



THE DAILY ASTORIAN

143rd YEAR, No. 44

MONDAY, AUGUST 31, 2015

ONE DOLLAR

Relay racers defy the elements to cross the line

Hood to Coast teams battle high winds, rain

By R.J. MARX
The Daily Astorian

SEASIDE — Early Saturday afternoon, sun tentatively peered out in Seaside after a morning of rain, wind and bluster. The tally of Hood

to Coast Relay funds raised to fight cancer was more than \$500,000, but only the runners knew how hard those dollars had been earned.

"We actually saw a tree crack in half," runner Travis Huntington said after the race. "The true Oregonian spirit came out."

Teams started at Timberline Lodge at Mount Hood, about 90 miles southeast of Portland. The

first runners hit the gate Friday at 5 a.m., and teams followed until about 4:15 Friday afternoon. Racers headed westward through Portland, Scappoose, St. Helens, Mist and Jewell before heading into the final legs and finish in Seaside.

More than a thousand teams of eight and 12 runners participated in the 198-mile course. Waiting were 3,600 volunteers, merchants,

family members and fans.

While the beach was closed to runners and spectators because of the day's high winds, that didn't bother the finishers.

"The winds came up, then the rains started and it became really fun," Matt Garnett of Madison, Wisc., said after the race.

This was the 10th Hood to Coast in a row for Matt Garnett's group,

which included members from Seattle, Portland, Minnesota and Utah.

Garnett said during his run he thought about stopping only briefly, but then realized "all the cars were going in the same direction. "It was crazy. The winds were insane. People were really earning it."

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Visitors walk up the hill near the uncovered Astoria Column Sunday.

Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Summer storm blows cover off Astoria Column

By ERICK BENGEL
The Daily Astorian

It looked like a calamity atop Coxcomb Hill Saturday morning as gale-force winds ripped the white cover off the Astoria Column, exposing the scaffolding built for the landmark's ongoing restoration.

But, to the restoration team, the sight meant that everything was going according to plan.

In fact, Project Director Marie Laibinis and Safway Services Inc., the scaffolding company, knew the storm was coming — and prepared for it.

On Friday, Laibinis and her crew secured the scaffolding level by level, adding additional ties to the top area and removing notebooks, paint buckets and other materials that could fly away.

Laibinis arrived at the Column at around 6 a.m. Saturday and took wind-velocity measurements, which registered only 20 mph at that point. She summoned

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A roadblock blocked access to the Astoria Column Sunday.

Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

MORE STORM COVERAGE INSIDE

Turn to Page 10A to read about how the Coast Guard kept busy as the Saturday storm rushed over the North Coast. The storm packed wind speeds that spiked higher than 80 mph.

Alleged killer rejects state psychologist

Smith defense opposes pick

By DANI PALMER
EO Media Group

A state-appointed psychologist lacks proper credentials to examine alleged killer Jessica Smith, her attorney said Friday.



Jessica Smith

Smith, of Goldendale, Wash., appeared in Clatsop County Circuit Court shackled and in a blue jumpsuit. She is accused of aggravated murder and attempted aggravated murder for allegedly drugging and murdering her daughter, Isabella Smith, 2, and attempting to kill her older daughter, Alana Smith, 13, in a Cannon Beach hotel in July 2014.

William Falls, Smith's attorney, asked the judge to oppose the state's request for a mental health evaluation with Dr. Paul Guastadisegni, a Portland-based psychologist, because he is not qualified under new state standards to evaluate a criminal defendant.

"It's not the evaluation, it's the evaluator," Falls told Judge Cindee Matyas.

Falls said he is not opposed to a state evaluation as long as the defense can participate in the process with a certified evaluator. In any case, Falls said he would direct Smith not to answer any questions about her state of mind at the time of the murder and attempted murder.

The defense has already indicated it may seek to prove Smith acted with diminished capacity as a result of postpartum depression.

District Attorney Josh Marquis said he did not believe defense claims applied in this case.

Marquis added he was disappointed the defense had waited until the appearance date to make an objection. A letter stating the district attorney's office expected to call Guastadisegni as an expert witness was sent five weeks ago, he said.

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Commander works to keep waterways open

Firestine ran the effort to remove Fennica protestors



A couple weeks into her new job as response chief for the U.S. Coast Guard's Sector Columbia River, Cmdr. Rosemary Firestine found herself coordinating an operation to remove activists amid one of the higher-profile protests in recent memory.

As the incident commander, Firestine coordinated all levels of government in an effort to clear the Willamette River and St. Johns Bridge of activists protesting the ice-

breaker Fennica, which was leaving after being repaired in Portland's Vigor Shipyards. Fennica was en route to support Shell Oil Co.'s drilling rig Polar Pioneer in its exploration for oil in the Chukchi Sea northwest of Alaska.

Protesters with Greenpeace suspended themselves in climbing harnesses from the St. Johns Bridge late last month in an effort to block the Fennica from leaving.

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Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

Cmdr. Rosemary Firestine is the operations chief for the U.S. Coast Guard's Sector Columbia River.

