

# Veteran: He's the first National Guardsman to receive the Silver Star since World War II

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nonprofit, nonpartisan organization focused on helping veterans speak out on national issues, including environmental concerns.

Through Vet Voice, Matthew Zedwick and five other veterans took a trip to Washington, D.C., in mid-April to meet with Oregon senators and discuss re-authorizing the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

The fund, signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson 50 years ago, expires in September. Congress began considering renewing the fund on Earth Day, April 22.

It benefits parks and monuments across the country, including in Clatsop County. The Jewell Meadows Wildlife Area was formed as part of the fund. Other local beneficiaries are Les Shirley Park in Cannon Beach, city park restrooms and Broadway Park improvements in Seaside, ballfields in Astoria and restroom developments at the Hammond Mooring Basin.

The LWCF is funded by a portion of revenues from offshore oil and gas royalties.

"The senators thought it was incredible a veteran's organization was in support of the LWCF. That was really a surprise to them," Zedwick said. "They really enjoyed having the lands and parks as a part of healing and taking care of our troops."

## Healing in the outdoors

Rick Hegdahl, the Pacific Northwest director for the Vet



**Matthew Zedwick stands at Tapiola Park in Astoria. The park received a nearly \$4,000 grant from the Land and Water Conservation Fund in 1972 for park improvements.**

Voice Foundation, said his organization looks at environmental issues such as the LWCF from a veteran's point of view.

Protecting the outdoors for returning veterans is a new take on supporting the troops, he said. "Veterans return from war and find a lot of healing from spending time outdoors," Hegdahl said.

One of the first things Zedwick did when he returned from his deployment in Iraq, was take an outdoor excursion with his cousin to Smith Rock, where they hiked and climbed together.

Being outdoors provided Zedwick an opportunity to re-establish and heal. Such experiences are critical for veter-

ans, Zedwick said, especially for those who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder.

Sometimes, he said, what soldiers need is to break away from society, and get outdoors where they can feel at peace with themselves and share their thoughts and experiences.

"It meant the world to me," Zedwick said.

## 'Doing my job'

Zedwick joined the Oregon Army National Guard in 1998 as a senior in high school in Corvallis. His time in the National Guard has taken him to Germany, Mongolia and around Oregon to help fight forest fires. On June 13, 2004, in Iraq,

Zedwick and other members of the infantry were patrolling a main supply route north of Baghdad when they approached a Land Rover SUV with a bomb planted in it. The SUV exploded and Zedwick threw himself over his squad leader, saving the man's life.

"I injured myself and continued to give first aid to my buddies, helped evacuate them and went back to pulling security and doing my job," he said.

His actions that day earned him the Silver Star, the third-highest military medal for valor. He became the first National Guardsman to receive the Silver Star since World War II. At the time, Zedwick re-



**Submitted Photo — Matthew Zedwick**  
**Sen. Jeff Merkley, signs a poster to support the Land and Water Conservation Fund while Rick Hegdahl, the Pacific Northwest director for Vet Voice Foundation, left, and Matthew Zedwick watch.**

ceived recognition for the honor by being featured in the "America's Army" video game. His likeness was also depicted on an action figure as part of the campaign for the video game.

In 2008, Zedwick and his wife appeared on the TV show "Deal or No Deal," and won \$227,000.

## Breaking the ice

While meeting with Sens. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., Jeff Merkley, D-Ore., Patty Murray, D-Wash., and other lawmakers in D.C., Zedwick broke the ice by sharing another interesting fact about his life.

He told the senators about his 1-year-old pet bobcat, Elliot. Zedwick and his wife, a veterinarian, adopted the 35-pound, female bobcat from outside of Missoula, Mont., and raised it from when it was 3 weeks old. Bobcats are legally bred in Montana and are allowed as pets in Oregon.

"We would stop talking about politics and talked about the bobcat," he said.

Zedwick went on the D.C. trip with veterans from Califor-

nia, New Mexico, Colorado and Washington.

All indications are the LWCF will be reinstated with bipartisan backing, but the veteran group still wanted to add their voice in support of the fund, and meet with lawmakers face-to-face.

"The folks we took were thrilled to be there and Matt was a joy to be around," Hegdahl said.

