

Rogers

Continued from Page 1B

Rogers is planning on attending George Fox in the fall with a goal of getting a bachelor's degree in nursing, and he plans on running in track and field.

"Athletics are very much part of his personality and his life," Hayden said. "If he's not on the track, he's definitely doing some strength training and working on that. He will be a very successful student athlete in college."

While Rogers has spent a lot of the past few years outside of town, his track and field exploits – and his involvement in church – have helped connect him to the Silverton community.

"He's positive, and gosh, I don't think I've ever heard him say anything negative," Silverton coach Erik Cross said. "He's just a great guy. I think that's really helpful."

Though Rogers has never had any problems running in four events in nearly every meet in which he has competed, he elected to take a weight training class for the first time in his life this year.

He's always responded well when new physical challenges have been thrown at him.

His weight training has already paid off as he has set a personal record in the open 100 of 11.37 seconds.

"We've been careful with him as far as training to keep him healthy at the end of the season even if we're sacrificing some speed," Cross said. "He's kind of just been up for whenever."

Rogers got his start in the hurdles as a freshman because an assistant coach who was coaching the event was also coaching him in JV soccer.

He found out quickly that he was good at the hurdles.

Well, it was a combination of that and the first event he chose, the high jump, wasn't working well for him physically.

"I just kind of stopped because it was my first year and I started getting shin splints really bad," Rogers said. "They

"Athletics are very much part of his personality and his life. If he's not on the track, he's definitely doing some strength training and working on that."

MARY HAYDEN
SILVERTON SPRINT COACH

were just super jarring along with the hurdles. I liked it, and I did long jump, too, but I just slowly started transitioning to like hurdle events and sprints."

The truth is that Rogers has the athletic ability to do any event he wants.

Though he's known as a hurdler, he's also the fastest sprinter Silverton has.

"He's a hurdler. He has definitely fast legs," said senior sprinter Lance Cline. "Honestly him and (Austin) Haskett both if they wanted to could pick any event and do well at it."

There's a reason Rogers has earned a reputation in the hurdles.

He won the Mid-Willamette championship in the 110 hurdles the past two seasons, and placed sixth in the state in the 110 hurdles as a sophomore.

But it was his performance at the 5A state meet as a junior that really stood out.

He placed second in the 110 hurdles with a personal record of 14.85 seconds and followed that with a seventh place finish in the 300 hurdles with another personal record of 40.23 seconds.

"It just makes me excited for this year because I know that this year, I have worked a lot more in the offseason this year," Rogers said.

"I knew I wanted to do stuff in the off-season more than previous years because this is my last year and I just had fun with it."

bpoehler@StatesmanJournal.com or Twitter.com/bpoehler

Boys track and field previews

Greater Valley Conference: West Salem is the defending district champion and returns a lot of components from its team that placed fifth in the state last year. The Titans return state pole vault champion Micah Masei, two-time state cross country champion Ahmed Muhumed, state placing relay runners in Jacob Miller and Brennen LeBel, and have a good group of athletes including Cole Rummill, Keonte McMurrin and Brenden Cassanova who make the Titans the team to beat in the league again.

McKay has some impressive athletes in district champion sprinter Israel Garza, Avori Miranda, Leo Silva, Zach Hammack and Shaton Daniels and will challenge for a top three spot in the district. McNary sprinter Brendan Van Voorhis was a state placer in the 400 last year and has the potential to win a state championship.

Sprague senior Austin Kleinman was a state placer in the shot put and discus last year and will contend at the state level, as will South Salem junior Alex Sanchez, the district champion in the shot put last season. North Salem has some upperclassmen who will contend for district champions in Adam Foreman, Quille Bonner, Michael Bolen and Jason Backer and will contend to finish in the top half of the league.

Mid-Willamette Conference: Lebanon will be tough to beat this year, but Silverton has the best shot at it. The Foxes return a solid senior class including state champion high jumper Coleton Myers and state runner-up hurdler Brock Rogers. Dallas returns district pole vault champion Jacob Deming.

Oregon West Conference: Cascade has a deep team that should challenge Newport for the district championship. The Cougars return district champion hurdler Brandon Martin. Stayton returns district champion distance runner Casey Pugh.

PacWest Conference: Jefferson, last year's district champion, is a force in the distance events behind brothers Hassan, Suleiman, Abdi and Ahmed Ibrahim. But Blanchet is the favorite in the conference with a strong group of seniors in Kevin McCarthy, Jared Myers, Patrick Tuttle, Zion Steiner and Drew Spear. Scio has some strong athletes in state placing thrower Wyatt Means and Colby Borresen, who was on the team's state championship 400 relay team.

