

Queener: She dabbled in acting, hopes to act again

Continued from Page 1A

first time her heritage or background didn't count against her.

"You would think that's really where you would expect that 'otherness,' but I was embraced in that community," she said.

Constitutional rights

Queener — a 32-year-old with a diamond-sharp mind and a jaunty personality — attended Clatsop Community College for two years before transferring to Willamette University, where she earned her bachelor's degree in politics. She graduated from the university's college of law in 2009.

Before graduating, Queener clerked in the Tillamook County District Attorney's office. She then moved into public defense contract work and, in 2011, became a solo practitioner.

Over the past several years, she's handled a spectrum of cases, from employment discrimination and landlord-tenant issues to criminal, juvenile, family and administrative law. With her new practice, she plans to add a civil litigation component.

Though many of her cases have had a comical flair — like the guy in Pacific City who swiped a police vehicle, drove it into a dead end and hid in the dune grass until the cops found him — she's also been privy to some pretty awful displays of human behavior, especially with cases involving abuse and restraining and stalking protective orders.

When it comes to criminal cases, she has defended clients she believes were falsely accused — "That does sometimes happen," she said — and some she knew were guilty.

"They have a constitutional right to a good attorney," she said. "We have an adversarial system in this country, and if I'm not defending them for any reason, they're not getting the fair shake that they should be getting. If I have a way to defend a client, even if I know that he is guilty, I'm going to do that."

Bill: 'It gives an opportunity for families ... to heal'

Continued from Page 1A

Scott Lee, the chairman of the Clatsop County Board of Commissioners, said the board will likely pass a resolution in support of the bill.

"It gives an opportunity for families and communities to heal," Lee said. "This is a very good thing."

The bill is now before the state House for consideration.

The property tax breaks are supported by a slew of law enforcement associations: The Oregon Association of Chiefs of Police; Oregon State Sheriff's Association; Oregon Associa-

A homecoming

Before her son, Drew, 2, was born, Queener dabbled in community theater through the Tillamook Association for Performing Arts. Having never acted before, and believing herself to be inartistic, Queener needed some convincing. A neighbor and co-worker kept trying to pull her into it, and she kept refusing.

"Then one day he sort of cornered me and said, 'How do you feel about Agatha Christie?' And I said, 'I love Agatha Christie! Who doesn't!'"

So she was cast in a production of Christie's murder mystery "The Mousetrap."

"I got to know the people, and they were all so wonderful ... It was so much fun," she said. "And pretty soon I wanted to be part of every play. And, of course, it doesn't work out that way, but I did what I could until Drew was born."

When Drew gets older and his bedtime gets later, she hopes to reconnect with her inner thespian.

For now, Queener and her husband, Gary, are settling into Clatsop County, which, for her, feels rather like a homecoming.

"I have to say, I've met people who love the rain; I'm not one of them. I don't fish. I don't hunt. So a lot of the attractions that the folks around here generally see don't necessarily apply to me," she said. "I'm really looking forward to all the fishermen poetry gatherings, and the art exhibits and all the cool stuff that happens in Astoria that doesn't necessarily happen in other small communities."

Though she didn't realize it during her first stay in Clatsop County as a college student, "I think it's going to be a really great place to bring up my kid," she said. "I think that the same people that helped me out, and were there for me when I was here, are probably going to be there for him while he's growing up."

And, if the area is the way she remembers it from 2002, then it's the community she will appreciate most. "I'm hoping to find that again."

— Erick Bengel



Alexis Mather crowns Ryen Buys as Miss Clatsop County 2016.

Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Miss Clatsop County: Miss Oregon pageant takes place this summer at the Seaside convention center

Continued from Page 1A

"I'm super happy I can compete here," she said.

Miller said she enjoys the whole pageant experience, from gaining confidence to be interviewed by several adults to making friendships with the other girls that endure beyond the end of the night.

Most importantly, the pageant is an opportunity for her to promote her platform, "Lupus — Raising Awareness." Miller's mother has the autoimmune disease.

"I just want everyone to know what lupus is," she said. "It's not curable, so by spreading awareness and other people helping out, I'm hoping we will find a cure later on."

The winners are ...

The three girls from out of county competing in the teen pageant were eligible to win the Miss North Coast's Outstanding Teen and Miss Columbia-Pacific's Outstanding Teen titles, but not the Miss Clatsop County's Outstanding Teen title, which was reserved for Clatsop girls and won by Caitlin Hillman, 13, of Gearhart.

Nikkole Sasso, 14, of Astoria, won Miss North Coast's Outstanding Teen.