The LWCF is more than just for conservation, Zedwick said, it is also important for hunting and fishing lands found around Astoria, where the Zedwicks plan to raise a family.

"This will always be our home," Zedwick, who moved to Astoria in 2010, said. "We plan on living in Astoria the rest of our lives."

Zedwick and his wife are expecting their first child, a boy, on Sept. 10, a day before Patriot Day.

Taking his son camping and fishing on the lands he served to protect is an encouraging thought for Zedwick.

"I want to share those experiences that I had with him. I want him to be able to have something to pass on to his kids," Zedwick said

# Cruise: 20 ships are scheduled to visit in 2016

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Princess, used in the "Love Boat" television series. Lawes added his first trip to Astoria as a cruise ship captain was on the Sea Princess in the mid-1990s.

He is supported on the bridge by 11 other navigational staff split up on a watch system, working four hours on, eight hours off.

On the 8 a.m. to noon shift Thursday was 3rd Officer Dennis Cernakovs, from Latvia, keeping watch.

"Passengers are our priority, to keep them safe," Cernakovs said, keeping watch over passengers going up and down the gangway. About 50 to 60 able-bodied seaman work on the decks of the vessel, he added, while six or so officers stay on the bridge at all times.

## A floating city

Built by Fincantieri-Cantieri Navali Italiani in Monfalcone, Italy, the Crown Princess is 952 feet long, 195 feet wide and covers 19 decks in total. It's a mostly self-contained resort, with more than 1,500 cabins between Decks 8 and 14.

In the bottommost decks are crew quarters, with a medical center on the fourth.

Passengers enter the Crown Princess through the fifth deck into the Piazza, an opulent, three-story lobby reminiscent of a grand hotel, aside from sound of an idling engine in background.

Spread across the ship are nine restaurants, cafes and other dining options, from steak and seafood to pizza and ice cream. For entertainment, it has four pools; seven spas; age-specif-



**JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian**  
**While it was moored at the Port of Astoria, a fishing vessel and carrier vessel pass by the 952-foot-long Crown Princess.**

ic children's areas for toddlers to teens; eight showrooms and clubs, including a wine bar and a cigar bar; a casino; fitness studios, jogging tracks and a mini golf course; a movie theater; art galleries; roaming photographers and a photo studio; and a wedding chapel.

## Stopover

The Crown Princess, on its transition between its central American and Alaskan cruise markets, started its most recent tour in Los Angeles April 25, stopping in San Francisco before cruising to Astoria Thursday. It left Thursday night for Canada, stopping in Victoria and finishing the weeklong tour off Saturday in Vancouver, British Columbia.

"We will have two weeks of dry dock in Victoria," Hotel General Manager Claudio Mazzoni said. Before its most recent cruise, the Crown Princess, too big for the Panama Canal, took a 45-day trip from Fort Lauderdale, Fla., around Cape Horn on the southern tip of the Americas and north to Los Angeles.

There are 20 to 25 new cruise ships going into the Mediterranean and Caribbean, Cruise Marketing Manager Bruce Conner of Sundial Travel said April 21 during a cruise ship report to the Port of Astoria Commission, which means other ships are being pushed into the Pacific Ocean market.

In his formula for revenue from the cruise ships, taken from Cruise Lines International Asso-

ciation, Conner assumes about 80 percent of passengers leave the ship, each couple spending \$125, translated to about \$150,000 for the 3,000 passengers who visited Astoria Thursday.

"With this season, they should see, at the minimum, 1,500 cruise guests visiting Seaside and Cannon Beach," Conner said, adding the passengers come for the entire region, not just Astoria.

While only 17 more ships are coming to Astoria this year, he said, about 20 are already scheduled for 2016. As of this morning, the Crown Princess was pulling into Victoria, while the Seven Seas Navigator, operated by Regent Seven Seas Cruises, is scheduled to pull into Astoria Sunday.

# King: She describes herself as a 'radio cowgirl'

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And there is the late Leona Woods Marshall Libby, a physicist who worked on Hanford's B Reactor, the first large-scale nuclear reactor that was part of the Manhattan Project to build the atomic bomb. The only woman at the B Reactor at the time, she had her own tiny bathroom.

The "Daughters of Hanford" project uses photography, a geo-mapping application and art to complement the women's histories.

