



Media Contact:

Jamie Hinz, *For Ivar's*

206-957-8305 | jamie@duopr.com

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Seattle Mayor Proclaims April 1 “Ivar’s Fool’s Day” Or, Should We Say ProCLAMs?

It's no joke: City of Seattle honors popular restaurant chain's mischievous spirit, as inspired by late “flounder” Ivar Haglund

SEATTLE – March 31, 2014 – Seattle seafood chain, Ivar’s, is famous for its practical jokes, publicity stunts and endless puns – so much so, the City of Seattle has officially declared April 1, 2014 to be “Ivar’s Fool’s Day!” The official proCLAMation by Mayor Ed Murray is in recognition of company “flounder” Ivar Haglund’s uncanny knack for a good prank, a tradition the company has carried on for more than 75 years and still maintains as part of its culture today by playing many memorable April 1 gags.

Always devising new attention-getting capers, Ivar Haglund staged a [number of pranks](#) in his time, making him a Seattle legend synonymous with creative mischief. Some of his most famous public stunts include:

- Placing the aquarium’s Patsy the Seal in a baby buggy and strolling him to Frederick & Nelson to visit Santa Claus in 1940;
- Issuing a clam postage stamp in 1960 to combat Maine’s sardine stamp (the clam stamp was later revoked by the U.S. Postal Service);
- Organizing the first International Pacific Free Style Amateur Clam Eating Association Contest in 1948, crowning Seattle cabdriver Richard Watson the champion after gulping down 110 clams in 10 minutes;
- Turning a messy 1945 situation into a slick photo opportunity by wading into a large syrup spill outside the restaurant caused by a derailed train car. With a stack of pancakes in hand and surrounded by a crowd of reporters – Haglund declared, “Eat at Ivar’s. We don’t spare the syrup!”

“Ivar Haglund was quite a character,” said Bob Donegan, president and co-owner of Ivar’s. “He publically carried out these capers, while behind the scenes there was never a dull day at the restaurant. We will certainly continue to entertain our fans and carry on his spirit at every chance we get.”

Specifically for April 1, Ivar's has pulled a number of memorable April Fools' Day pranks over the last few years, including:

- **Chowder Select (2012):** Ivar's developed a groundbreaking new vending machine that delivered customized, mixed-to-order chowders at the touch of a button, 24 hours a day. Named Ivar's Chowder Select^{CM}, the innovative vending kiosk blended the best in consumer customization, high technology and accessibility, ensuring hungry patrons could "hit the spot" any time of day or night with thousands of delicious chowder combinations to choose from. Many people fell for it, hook, line and sinker!



- **New Minimalistic Logo (2011):** Ivar's unveiled a modern new logo created to better capture the millennial essence. Notably, the recognizable cursive "Ivar's" was dropped from the company's identity, leaving behind a clean blue wave simply complemented by the number "1938" to denote Ivar's founding year. This hoax was a nod to another prominent Seattle company's logo change.



- **Insta Ivar's and Tumbler (2010):** Broadcast on social media and in a staff newsletter, Ivar's claimed its hungry customers would no longer have to search for their favorite Ivar's chowder in the refrigerated section at the grocery store with its "Insta Ivar's." This new version of Ivar's classic would be available for purchase in small pouches, and all customers had to do was pour the Insta Ivar's into a Chowder Tumbler with hot water and enjoy.



- **ClamForce Air Charter Service (2007):** An employee memo announced plans to enter the air charter business with the acquisition of a 757 jet. Ivar's claimed that one of Seattle's professional sports teams offered it an old jet, and it just had to accept. Ivar's promised flight attendants would wear chowder hats and offer fresh-baked chocolate chip cookies, fresh clam chowder, garlic fries and more on every ClamWay^{CM} flight.



Outside of April Fool's Day itself, the company has also pulled off plenty of good gags. Most famously, it "discovered" billboards off Duwamish Head near Alki in 2009, purportedly placed by Ivar decades ago as a preemptive future advertising campaign for submarines. Other fishy fun has included the hilarious Dances with Clams and rapping fisherman commercials, the shortest Super Bowl commercial in history, which aired during the 2009 game and consisted of a seagull squawking "Ivar's" for just a half-second. The fun doesn't stop with the public, Ivar's takes its culture very seriously and has pulled numerous April Fool's Day pranks on its employees, including the discovery of a mystery office in Pier 54 and a rare, fresh whale skeleton at Ivar's Salmon House.

To read the full proclamation and learn more about Ivar's pranks and April Fool's stunts throughout the years visit, www.ivars.com/fools

[About Ivar's](#)

Ivar's Seafood Restaurants began on Seattle's waterfront in 1938. Today, there are 24 Ivar's fast casual Seafood Bars and three full-service restaurants: Ivar's Acres of Clams, Ivar's Salmon House and Ivar's Mukilteo Landing. Ivar's Seafood, Soup and Sauce Company markets and sells its award-winning soups, chowders and sauces both nationally and internationally. The company also operates regional stadium concessions including Safeco Field, CenturyLink Field, Alaska Airlines Arena, Husky Stadium and Cheney Stadium. Learn more at www.lvars.com.

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