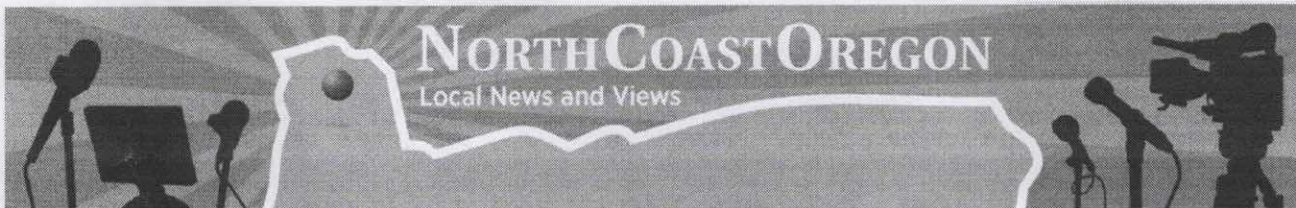


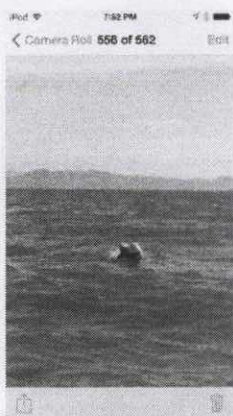
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62 Year Old Realizes Dream Swimming Across Columbia River

September 22, 2013 | Filed under: Local News | Posted by: Carrie Bartoldus



David Mathre began his swim across the Columbia River at Dismal Nitch. Three hours and twenty minutes, and five miles, later he arrived at Alderbrook, east of Astoria.

Every since he was a youngster, David Mathre has dreamed of swimming across the Columbia River. On Thursday, September 19th, at the age of 62, his dream was realized. He entered the Columbia River from the rest stop at Megler Landing (also known as Dismal Nitch) at 8:30 in the morning. He climbed out of the water at 11:50 am at the east end of Astoria, in Alderbrook, just past the small bay east of Pier 39. This was his second attempt, and first success, at swimming the Columbia River. It took him 3 hours and 20 minutes to complete the swim.

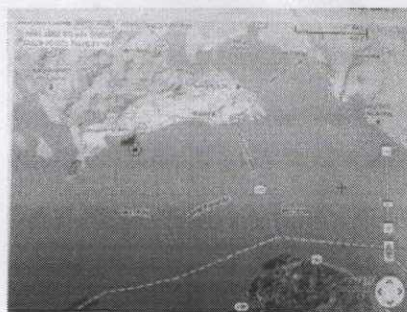
When he was young, David's father told him the story of his two cousins, Bruce and Charles Mathre, swimming across the Youngs Bay when they were young boys. Mathre said, "I researched past articles in the Astorian (Budget) and found that swimming across the Columbia, at Astoria, has been done many times in the past by both men and women (sturdy women) and was a race event in 1934-1936 Regattas."

David is a native Astorian. He attended Astoria High School and graduated in 1969, then went on to Oregon State University and graduated with a BS Pharmacy in 1992. Mathre has worked at the Warrenton Oregon location Fred Meyer pharmacy for 20 years. He

has been married to Electa for 34 years. They have 6 children together and 4 grand-children.

Mathre says has always loved to swim but has had little formal training. He took swimming lessons at Tapiola Pool in the summers as a youth, "because my mother insisted on it, she could not swim herself." He did not swim in high school because there wasn't any swimming programs at that time. "I started swimming seriously at the aquatic center about 5 years ago as a way to stay in shape and keep my health."

David tried crossing the river last year, in September 2012, starting at the Megler Landing in Washington, but only got into the shipping channel on the Oregon side. He said that the tide was ebbing hard and he was unable to reach Astoria. He was being swept toward Warrenton and would not have been able reach land on the Oregon side in a timely manner. Mathre's cousin, Lyle Russel Mathre, accompanied him in a small boat and was able to help him out of the river.



Route of Mathre's Swim across the Columbia River, five miles with drift.

He was exhausted after that swim so started doing research into open water swimming. David said that he searched YouTube and found a program called "Total Immersion". He bought the DVD and improved his swimming style though out the year at the Astoria Aquatic Center, where he has been a regular swimming four to five times a week for many years.

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