King, 36, a jumble of demonstrative energy, described herself as a "radio cowgirl" who is comfortable "on a back of a horse, or up a dirt road, or in a pickup." She said her background — she is from Roy, Wash., a small, rural city near Tacoma — has helped her connect during interviews with rural people in the Mid-Columbia



**JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian**  
**Anna King, a Richland, Wash.-based journalist who covers the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, speaks at the Columbia Forum Thursday.**

region who can be reluctant to speak with the news media.

Reporting on Hanford can be frustrating. Access to the 586-square mile site in the desert is restricted — she recently took a public tour to gather material

— and information often must be extracted from layers of U.S. Department of Energy bureaucracy.

"If we can't figure out what's going on; if they won't release documents; if we can't ask good questions and get good answers,"

King said, "that's a problem."

The cleanup on Hanford has been contentious. On Tuesday, for example, U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., said the Department of Energy has been mismanaging the cleanup for three decades. In a letter to the department's inspector general, the senator asked for an examination of what he called wasteful contracting practices at a waste treatment plant that is behind schedule and over budget.

King believes Hanford is too important to ignore.

"I think the big thing is, we can't ignore it. We can't hide our head in the sand," she said. "We have to face it. It's hard. It's tough. It's not fun. It's not sexy."

"Nuclear cleanup is kind of dirty, gross work. But we have to do it. It was the legacy that we were handed, and who knows how our history would have been different without it."

# Race: Both candidates have strong ties to schools, community

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"A vote for Jan Horning will give the majority to the progressive board members," the site reads. "A vote for her opponent will block any possibility of student health services. Restore a progressive majority to the Astoria School Board."

According to the Clatsop County Clerk and Elections Department, Rickenbach is a registered Republican.

## Rickenbach

Rickenbach, 41, a stay-at-home mom who's been living in the district since 1997 and whose husband, Jared, runs Rickenbach Construction, said she's been involved in the district ever since her kids started school. She has three children in the district and a fourth starting kindergarten next year. She has a degree in health science from Ricks College (now Brigham Young University — Idaho). She administers a "Rickenbach for ASD School Board" Facebook page.

She helps her husband's company and volunteers with numerous entities, including the Boy Scouts of America, the School District's budget committee, as a teaching aide at her children's schools, mentoring students at AHS, helping coach the Astoria Middle School track team, Astor Parents Club and through the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Rickenbach said she has no major issues or an agenda. She said she believes the district has been addressing issues, such as the achievement gap facing low-income and Hispanic students through efforts to bring math tutors for Hispanic students to Emerald Heights, and through the health and wellness district and board goal established after the health center was voted down.

The goal has led to counselors from Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare meeting with existing clients in schools. Rickenbach said she is excited by that, but would like to see more access for other mental health providers.

## Horning

Horning, 56, has lived in the Olney neighborhood since 1991; has two sons who graduated in 2005 and 2006 from AHS; and is married to David Horning, a project supervisor for the Oregon Department of Forestry. She provides on-call clerical help for Clatsop Community College, where she attended school; registration services for patients for the emergency room and urgent care clinic at Columbia Memorial Hospital; special education teaching assistance for Northwest Regional Education Service District; and substitute teaching. She previously taught at Cannon Beach Preschool and was secretary at AMS from 2001 to 2012.

Horning said her involvement with school groups has waned since her children graduated, but she's still involved with American Association of University Women. She served on the Olney School Board in the mid-1990s, the district's Parent Teacher Association, the Boy Scouts and other groups.

Horning, who also runs a Facebook page for her campaign, said she'd like to see the return of librarians and more community involvement in schools, such as literacy nights for children and their parents to share their writing. Her campaign fliers also focus on improving the graduation rate, communication with the community, promoting science, technology, engineering and mathematics education; starting an anti-bullying campaign; and resuming dialogue on a school-based health center.

Horning said she ran for Position 5 not to oppose Rickenbach, but because it's only a two-year unexpired term, allowing Horning to gauge her effectiveness at working with the school board.

During her time on Olney's School Board, Horning said she clashed with parents over her support of adding a school counselor students could meet with, because of similar fears over loss of parental control.

"It just didn't make sense to me that they would deny that right to a child," Horning said. "I guess I'm more about children's rights than about parent's rights."