

'Mother of All Relays' arrives this weekend

Relay races to finish on Seaside beach, followed by big bash

By KATHERINE LACAZE
EO Media Group

SEASIDE — Make way for the runners.

Saturday marks the 27th year Hood to Coast concludes its annual relay race — touted as the “Mother of All Relays” — on Seaside’s beach.

Signs of the impending grand finale, when thousands of runners will flood the city for a day, can be spotted around town. The foundation for a temporary pedestrian bridge spanning U.S. Highway 101 to 14th Avenue is set up. Tents and other infrastructure are popping up on the beach this week, as well.

The approximately 198-mile Hood to Coast Relay, founded in 1982, starts at 5 a.m. Friday at Timberline Lodge near Mount Hood; the Portland to Coast Walk Relay, added in 1991, starts that day, as well.

The teams switch participants every few miles until reaching the beach just north of the Turnaround.

The 36 legs vary in length from about 3.5 to 7.75 miles, with each runner completing at least three of the 36.

Once in Seaside, the race course takes runners from Lewis and Clark Road to North Wahanna Road, west on 12th Avenue, through the parking lot by the Seaside Cinema, where they will cross U.S. Highway 101 before continuing west on 14th Avenue, to North Holladay Drive, back to 12th Avenue and then south on the Prom.

The Hood to Coast Relay team limit is filled for the 24th consecutive year with 1,050 teams of eight to 12 runners each. According to organizers, there will be about 12,600 runners and 3,600 volunteers participating in this year’s event.

Teams start trickling into Seaside Saturday, where the beach will be set up for the finale party and awards ceremony.



Crews were busy Tuesday afternoon setting up the beach, just north of the Seaside Turnaround, for the Hood to Coast and Portland to Coast Relays’ “finish party” Saturday. Runners will flow in throughout the day and be treated to live music, food, drinks, vendors and a party-like atmosphere.



The Nike Wings, a team from Heidelberg, Germany competing in the Male Open division of the Hood to Coast Relay in 2014.

Wine Garden

The Seaside Chamber of Commerce Beer and Wine Garden, a fundraiser for the organization run by about 100 volunteers, opens at 11 a.m.

Doug Barker, chamber events coordinator, said the organization has put on the beer and wine garden for about 20 years.

In addition to paying for all expenses — including the tent, security, portable toilets and libations — the chamber pays a percentage of revenue to Hood to Coast.

The rest goes to the chamber and helps keep down membership dues, Barker said.

Last year, the organization also received tips, which were later donated to the South Clatsop County Food Bank, as requested from volunteers. They plan to do that again this year, he said.

Part of the success of the wine and beer garden is dependent on weather. Rain is in the forecast for Saturday, Barker said, and they worry runners won’t linger and enjoy drinks, as they do “when the weather is nice and warm.”

Hood to Coast also features a fundraiser for the Providence Cancer Center,

which has been the event’s exclusive charity partner since 2013. Participants are being challenged to donate at least \$1 for each mile they walk or run, and, so far, about \$453,000 has been raised.

The Brian O’Dell Band performs Saturday from 12:45 to 3:45 p.m. and Radical Revolution takes the stage from 6:45 to 11 p.m. for the finale party. Award ceremonies are throughout the day Saturday and Sunday.

Congestion

Heavy traffic and parking congestion are issues associated with the Hood to Coast relays. Event organizers designate a few parking spots for teams, including the Seaside High School parking lot, North Coast Family Fellowship Church parking lot and the public parking lot west of the Seaside Civic and Convention Center. The teams and their vehicles don’t always stick to those areas, however.

At a City Council meeting Monday, Councilor Randy Frank, who owns Norma’s Seafood and Steak downtown, spoke of numerous Seaside residents’ plans to head out of town this weekend, so as not to get caught up in the mayhem and gridlocked traffic.

Learn more at www.hoodtoastray.com.

Port Commission, executive director in familiar fight over micromanagement

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

The term “micromanagement,” used several times over the years to describe the Port of Astoria Commission meddling in the daily duties of the agency’s staff, came up again at Tuesday’s special meeting.

Commissioner Bill Hunsinger made his own agenda item Tuesday out of the Port’s efforts to hire several new employees, one of the main duties of Executive Director Jim Knight.

“I don’t think we can just go out and hire these people,” Hunsinger said, bringing up about six positions the Port has advertised, including a mechanic, a property manager, a person working on leases and maintenance people.

Commissioner James Campbell recommended the Port Commission discuss the matter at its next meeting Tuesday. Commissioner Stephen Fulton said he needs paperwork on the hires before discussing the issue, adding maybe the Port could put a hold on the hires until Tuesday.

The issue was a surprise, said Knight, and one candidate has already accepted a position.

“The positions were identified in an approved budget,” Knight said. The Port Commission’s job is to empower the director to hire people, said Commissioner Robert Mushen, not to micromanage the Port.

Andrew Bornstein, co-owner of Bornstein Seafoods, sat through the meet-

ing, waiting for public comment to share his opinion on the discussion over hirings.

In his eight years of coming to Port meetings, Bornstein said, he has worked with seven different directors.

“Jim, in my opinion, is the best executive director you’ve had in the last seven years,” Bornstein said, adding the Port staff is the best he’s seen.

Part of the reason directors get burned out, he said, is the excessive micromanaging and inability to get to the finish line on deals.

The Port’s last regular director, Hank Bynaker, lasted 14 months on the job. Before

him was Jack Crider, who resigned before taking a directorship at the Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation and Conservation District in Northern California.

“It’s been a real challenge trying to do that with this commission,” Bynaker said upon resigning. “I just can’t seem to move the ball down the field. I just feel like I’m spinning my wheels.”

From Eureka, Calif., in 2013, Crider said there’s been a world of difference in his new job at the Port of Humboldt Bay, having a professional commission that makes it encouraging to go to work.

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