

Police: Forcible rape reports have increased since 2012

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In our town

Overall, Johnston said, he believes his department has a positive perception in the community, mostly because the officers are involved locally raising their children, coaching sports teams and living in the town they patrol.

"While many departments are currently struggling with their community's perception of them, we have not had this same problem," Johnston wrote in the report. "It is not because we have not had controversy. Instead it is because we have a department that has legitimacy in its community."

Another way APD works to control how it is viewed is by collecting racial profiling data. Since 2009, the department has tallied the perceived race of all people stopped by the police.

Between 2011 and 2014, a total of 15,093 perceived white people have been stopped. In that same time period, 878 Hispanics, 230 Asians, 163 blacks and 16 Native Americans were stopped.

"A lot of people would not suspect we keep that data," Johnston said. "By putting that out front and saying this is what we are doing, it's easy to see the stops are proportional to the representation in the community."

Crime by the numbers

A portion of the annual report shows the number of citations issued each year. A total of 1,291 were issued in 2014, a steady increase from 962 issued in 2011.

The vast majority of citations are for speeding, driving while uninsured and



Astoria Police Officer Andrew Randall wakes up a transient at the Sixth Street Viewing Platform who had previously caused a disturbance with a motorist next to McDonald's in September. Randall cited the man for having an open container of beer, told him he had to leave the riverfront park and offered him a Clatsop Community Action resource book, which was declined.

driving while a license is suspended.

For major crimes, Astoria Police report statics to the Oregon Uniform Crime Reporting System that sends its data to the FBI. According to the statics, serious crimes such as rape, burglary, assault increased in the past few years.

Reports of forcible rape increased from two in 2012 to 14 in 2014. Burglaries went from 145 in 2012 to 149 in 2014. Assaults rose to 177 last year from 144 in 2012. One homicide was reported in 2012, none the following two years.

Other crimes, such as robbery, larceny and motor vehicle theft, saw decreases since 2012.

All police agencies are required to transfer to the National Incident Based Reporting System no later than 2017. Johnston said the



In September, Astoria Police Officer Andrew Randall conducts a sobriety test on a teen who was seen in the area of a suspected house party in Uppertown shortly after midnight. Randall and Officer Cory Gerig stopped several more teenagers walking in the area to ask for identification and see if anyone had been drinking. Four teens ended up being cited for curfew violations.

switch will require officers to report nearly double the details of a crime, which will require a significant increase in data entry time.

Although it will take more staff time to report to NIBRS, Johnston said, it helps that his department is already keeping its own statics.

Astoria crime statistics

Total reported crimes in Astoria were up more than 4 percent in 2014, according to Oregon Uniform Crime Reporting data.

Crime	2012	2013	2014
Homicide	1		
Forcible rape	2	5	14
Robbery	11	1	7
Aggravated assault	19	34	15
Burglary	145	115	149
Larceny	469	419	319
Motor vehicle theft	30	17	21
Simple assault	144	208	177
Arson	2	5	4
Forgery	15	22	17
Fraud	46	83	125
Stolen property		2	
Vandalism	142	192	224
Weapon offenses	12	18	17
Prostitution			2
Sex crime	23	15	29
Drug offenses	127	156	131
Offense against family	13	19	19
Liquor law offense	68	91	119
Disorderly conduct	278	387	346
Trespass	826	810	1022
Runaway	41	34	30
Officer assaulted	8	21	19
Other	87	99	66
Total	2,509	2,753	2,873

Source: Astoria Police Department

Alan Kenaga/EO Media Group

Informing the public

The 2014 annual report was submitted to the Astoria City Council and included in the consent calendar at its Tuesday meeting.

City Councilor Drew Herzig moved the report off of the consent calendar — items previously discussed by the council that have complete approval — to better highlight the importance of the Police Department's report.

Herzig said he hopes to see more public reports from city departments in the future that help engage local citizens with the business of the city. A goal for the City Council this year is to encourage such reports.

"The questions we get from

people are 'What is the city doing with this or that?' To get reports like this specifically saying 'This is how the money is spent' and 'This is our approach,' is to me, part of the function of any municipality to continually inform the public," Herzig said.

Johnston believes the report does a fair job of providing a high-level overview. He welcomes any input on what the public would like to see in future reports.

"It's a great summary of the recent period of time. It is hard to really quantify the work we do and it's nice to put some metrics on that work and show people what we are doing," Johnston said.

School: 'I did not expect to grow as much this year as we did'

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Carper, principal at Long Beach Elementary — this despite the district's decision to move all sixth-grade classes from the elementary schools to Ilwaco Middle School beginning in September 2014. It is possible Long Beach could have as many as 300 students in the next school year, Carper estimates.

The growth likely has many sources: people moving to the area, migrant students passing through, new kids entering the grade levels. The district hasn't been able to tie it to any one thing, but enrollment has been on the rise for the last five years. Before that, Ocean Beach, like many coastal districts in Washington and Oregon, had been on a downward trend for a decade. Long Beach Elementary was renovated and expanded after voters approved a bond issue in 2003; September 2005 marked



Observer file photo

Long Beach Elementary is maxed out in terms of enrollment, even after moving sixth-graders to Ilwaco last September.

the start of classes in the renewed facility, with citizens second-guessing their decision in light of a steadily declining student census.

