

Observer wins multiple awards in annual news competition

Coast Weekend editor gets first for Our Coast

EO Media Group

EVERETT, Wash. — Current and former Chinook Observer staff members won several awards in the 2015 Washington Better Newspaper Contest.

Each year, nondaily newspapers across the state compete for BNC honors in reporting, advertising, photography, and page and web design, as well as the overall quality of the product. In some categories, newspapers compete against

other publications with a similar circulation size. In other categories, including most photography categories, all newspapers compete against one another, regardless of size. The competition cycle ran from April 1, 2014, through March 31, 2015.

The competition is sponsored by the Washington Newspaper Publishers' Association. Winners were announced at a WNPA awards dinner in Everett on Oct. 9.

The Chinook Observer is The Daily Astorian's sister publication.

Special publication and columns
Coast Weekend editor Rebecca Sedlak won a first-place award for "Our Coast," an annual visitors' magazine.

Matt Winters won first place in the Best General Interest Column category for his occasional column, "Editor's Notebook," which provides a first-person take on life on the Long Beach Peninsula.

Reporting
Former Chinook Observer reporter Katie Wilson won first place in the Government Reporting category for "Disappointment," her July 2014 story about tourists' encounters with the rangers at Cape Disappointment State Park. Reporter and photojournalist Natalie St. John won second

place in the same category for a November 2014 article about the unintended consequences of allowing "write-in" candidates in Wahkiakum County elections.

St. John also won first place awards in Investigative Reporting for "Crumbling Courts," a series about unsafe and unethical management practices at manufactured home parks, and Lifestyle Features reporting, for "Wolfing Down Ilwaco" a story about competitive eaters.

St. John won third place awards in "News of the Weird" for "It's Raining Bears," a story about state game wardens using tranquilizer darts to remove a family of bears from

a tree, and long-form news reporting, for her coverage of a June 2014 incident in which campers on Long Island rescued a family whose boat had capsized.

Photography
Former Chinook Observer photojournalist Damian Mulinix won his fourth Miles Turnbull picture of the year award for "Hay Season" a photo essay, captured on black and white square-format film. Mulinix won first place in the Black and White Photo Essay category for the same series and first place in the Color Portrait competition for "Shotgun Victim", a picture of Long Beach resident Kevin

Tore, taken after his mentally ill neighbor shot him with bird pellets.

Mulinix also won a third place spot-news award for "Rescued," a picture of Long Beach firefighter Tye Caldwell carrying a young survivor of the capsizing incident.

Natalie St. John took third place in the Photographer of the Year competition for a portfolio of pictures taken during the competition cycle. She also won a second place award for a time-lapse photo of dancing kites taken during the 2014 International Kite Festival, and third place for "Life at the horse barn", a color photo essay about Peninsula equestrians.

Beer 101: The pass will benefit the entire North Coast



Dani Palmer/EO Media Group

Dave Kinhan pours a beer as he talks with Sophie Rivera at Cannon Beach Hardware & Public House.

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"It's a great opportunity for people to come enjoy the culinary arts and beverage Cannon Beach has to offer during the value season," Cannon Beach Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Court Carrier said.

The pass will benefit the entire North Coast.

Jon Rahl, assistant general manager of the Seaside Visitors Bureau and Convention Center, met Brandon Holmes, co-founder of technology start-up Bandwango, during the 2015 Oregon Governor's Conference on Tourism. The company was about to launch an attractions pass in Salt Lake City that appealed to Rahl, so he began working with them on a pass for the North Coast. When it "hit a snag," the attractions pass became a craft beer pass.

Two years ago, the North Coast Alliance unveiled Beer 101 focusing on craft breweries, educational events and a contest allowing consumers to assist in the naming of "a one-of-a-kind collaborative beer."

The Beer 101 Pint Pass will serve as a successor to that promotion.

The alliance hopes to sell at least 500 passes and would see 2,500 as a "tremendous success," Rahl said. The alliance used grant and room tax money for its \$10,000 fall marketing campaign, primarily through TV and digital media, which also includes "behavioral targeting for general awareness of Oregon's North Coast."

Rahl said the concept of a food and beverage pass is a "pretty new one," and sees it as good for both industries. In Cannon Beach, the Cannon Beach Hardware Store & Public House and Seasons Cafe are among participants. The city is also adding two breweries in 2016 planners hope will one day be on the trail. They are Pelican Brewing Co. and the Lumberyard Rotisserie and Grill, which is transforming into Public Coast Brewing Co. this winter.

Pelican CEO Jim Prinzing said they are interested in the idea.

The Rivertide Suites in Seaside is planning to offer the pass as part of a hotel package for guests, "which is exactly the kind of partnership we'd love to see more of," Rahl said.