West Valley League: Amity has the athletes to knock Taft off its perch as district champion including Jaycen Nelson, Curtis Turnidge, Will Keen, Jonathan Mather, Tyler Parr, Robbie Morrison and Benjamin Hayes.

Tri-River Conference: Regis is the defending state champion, returns three legs of its state championship winning 1,600 relay in Brendon Woodcock, Eric Gustin and Ethan Lulay along with state runner-up high jumper Josh Mumej and will contend for a state championship again. Kennedy has three event state runner up senior Bishop Mitchell along with experienced athletes in Noe Jines, Brandon Rendon, Christian Reyes, Jeremy Kliever, Lewis Butsch and Nick Perez and will be a contender at the district and state levels.

Casco League: Crosshill Christian has a good group of athletes and should be competitive.

Girls track and field previews

Greater Valley Conference: West Salem continued its domination of the conference last season and has the athletes to improve on its eighth place state meet finish. The Titans return state meet athletes in Keira McCarrell, Ella McCrae, Taylor McCarrell, Lucy Jolivet, Ayle Armstrong, Elisabeth Goodrich and Cari McCrae and have an impressive group of freshmen who have the potential to take the team to new heights.

North Salem returns defending 200 meter dash state champion Rebekah Miller, a sophomore, along with district championship contenders in Madison Willhoft, Aaiyah Fitzke, Manya Mendrin and Ashley Clark and will contend for a top three finish in the league again. Sprague will be strong in the distance races with a healthy Ginger Murnieks, the district cross country champion in the fall, and Kaylee Mitchell, a state champion in the 400 relay and state runner up in the 800 and 1,500 at Astoria last season.

McKay has a small team including Cecilia Munoz, Raquel Williams, Steffani Rodriguez, Kaitlyn Green and Marquita Ignacio Ritchey, but should improve on its fifth place finish in the conference of last season.

Mid-Willamette Conference: Silverton has a strong team that will challenge for the district championship with state qualifiers in Madi Arrington, Desiree Sinn and Jori Paradis.

Oregon West Conference: Cascade is the favorite to defend its district team champion with a group including state champion pole vaulter Amanda Wiebenga and district champions Elisa Kanoff and Kalulu Ngaida.

PacWest Conference: Blanchet, which has won the past seven district championships, has the athletes to continue its dominance of the conference with athletes like state medalist Leilani Salang, Sophia Heyman, Emily Collier, Trinity Phipps, Bailey Hittner and freshman Shelby Gwyn. Scio returns state placers in Olivia Bennett and Katelyn Gray.

West Valley League: Amity is the defending district champions and has a big group of athletes, including a huge point scorer in junior Amy Kraemer, the defending state champion in the 100 hurdles and triple jump. Santiam Christian returns two-time state champion sprinter Rebeka Preston.

Tri-River Conference: Kennedy has a solid group of state placers in Kaylin Cantu, Alejandra Lopez, Abby Frey, Sarah Therkelsen and Alyssa Eklund, but with state favorite East Linn in the league has a challenge.

Casco League: Willamette Valley Christian returns the first state champion in the school's history in senior Sarah Falardeau.



ANNA REED / STATESMAN JOURNAL

Silverton senior Brock Rogers is planning on attending George Fox in the fall.

Class

Continued from Page 1B

are those at the current 4A level like Stayton and Cascade.

In the five classification draft released by the committee, Cascade (with an adjusted 683 students) and Stayton (608) would be in the same league as current 5A powers Silverton (1,149) and Wilsonville (1,077) and schools approved to

play down a class in North Salem (1,404) and Woodburn (1,256).

That large of a discrepancy in sizes of schools could be catastrophic for rural schools like Cascade and Stayton.

"It doesn't sit well, that's for sure," said Shryock, Stayton's girls basketball coach who previously coached boys basketball at Silverton and McKay. "And I was at Silverton for many years and Silverton and Stayton are not the same schools. They're both great schools, but they're not alike schools."

"It will be very detrimental. There's

20, maybe 25 schools at the 4A level that this is devastating for."

Oregon's high schools expanded to six classifications from its long-time standard of four classes starting with the 2006-07 school year.

There are still two models for the 5A classification in the latest draft.

One has Salem-Keizer schools McKay, McNary, South Salem, Sprague and West Salem in a nine-team league with Bend, Mountain View, Summit and West Albany.

The other has McKay, McNary, South

Salem, Sprague and West Salem in a seven-team league with McMinnville and West Albany.

The next meeting of the committee is at 1 p.m. April 10 at the Wilsonville Holiday Inn.

