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Sunday, July 31, 2011

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Chainsaw Magic - 6th Year of Incredible Art

Photos and story by Jenny Chissus

Watch the chips fly!!

The Seldovia Craft
Invitational Chainsaw
Carving Competition





What an amazing weekend - "With great talent comes great responsibility!" The carvers this year were asked to produce "interactive art - pieces that could be used in public areas and parks" - and wow, did they live up to that calling!

We now have a fantastic and fun picnic table by Stephen and Marylu, rightly named "The Gathering Place" - which we are certain will become a well-used lunch location for visitors and locals alike!

To fit in the theme of outdoor play, Scott and Scott came together to create a Sea Otter Playground - complete with a slide, a halibut stairway, trapeze, swing and a sea otter climbing wall!

Jimmy Kitchens and Carisa Curtis created a HUGE pirate ship that has become the perfect lounging area for our local teens, as it has two immense decks and plenty of room to just "hang out" in style!

Then we have the regal Eagle by Ben and Silas Firth that stands proud and is a perfect symbol standing for our country and our Alaska location!

Rob and Karen Younkin's hermit crab "M'Shell" draws everyone in for a closer look - and a perfect photo opportunity - she's so endearing with her long antennae and her massive shell!

And, last, but certainly not least is the Seldovia Sea Otter by Derrick Stanton and Matthew Parker - this beautifully carved mascot is a perfect representation of the beloved sea otter of Seldovia!

Below you will see the log in its original state - prior to the carving (with the exception of Scott Thompson - he was so fast - I missed the "before" shot - sorry Scott!) and then you can see the finished product! Quite amazing!

Over the weekend, between Thursday and Sunday, over 700 people came into town on boats and planes (not including the AMHS) and there were 39 private boats that spent at least one night in our harbor (who knows how many folks were on these vessels) and the airport was FULL with private planes who had made the trip to Seldovia for our Memorial Day weekend - we had a very busy and successful weekend!

Thank you to all 7 carvers and their assistants and families for coming to Seldovia and participating in such a great event - you have made Seldovia a true destination for Memorial Day Weekend and a spectacular kick-off to the summer season in Alaska!



Scott Thompson
4th Year in Seldovia Competition

Scott Hanson

6th Year in Seldovia Competition

"4RJ" Sea Otter Playground

1st Place!





Derrick Stanton and Matthew Parker
4th Year in Seldovia Competition

"Seldovia Sea Otter"

2nd Place!



Rob and Karen Younkins
2nd Year in Seldovia Competition

"M'Shell"

3rd Place!





Stephen and Marylu Hopkinson
5th Year in Seldovia Competition

"The Gathering Place"



Ben and Silas Firth
1st Year in Seldovia Competition

"Eagle"





Jimmy Kitchens and Carisa Curtis
4th Year in Seldovia Competition

"Pirate Ship"

The Chainsaw Carving Committee will be making recommendations regarding the placement of these masterpiece carvings, and will be working with the City of Seldovia, Parks & Rec and business owners to find the best locations - so stay tuned. For now, we will enjoy the carvings all at the competition site, as it is a great draw for tourists and individuals to visit and see all the carvings at once!

When I am down at the site, I hear the incoming boats talking over their loud speakers about the competition as the visitors are brought into Seldovia Bay! Many of these folks make a specific effort to walk around to see all the carvings in town - they have become quite an attraction! ➡ Please scroll down to view many great photos of the event!

A Grand Thank You!

To Those Who Made This Event Possible!

AutoWash Express - Financial Donation for Prizes for Carvers

Alaska Tree Tops Lodge - Financial Donation for Prizes for Carvers

Boardwalk Hotel - 3 Nights Lodging for Carver and Family

Byron and Margie McCord - 5 Nights Lodging for Carver and hosting 3 breakfasts for all participants & crew!

