

City Remembers Tidal Wave disaster

April 12, 2024



The public braved cold, rainy weather and paid respects to the memories of the victims on the 60th anniversary of the worst Tsunami in the United States ever.

The event was hosted by the City at the Cultural Center.

11 individuals lost their lives, another 60 suffered injuries, an estimated \$40 million in damage (1964 dollars) devastation covered 30 plus blocks March 27-28, 1964.

Dr. Lori Dengler, Professor Emeritus in the Geology Dept. at Cal Poly Humboldt University delivered a compelling presentation to those in attendance. Professor Dengler recounted what she referred as the flood following the earthquake, in an era when the public was not so familiar with the word tsunami. Dengler's presentation chronicled the genesis of the 9.2 Anchorage Earthquake 60 years ago and detailed the timing of the four major ocean waves:

- Wave #1, 4.4 meters (14.5 ft) landed ashore at 11:50pm
- Wave #2, 3.6 meter (12 ft) arrived at 12:20am.

- Wave #3, (unknown height) is believed to have hit downtown about 1:20am.
- And the final wave, 6.7 meters

(22 ft) slammed into an area of Front St just north of the S Curve.

Professor Dengler's comprehensive report follow the equally compelling presentation by author Dennis Powers who chronicled the devastating event in his non-fiction book, *The Raging Sea*, the previous Monday at the Crescent City Council meeting.

Upon finishing her presentation, Professor Dengler and City Manager Eric Wier escorted the audience across the street to the epicenter of the Tsunami on the Mason Mall and conducted a candlelight vigil at the Tsunami Memorial Fountain. Thursday's commemoration precedes the Kamome Festival, April 11-13, acknowledging the 10th anniversary and celebration of the Kamome Landing, following the 2011 Rikunzentakata, Japan tsunami.