It will make its final recommendation for classification for the 2018-2022 time block to the OSAA Executive Board at the Oct. 16 Special Classification and Districting meeting.

bpoehler@StatesmanJournal.com or Twitter.com/bpoehler

Oregon unemployment rate hits record low

LAUREN E HERNANDEZ
STATESMAN JOURNAL

Oregon has reached its lowest unemployment rate in four decades.

Job growth in a number of Oregon's industries has driven the state's unemployment rate down to 4.0 percent, the lowest unemployment rate since comparable records began in 1976.

"Oregon's unemployment rate is typically higher than the United States' rate, but Oregon has been adding jobs faster than the United States since 2013," said Nick Beleiciks, a state employment economist with the Oregon Employment Department. "There is not any one reason for the growth, but one thing that may be especially relevant now is that Oregon is a very attractive state."

The state records the second-highest percentage of inbound moves in the country, with one of the primary reasons

for moving being employment.

Since 1995, the Oregon labor force has grown from 1.7 million to 2.0 million today, according to the Oregon Employment Department. In the past year, payroll employment grew by 39,000 jobs, or 2 percent. That number is just below the growth rate which has hovered near or below 3 percent through the past four years. The department recorded 82,000 unemployed Oregonians as of February this year — the lowest number since August 1995.

Oregon's unemployment rate was 5.3 percent in February of 2016 and dropped to 4.3 percent in January of 2017 before decreasing to 4.0 percent in February.

Beleiciks said Oregon's 9.2 percent underutilization rate, which refers to those who are working part-time but would like to work full-time, dropped from 10.4 percent since February of last year. The United States underutilization

rate, called U-6, also records 9.2 percent nationally.

Job growth following Great Recession

"Oregon's historic jobs gains over the last few months mean Oregonians in every corner of the state are closer to gaining the opportunities they need to thrive," Oregon Gov. Kate Brown said. "We must continue this progress by creating good jobs in the places that need them most."

Oregon's 2.2 percent job growth rate over the past 12 months is faster than the national growth rate of 1.6 percent, Beleiciks said.

He credits that growth to two sectors that surged following a slow recovery process after the Great Recession — the construction industry and broader financial activities, specifically the real

estate market.

Construction companies added 900 jobs in February following a surge of 2,500 jobs in January. The state's construction industry has grown 10 percent since February 2016, which accounted for 8,900 jobs more jobs. The real estate market followed that trend and grew by 3.8 percent since last year.

Another industry that performed off trend compared with last year's numbers is the broader manufacturing industry, which recorded a boost of 1,300 jobs last month.

The manufacturing industry is recovering following last year's cut of 1,500 jobs, which were mostly in the computer and semiconductor sectors.

"There really isn't a way to pinpoint where the growth was in manufacturing, but it had been doing pretty well up until last year with those job losses," Beleiciks said.

Republicans want budget passed, education prioritized

NATALIE PATE
STATESMAN JOURNAL

Is school funding being prioritized in the Oregon State Legislature?

Senate Republicans argue it isn't being prioritized enough — and they have a plan to fix that.

A Senate Republican-sponsored "Education First" package had its first public hearing in the Senate Education Committee last week.

Senate Joint Resolutions 18 and 20 seek to prioritize education funding in the state budget and hold elected officials accountable for the expediency of the budget.

"We must pass these resolutions to put an end to the legislature holding Oregon classrooms hostage during budget negotiations," Senate Republican Leader Ted Ferrioli (R-John Day) said while presenting the resolutions to the committee March 21.

Senate Joint Resolution 20 proposes an amendment to the Oregon Constitution that would require the legislature to appropriate funds for Oregon's K-12 system by the 65th day of the regular session in odd-numbered years.

The resolution would also prohibit legislators from being compensated starting on the 66th day if the appropriation is not passed. Ferrioli said the com-

pensation cut-off "certainly gets the attention of the legislature."

This cut-off would apply to compensation of any value, he said, referring not just to salary, but benefits as well.

The other proposal, Senate Joint Resolution 18, proposes another amendment to the Oregon Constitution that would require the legislature to fund K-12 education before passing any other appropriations for any other state agency.

Ferrioli said K-12 funding is a top priority for Oregon voters and he believes these resolutions reflect the public's desires. The idea behind the resolutions has been in the works and presented for nearly 10 years, started, he said, by Sena-

tor Jason Atkins.

Ferrioli added school boards cannot accurately pass their budgets until the state finalizes its budget.

Senator Mark Hass (D-Beaverton) said he could argue both sides of the resolution. However, he brought up the concern that the May economic forecast could negatively impact education if the legislature has to pass a budget without that information.

The legislature has been able to complete its budget before the proposed deadline in most recent sessions, including in 2015 when the legislature passed the K-12 education budget in the shortest time in more than 20 years.