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Festivals and celebrations On the long beach peninsula HiGHLIGHT OUTDOORS, CULTURE and LOCAL FOOD

*Long Beach Peninsula Visitors Bureau announces main events for 2012*

**LONG BEACH PENINSULA, Wash.** – March 22, 2012 – From wild mushrooms to cranberries, jazz to chamber music, beach games for dogs to half marathons for chowder, events on Washington’s Long Beach Peninsula have diverse appeal. With over 60 festivals and celebrations taking place on the Long Beach Peninsula in 2012, beach goers will have even more reason to plan a visit to this welcoming coastal destination.

A number of musical events are produced on the Peninsula each year, among them are **Blues and Seafood** (Aug. 17-18) in Ilwaco, **Jazz and Oysters** (Aug. 19) in Ocean Park, **Waikiki Beach Concert Series** (June 9, 23, July 14, 28, Aug. 11 and 25) at Cape Disappointment State Park, and the **Water Music Festival** (Oct. 12-14) – a Peninsula-wide series of concerts that brings chamber music to the lower Columbia River region. The Peninsula’s watery setting combined with small venues (including the 1892 Oysterville church) makes Water Music one of the most enjoyed events of the year.

Many Peninsula events take place outdoors, most on the beach. These include, among others, the kids-only (ages 1 to 14) **Black Lake Fishing Derby** (April 28), **Beach Clean Up Days** (April 21 and July 5), **Surf Perch Derby** (May 14), **Doggie Olympic Games** (June 15-16), **Beach to Chowder 5K/10K Run/Walk** (June 23), **OTC Ilwaco Tuna Classic** (July 28), certified **Discovery Trail Half Marathon** (Sept. 15), and the **Washington State International Kite Festival** (Aug. 20-26). Taking place for a full week starting the third Monday in August, the Kite Festival attracts professional and amateur kite makers and fliers from around the globe, as well as an enthusiastic group of spectators to watch the competitions, learn about kites, enjoy the colorful festivities and the expansive beach.

A handful of events point to the Peninsula’s importance in U.S. history, namely as the Western terminus of the Lewis & Clark Expedition in 1805, as well as a military outpost and guardian of the mouth of the Columbia River. The Columbia Pacific Heritage Museum presents special exhibits throughout the year and spearheads **‘Ocian in View’** – a history lover’s cultural event, which originated during the Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commemoration. It takes place over Veterans’ Day weekend (Nov. 9-10) and focuses on local history. Fun and educational interpretive activities at Cape Disappointment State Park are highlighted by **Graveyard of the Pacific Events** (Oct. 27-28) while **Clamshell Railroad Days** (July 14-15) celebrate the days when travel on the Peninsula was ruled by the tides. Other events tied to history include **Blessing of the Fleet** (May 5) and **Loyalty Days** (May 5-6).

While food is part of many of the events (e.g. Jazz and Oysters, Blues and Seafood), the Peninsula’s cultivated and wild harvests are showcased during **The Cranberrian Fair** (Oct. 13-14), a harvest festival with visits to cranberry bogs and more, and the **Wild Mushroom Celebration** (Oct. 1-Nov. 15), when participating restaurants and lodging showcase their talent and creativity via cooking classes, demonstrations, themed dinners, and more all centered around the abundant, locally harvested wild fungi.

Artists have been drawn to the beauty of the Long Beach Peninsula for more than a century. Fine art events include the **Peninsula Arts Association Spring** **Show** (April 1) and **Fall Show** (Oct. 5-8) and the **Chinook Art Festival** (Sept. 1-3), as well as Ilwaco’s **Art Walks** (June 16, July 21, Aug. 11, Sept. 15). Work of artists and artisans is also shown at Ilwaco’s **Saturday Market at the Port** (May through Sept.).

Independence Day celebrations are big on the Peninsula with Ocean Park’s **Old Fashioned 4th of July Parade** (July 4) and Long Beach’s **Fireworks on the Beach** (July 4), as well as Ilwaco’s **Fireworks at the Port** (July 7), Building anticipation for winter holidays are **Holidays at the Beach** (Nov. 23-25), the **Lighted Boat Parade** **and Crab Pot Christmas Tree Lighting** (Dec. 1), **Tuba Christmas** (Dec. 9) and, on New Year’s Eve, **Fireworks at Midnight over the Ocean** (Dec. 31).

With its mix of sensational restaurants, local seafood, ocean view lodging, unique museums and attractions, lighthouses, fine art galleries, meandering trails, birding spots, and, above all, its long, wide, windswept beach, the Long Beach Peninsula continues to be one of the Northwest’s most enjoyable and refreshing getaway destinations. For event and visitor information, please call the Long Beach Peninsula Visitors Bureau toll free at 1-800-451-2542 or access [www.funbeach.com](http://www.funbeach.com).

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