUSIC MOVIES ENTERTAINMENT

HUNTAMER PARK • SUMMER 2026

laceyparks.org/events

TUESDAYS Children's Entertainment Series 6:30 pm

July 7
Ian Dobson
Steel Drum Party

July 14
The Rad Scientist
Nature & Science Songs

July 21
Recess Monkey
Kids Rock Band

July 28
Reptile Lady
Fun Exotic Animal Education

August 4
Eric Ode
Kids Author, Entertainer, Songwriter

August 11
Angel Ocasio
Comedy Show

WEDNESDAYS Concert Series Noon

July 8
Army Nat'l Guard Full Metal Racket
Rock Band

July 15
Lavon Blue
The Ultimate Cover Band

July 22
Alma y Azucar Quintet
Latin Music

July 29
Raucous Band
Smooth, Classic Rock & Roll & Dance Music

August 5
Platinum Soul
A Musical Ride Down Funky Street

August 12
Lindsay Quella Kara
Indie Singer-Songwriter

FRIDAYS Concerts 7:00 pm Movies at Dusk Food Trucks 6:00 pm

July 17
Harmony of Rock
A Celebration of Early 70s Rock

Captain America *(PG-13)*

July 24
High Voltage Honeys
Leather, Lipstick, Loud Guitars — Rock & Roll

How to Train Your Dragon (2025) *(PG)*

July 31
Band After Midnight
ABBA Tribute Band

Mamma Mia *(PG-13)*

Aug 7
13 Til Midnight
Taylor Swift Tribute Band

Zootopia 2 *(PG)*

TUESDAY BONUS SHOW!
Tues., June 23 • 6:30
Pan Wizards
Youth Steel Drum Orchestra

Movies on 18ft screen • Bring your own seating • Food Trucks on Fridays

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For more info
laceyparks.org/events

THURSDAY BONUS SHOW!
Thurs., July 9 • 6:30
American Legion Band
Patriotic Americana

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