

Salmon Festival celebrates Yurok staple

September 4, 2022



There's not much going on in Klamath besides seemingly never ending construction and the infamous statues of one hairy chested logger and his loyal blue ox. But come mid- August, the entire township is buzzing about, preparing for the biggest event of the year- the Salmon Festival.

Over the years, the Salmon Festival has boasted many a contest, tournament, vendor, and food tent and this year was no different.

The festival is an homage paid to the Yurok staple food of salmon or ne-puey as the Yurok call it, whose beautifully coral pink and deliciously healthy presence in their culture continues to nourish the isolated community - both in traditional value and monetary gain.

The cultural significance of salmon in this area is unmatched and considering their dwindling numbers due to dams, overfishing and natural disasters like the mudslide that caused a massive fish die off recently, the festival in their honor every year is all the more important.

In addition to the salty fresh subject of celebration, the Salmon Festival is an opportunity for vendors to engage the small community and it's impressive flock of feasting and festive fans. From young entrepreneurs selling sno cones and painted pet rocks to salmon slingin' cabanas boasting lines the length of Klamath town site proper.

With colorful booths ranging from social justice and community outreach to natural resource and environment protection, the festival is unique in it's diversity.

The intriguing lore doesn't stop there - the Salmon Festival also boasts a family fun parade through downtown Klamath to kick off a weekend of traditional stick games, Native gambling and cribbage/dice/card games, a softball tournament, smoked salmon contest and more.

The winners this year are as follows:

Smoke Salmon Contest

1st place- Rose Norris

2nd place- Ira Thompson

3rd place- Lance Bates

Rez Chopped Cooking Contest

1st place- Tori McConnell

Softball Tournament

1st Place- Country Club

2nd place- Wild Rivers