Sasso started in the noncompetitive Princess program when she was 5 years old. This was her second year competing in the program at the teen level. She enjoyed the interview process and



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Teen contestant Viola Soprano performs a jump rope routine during the talent competition.

"learning more about myself and figuring out that what I'm saying, people want to hear," she said.

Sasso not only promotes her platform, the "Astoria Wishing Tree Program," but also volunteers with it, as well.

"It definitely helps get across the point if you're very active with (your platform)," she said.

Buys, 17, of Seaside, won Miss Clatsop County. Buys, a senior at Seaside High School, did a cheer routine for her talent;

her platform is "Shriners Hospital for Children: The Importance of Diagnosing Scoliosis."

The Miss North Coast title was won by Rund, 21, of Astoria, who attends the University of Oregon. Her platform is "The Ideal Body is Your Own."

Of the 20 contestants competing for the Miss or Outstanding Teen titles at the pageant, nine started in the Princess program. Miss Clatsop County Scholarship program is about mentorship, said Newman, who started volunteering with the program in 2000. Just as the contestants are required to have a personal platform, she said her own "personal platform is mentoring to young women and the future leaders of tomorrow through the Miss American Organization."

The teenagers and young women who competed in Clatsop County this year are "just a great group of girls," according to Newman. From the start, they have been prompt, engaged and dedicated. Yet Newman has seen growth and development in confidence and skills, as well, she said.

"For those lucky few who actually win a title and do a year of this, the growth is incredible," she added.

With the field of county representatives narrowed from 20 to five girls, Newman and others now will help the contestants prepare to take the stage at the Miss Oregon Scholarship pageant this summer at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center.



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Miss Clatsop County Outstanding Teen Caitlin Hillman hugs Miss North Coast's Outstanding Teen 2015 Hayliehe Bell.



Jeff Ter Har/For The Daily Astorian

Miss North Coast Tess Rund is crowned Saturday at the Miss Clatsop County Scholarship Program.

Verdict: For another appeal, he'll have to petition Oregon Supreme Court

Continued from Page 1A

In 2008, a jury originally convicted Kelly of 12 counts of first-degree sodomy and 12 counts of first-degree sexual abuse for ongoing abuse of the a family member between July 2004 and May 2006. The girl first reported the abuse in May 2006 to her father's fiancée.

At the trial, the prosecution relied on testimony from Dr. Roy Little, who said the girl suffered from symptoms of sexual abuse, though there was no physical evidence to support the claim.

An Oregon Supreme Court decision in 2010 held that medical experts cannot testify about child sex abuse diagnoses if no physical evidence exists. As a result, Little's testimony was deemed invalid. The Oregon Court of Appeals overturned Kelly's conviction in 2011 and ordered that Clatsop County Circuit Court schedule a new trial.

"They said you could not put on a doctor to give a medical diagnosis without any physical findings," Clatsop County Chief Deputy District Attorney Ron

Brown said. "We didn't have any physical findings. It was an automatic reversal."

Kelly was retried in 2013 and was again convicted of 24 counts of sexual abuse and sodomy.

Brown, the prosecutor at both trials, said the conviction on the retried case was possible due to the victim's testimony and DNA evidence found where the abuse took place.

"Everything just fit together," Brown said.

Still, Kelly appealed the 2013 conviction, which was

upheld by the appeals court Thursday.

If Kelly wants to appeal the latest decision, he will have to petition the Oregon Supreme Court to take his case. "There is nothing automatic about it," Brown said. "They turn people down every day of the week."

Kelly also tried to petition for relief, claiming his attorney messed up. However, that is unlikely since he hired his attorney and spent a large amount of money.

"I don't think he has any avenues there at all," Brown said.

In his appeal, Kelly claimed the prosecution did not give proper notice to use hearsay statements of the victim. In any child abuse case, the prosecution must give notice to the defense that it plans to use hearsay statements. In this case, the statements related to an interview the victim gave at the Lighthouse for Kids, a child-abuse assessment center in Astoria.

The Court of Appeals ruled the original notice from the first trial was valid for the second trial.

"They said the notice was perfectly fine," Brown said.

Kelly also unsuccessfully tried to appeal the trial court's denial for a change of venue. Kelly wanted the trial moved somewhere else because of all the pretrial publicity. Brown noted that the publicity was mostly created by Kelly and his supporters.

Many of Kelly's friends and family were outspoken about his innocence, including one man who created the website freetom.info. A sign is still visible from U.S. Highway 30 outside Astoria expressing support for Kelly.