Debate: Secretary of state hopefuls agreed on most policy issues

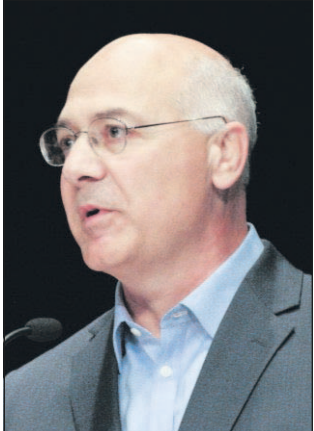
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The candidates were asked whether they support the controversial Jordan Cove Energy Project, a proposed liquefied natural gas facility in Coos Bay decried by environmentalists and championed by Oregon's building trades council. Oregon's secretary of state, as a member of the State Lands Board, has a say in the project. The candidates all said they would not stand in the way of Jordan Cove, which recently received federal environmental approval. Hoyle went further and explicitly supported the project, saying it would help take countries like Japan away from coal power while providing good union jobs.

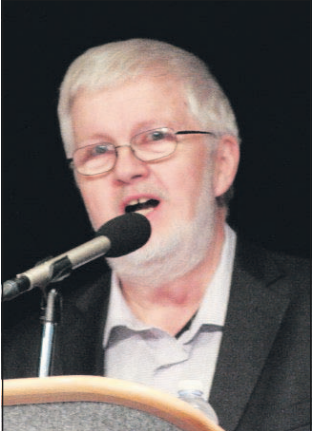
Elections chief
The secretary of state over-

sees elections in Oregon, one of only six states with no limits on individual contributions to state candidates. As secretary of state, Brown introduced Senate Joint Resolution 5, which would amend the Constitution to allow campaign contributions to be limited by the Oregon Legislature or popular vote. The amendment is up for a vote next year.

Devlin said Oregon has long been the "Wild West" in terms of campaign contribution limits, adding unions should not have the same limits as corporations. Avakian said the state needs to limit contributions, even if the decision bucks the U.S. Supreme Court. Hoyle said there isn't much Oregon can do on campaign finance reform with the current Supreme Court, adding the state needs to focus on transparency until it can get



Brad Avakian



Richard Devlin



Val Hoyle

Democrats and Republicans. Candidates said all parties, major and minor, need to be given a voice and governed by the same rules.

Labor in their blood
While agreeing on most policy issues, the candidates tried to stand out through their experience in state government and their personal backgrounds.

Avakian touted his experience as head of the Bureau of Labor and Industries, settling wage claims and pushing labor-friendly policies. Hoyle told the story of her father's picketing on behalf of unions, saying she would similarly stand with labor. Devlin, who helped write the state's budget, described himself as someone who focuses on the details and gets them right.

Symonds: The officer plans to ultimately become a detective

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they can talk to her — that she believes it's important to be respectful as an authority figure.

Her goal is to ultimately become a detective, and it all starts with "a great foundation."

Humand Services provided Officer Symonds with a strong base, but she has dispatch verbiage and multitudinous criminal and traffic codes to learn.

She enjoys mountain biking with her dog, Hobbs, hiking, surfing and reading in her downtime. But most of her reading has been job-related, rather than for fun lately.

Officer Josh Gregory, a "vault of knowledge," serves as her field training officer, along with his canine, Gunner. Symonds will end up working with multiple officers before she heads off to the police academy in February. After she gets back in June 2016, she'll be able to go out on her own.

"My favorite thing is actually being in the driver's seat, in

uniform, and getting out there," she said.

Symonds made her first traffic stop recently after numerous mock ones.

She knows she'll have large crowds during the summer and countless illegal overnight campers. Cannon Beach is known for being a safe community, but even it experiences drug use, high-end thefts and domestic violence. There are also rare serious crimes that occur, like the murder of 2-year-old Isabella Smith and attempted murder of 13-year-old Alana Smith in 2014, allegedly by their mother Jessica Smith.

Many are issues Symonds wants to address not only on a legal level, but also on a community one. She wants to engage the community through a variety of avenues, such as The Harbor, which provides services to survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

That community outreach is why she chose to apply to the Cannon Beach Police Department.

Symonds was chosen out of 26 applicants. Police Chief Jason Schermerhorn joked that Human Services was a little upset with the department for taking her. "We're very proud to have her," he said.

Symonds had to go through written and physical testing, an oral board, and an extensive background check and psychological evaluation over a roughly three-month period. She had a background interview with Officer Joseph Bowman "which lasted, it seemed, like hours and hours and hours."

She added it was a good process to go through to help her understand how vulnerable those she interacts with as an officer may feel. Symonds already knows she can't "take things personal" and has to adapt to each situation.

"We have a great community here," she said. "Just making sure I'm holding myself to a high standard and continuing is exciting. I hope to be here for awhile."

— Dani Palmer

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