

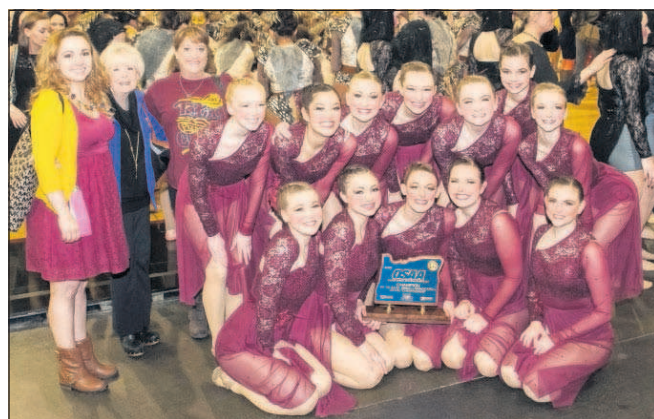
Jeff Ter Har/File Photo

Seaside's 2015 state champions, from left to right: Kevin LaCoste, Sam Hinton, Shane Fritter, Trenten Meyer, Aaron Richardson.



Daily Astorian/File Photo

Knappa's Tyson Burnard, center, celebrates with Chase Rusinovich, No. 10, and Dale Takalo, No. 5, after winning the 2A Baseball State Championship at Volcanoes Stadium in Keizer in June.



Submitted Photo

The Pizazz dance team, displays the first-place trophy from the OSAA 4A/3A/2A/1A Small bracket tournament. From left are choreographer Carole Simmons, head coach Jeanne Peterson, assistant coach Alice Thompson. Second row, standing: Lindsay Grant, Bella Marincovich-Mallares, Jessica Barber, Patience Womack, Julia Jenkins, Katie Koch, Maia Mahoney. Front row: Ally Berger, co-captain Claire Helligso, co-captain Emily Harris, captain Brooke Cross, co-captain Megan McCall-Devos.

# 2015: It was a year of champions

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In addition to state and federal approval, the company must also get access to property on the peninsula where the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has long held an easement — the subject of two federal court rulings against Oregon LNG.

Supporters hope that Oregon LNG, if the project goes forward, makes good on its promise to create hundreds of temporary jobs and more than 100 permanent jobs, and generate more than \$90 million in additional tax revenue. Opponents argue that the project would increase traffic congestion, decrease property values, endanger tourism and affect public safety during a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and tsunami.

## High times

On Oct. 1, Oregon's licensed medical marijuana dispensaries began legally selling up to a quarter-ounce of dried recreational marijuana to adults 21 and older who don't carry medical marijuana cards.

After the initial wave of purchases, sales on the North Coast continued to hold steady. Currently, Astoria has four dispensaries, Seaside has two, and Warrenton has one in development.

Cannon Beach, which doesn't have a dispensary, is still deciding how and whether to restrict marijuana sales within city limits.

## Year of the Champions

Last year saw five local sports teams win state championships at their respective levels of competition.

It all began in March, when the Astoria Dance & Drill team placed first out of the eight schools in their division (4A/3A/2A/1A small school) to win the state title.

In the spring, three more local teams won the big blue trophy.

On May 19 at Quail Valley Golf Course, the Seaside boys golf team became the first team in school history to win back-to-back state titles. Led by senior Sam Hinton, the Gulls shot a final round 623 team score to finish 20 strokes ahead of runner-up Valley Catholic.

Aaron Richardson, Shane Fritter, Kevin LaCoste and Trenten Meyer rounded out the Seaside scoring.

Four days later at Hayward Field in Eugene, the Astoria girls track team struck gold by winning the 4A state title, the first championship for the program since 1981. The Lady Fishermen were led by the trio of Darian Hageman, Halie Korff and Kaylee Mitchell.

On June 5 at Volcanoes Stadium in Keizer, the Knappa Loggers topped off a perfect 27-0 season with a 3-0 win over Monroe in the Class 2A state championship game. It was the second state title for the Loggers and coach Jeff Miller since 2010.

More recently, the Seaside boys cross country team won

the 4A state championship at Lane Community College in Eugene.

And the Lower Columbia region isn't done. Expect more state championships this year. Some of the top candidates: Seaside boys and girls basketball this winter, along with both basketball teams in Ilwaco and the Astoria Dance team. Or, how about possible state championships for Astoria and Knappa baseball in the spring?

Seaside and Ilwaco boys golf are always in the running, while Astoria girls track and Seaside boys cross country are already heavy favorites to defend their respective state championships.

## Crab, clams make a comeback

Fresh Dungeness crab is back on the catch menu after fishery managers determined the fishery is ready to open Monday along the entire Oregon coast and Washington north to Destruction Island, as well as Grays Harbor and Willapa Bay. Crabbers can set their pots Friday.

Fishery managers from Washington to California approved the opening after a monthlong delay because of high levels of domoic acid.

Razor clam harvesting along Clatsop County beaches from the Columbia River to Tillamook Head south of Seaside opened earlier this month, after samples indicated safe levels of domoic acid.

## Fake Willy makes Astoria a global spectacle

Thousands of the sea lions migrating into the Columbia have taken up seasonal residence at the Port's East End Mooring Basin, drawing in tourists, causing damage to docks and scaring away boats. The sea lions are in addition to the several thousand harbor seals native to the region who regularly enter the Columbia to feed.

The Port has employed surveying tape, pennant strings and beach balls in mostly unsuccessful attempts to dissuade the animals from lounging on the docks. Last summer, whale-watching company Island Mariner in Bellingham, Washington, offered to bring down a parade float resembling an orca and modified into a boat.

The spectacle drew in news outlets from across the country, including segments by "Good Morning America" and "The Today Show." Al Jazeera sent a crew to follow the whale from its homeport in Bellingham to Astoria.

But Fake Willy had issues with seaworthiness, capsizing multiple times before ultimately coming to rest on its side at a dock in the basin, still surrounded by sea lions. The orca's owner, Terry Buzzard, said he would bring an improved version down for last summer's Buoy 10 salmon fishery. So far, Fake Willy has not returned. But expect to see sea lions when the fish are running.

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Daily Astorian/File Photo

Seaside's Bradley Rzewnicki crosses the finish line to win the 4A boys OSAA Cross Country State Championship at Lane Community College in November in Eugene.



Daily Astorian/File Photo

Astoria's Natalie Cummings hugs Kaylee Mitchell after finishing the 4A girls 4x100 meter relay race at the OSAA 2015 Track and Field State Championships at Hayward Field in Eugene in May. Astoria placed second in the event on the way to winning the 4A girls state championship.

# Thank you for being our reader in 2015.

Steve Forrester  
Editor & Publisher

THE DAILY ASTORIAN



Daily Astorian/File Photo

A sea lion passes a trio of beach balls along the East Mooring Basin.