Now, the enrollment situation has flip-flopped.

"I'm pretty sure we're OK for one more year," Carper said, but added, "These last two months we've done nothing but increase in enrollment and we haven't lost any kids."

Nor has he heard that any families are leaving the area and the district next year. Several students transferred to Long Beach from Ocean Park because their families moved, Carper said.

Committee meets Jan. 29

Risner has tasked a new committee made up of teachers, principals, parents and a school board member with

brainstorming solutions to the overcrowding. The committee will evaluate the pros and cons of all potential solutions and eventually make recommendations to Risner and the board. Their first meeting is scheduled for 4:30 p.m. Jan. 29 at the District Office in Long Beach.

This type of committee has been formed before to address overcrowding at Long Beach Elementary. The solution that time was to install a portable at the school.

"It helped for that year," Carper said.

The situation this year would have been even more difficult if the sixth-grade classes hadn't left for the Middle School.

"Thank goodness we did that," Carper said. "There's just no place for two more classrooms right now."

After the sixth-grade students left, Long Beach teachers regained the use of their staff room which had dou-

bled as a classroom in prior years, and the school's special education classes, forced into one classroom last year, have two classrooms again.

But these gains at Long Beach could be short-lived if enrollment continues to soar.

Currently, Long Beach's kindergarten through third grade classes are overloaded, meaning the number of students per teacher per class exceeds what is stipulated in the District's contract. Under the contract, kindergarten through third grade classes should only have 23 students per teacher. Right now, kindergarten has a total 50 students, or 25 students per teacher. Third grade has a total of 49 students, or approximately 24 students per teacher.

Though the overloading hasn't reached drastic proportions, yet, and teachers are compensated for the increase, Carper said, "If enrollment does increase and we do

nothing, I'm going to have to move somebody again into the staff room or take away space from special education and neither is good."

Great seeing growth

Crowding aside, the growth at Long Beach is a great thing, Risner said. She is confident the committee will come up with solutions.

"I think that for our district, the amount of community support and business support has been evident," she said. "I feel like we're creative and innovative enough. I don't feel there'd be anything we'd come up with that wouldn't be doable within reason."

And, Carper said, "The thing is, this growth has to stop. It can't go on forever... Who's to say? We might have 10 kids move out unexpectedly."

Still, he added, "I did not expect to grow as much this year as we did."

Dog show: This will be Westminster's 139th show

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losing gracefully," she says.

More than 2,700 dogs are slated to compete in the traditional main event — breed judging — at Westminster's 139th annual show Feb. 16 and 17. Making their first appearances are the coton de tular (pronounced koh-TOHN' du TOO'-lay-ahr), an easygoing companion breed known as the "royal dog of Madagascar," and the wire-haired vizsla (pronounced VEEZ'-shlah), a stalwart Hungarian hunting dog. It's related to the more widely known vizsla.

There are only about 2,000 wirehaired vizslas worldwide, said owner Anton Sagh, whose dog Falko is entered at Westminster.

"That's why I'm trying to promote the breed," said Sagh, a Hungarian-Canadian of the Montreal suburb of Laval.

Meanwhile, the Feb. 14 agility contest will feature 330 contestants, up from 225 in last year's debut.

After knee surgery ended her marathon running, Yonda tried dog agility to stay active. It suits both her and her dog,



AP Photo/Bebeto Matthews

Lynus, a border collie owned by Authur and Janyce Selkin, from Rhinebeck, N.Y., runs an agility trailer, during a press preview for the 139th Annual Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, Wednesday.

Maggie, a poodle that eagerly leaped jumps and pranced around poles in a demonstration Wednesday.

"It's a very intricate,

complex sport," said Yonda, of Ridgefield, Connecticut. "We're learning all the time."

Organizers noted that for the first time, the agility com-

petition will coincide with the American Kennel Club's noncompetitive "Meet the Breeds" event, previously held separately in the fall.

Dispute: Filing is necessary to preserve Marquis' appeal rights

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standard of justice than Municipal Court.

Marquis said Wednesday he would still likely appeal a court ruling that recognized Astoria's ability to assign the DUII cases to Municipal Court. But the district attorney suspects the legal challenge to end soon.

Marquis said the state Attorney General's office, which is representing him against the city, has until a deadline today to ask the Oregon Supreme Court to review an Oregon Court of Appeals ruling last year in favor of Astoria.

The filing, which is also being backed financially by the Oregon District Attorneys Association, is necessary to preserve Marquis' appeal rights.

But Marquis has said he has no interest in prolonging the legal challenge. The Supreme Court could also decide that the legal fight is moot given the City Council's vote.

Other cities in Clatsop County direct DUII cases to Marquis for prosecution in state Circuit Court as Astoria has long used its discretion under the law to assign misdemeanor drunken-driving cases to Municipal Court.

"I have no interest in pursuing this litigation — both because of the cost to both my office, to the city, to the divisiveness that this has caused — once there is no question that this issue is resolved," Marquis said.



Josh Marquis