City of Seldovia - Assistance with set up of site, and gathering of masterpiece carving logs

Crabpot Grocery - Drinks for the carvers on site, and discount on food purchases for meals

Dick and Sammie Reason - 5 Nights Lodging for Carver and Family

Dimond Center Hotel - Financial Donation for Prizes for Carvers

HEA - Donation of Power Supply for the entire weekend and Financial Donation

Herring Bay Mercantile - Monty & Sherry Hingley - Food preparation and organization for the entire weekend!

Hopkins Brothers Construction - Site assistance and log gathering

John and Cheryl Riggs - Financial Donation for Prizes for Carvers

Kern Devin - Graphic Design for "Watch the Chips Fly" logo

Linwood Bar & Grill - Ice to keep our beverages cold all carving days

Mad Fish Restaurant - Lunch at the site for 30 participants

Mike Webber - 3 Nights Lodging for 2 Carving Teams

Perry's Cafe - Lunch at the site for 30 participants

Seldovia Bay Ferry - Transportation to and from Homer for Chainsaw Carvers and assistants & gear!

Seldovia Bayview Suites - 3 Nights Lodging for Carver and Family

Seldovia Chamber of Commerce - Financial support for evening meals for 3 nights

Seldovia Fuel & Hardware - Oil, gas, use of truck for storage and miscellaneous support for carvers & equipment

Seldovia Harbor Inn - 3 Nights Lodging for Carver and Family

Seldovia Property - Donation of Competition T-shirts for Carvers, Assistants & Crew

Tidepool Cafe - Lunch at the site for 30 participants

Thyme on the Boardwalk - 2 Nights Lodging for Carver and Family

Winter Watch - Donation of Competition Caps for Carvers, Assistants & Crew

Thanks to the following individuals who helped with miscellaneous tasks, serving and prepping food, bringing snacks and drinks, etc to the site for the carvers during the competition:

Darlene Crawford, Jan Wyland, Mary Montgomery, Peggy Cloninger, Valerie Morin

A Special Thanks Goes out to the Chainsaw Carving Committee for all the organization, managing the safety and needs of the carvers on the site and preparation for this event:

Byron and Margie McCord, Mike & Susan Millay, Mike Webber, Monty & Sherry Hingley, Sonny & Jenny Chissus

➡ Enjoy the photos below of the competition - Click to view full size!







Watch the chips fly!!

The Seldovia Craft Invitational Chainsaw Carving Competition

Join us in Seldovia for 3 days where seven teams of Alaska's premier carvers will be competing to create the most beautiful masterpieces for our community! Come by to see the works of art emerge from our local spruce.

Meet the carvers, buy a carving, enjoy a community Fish Fry Potluck and Awards Ceremony! Be a part of the competition as the judging will be done by YOU this year, pick up your ballots at 1pm on Sunday!

Make sure to check our Walking Map located inside our Seldovia Visitor to meet the carvers and see where you can visit over 30 Carving Masterpieces located about town!

Seldovia Memorial Day Weekend May 26 – 29, 2011

Thursday, May 26

Carvers Arrive on the Seldovia Bay Ferry & AMHS
5pm – Log Drawing & Carvers Prep their logs
7-10pm – Optional Carving Time

Friday, May 27

8:30am – Carving
11:00am – Quick Carve #1 – Come watch!
12:30pm – Lunch Break
1:30 – 5pm – Carving
6 – 10pm – Optional Carving Time

Saturday, May 28

8:30am – Carving
11:00am – Quick Carve #2 – Come watch!
12:30pm – Lunch Break
1:30 – 6pm – Carving

7:00pm – Quick Carve #3 – Come watch!
8:30 – 10pm – Optional Carving Time

Sunday, May 29



7:00pm - 8:00pm - Optional Carving Time

8:30 - 10pm - Optional Carving Time

Sunday, May 29

8:30am - Carving

1:00pm - Lunch Break

1 - 2pm - People's Choice - Judging - Come and Vote for your favorite!
2:30pm - Award Ceremony & Thanks to the Carvers!

Thank You

to the following Main Sponsors who make this event possible!



Seldovia Bayview Suites



Seldovia Fuel & Hardware

Seldovia Chamber of Commerce



Hopkins Bros. Construction