

Riverside Basketball Camp starts Monday

The Daily Astorian

Astoria's Riverside Basketball Camp runs Monday through Thursday next week, at the Astoria Middle School gyms.

The camp, scheduled for 9 a.m. to noon each day, is open to all boys entering fifth grade through senior year of high school.

Cost is \$50, or \$25 with Astoria High School card. A Summer League fee is \$75. T-shirt is included.

The camp is run by Astoria varsity coach Kevin Goin and Astoria High School staff. For more information, contact Goin at 503-949-2810, or by email at kgoin@astoria.k12.or.us.

SCOREBOARD

SPORTS SCHEDULE

SATURDAY

Junior State Baseball — St. Helens at Astoria Ford (2), 1 p.m.; Neah-Kah-Nie at Warrenton (2), Noon; Knappa at Kennedy (2), 11 a.m.

The Ocean View Cemetery opened in 1898. It has more than 16,000 plots.

The Daily Astorian File Photo



Parks: Employees can only perform bare-minimum services at each site

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For example, recent visitors to Ocean View Cemetery — an Astoria Parks-run cemetery in Warrenton — were outraged by the unmowed grass and unpulled weeds they discovered there on Mother's Day. Parks Director Angela Cosby said the department should have spruced up the site but had been focused on site safety throughout the park system rather than aesthetic upkeep.

"That's, unfortunately, the reality for every one of our sites," Cosby said.

The result is that employees can only perform bare-minimum services at each site.

"We're basically able to mow and pick up garbage at all of our sites and not much more," Cosby said.

Plans within plans

Concerns that Astoria Parks and Recreation resources are spread too thin inform a great deal of the master plan, which says the department must tap more funding sources to hire a sufficient number of employees at competitive wages.

One of the key findings from the master planning process is that "(m)ajor cuts to staffing in 2011, combined with a rapidly growing inventory of facilities and programs, high expectations from the community and decreasing general fund tax support, have contributed to a significant maintenance deficit and high staff turnover."

The department may look to increase revenue by regularly adjusting program and user fees to keep up with changes in operation and maintenance costs, or by creating a parks and recreation taxing district.

Meanwhile, to address basic maintenance issues, the master plan recommends increasing community stewardship of parks by establishing "Friends of the Parks" and "Adopt-A-Park" programs; keeping an online database of maintenance projects that volunteers can complete; ensuring partner organizations using department sites are also sharing maintenance responsibilities; and contracting for services that cannot reasonably be provided by department staff.

Ideally, the department will also have funding to:

- create a capital improvement plan
- develop a separate master plan for the 100-acre Ocean View Cemetery
- set up an annual communications and marketing plan for the department
- install additional lighting and restrooms along the Astoria Riverwalk
- install a permanent restroom at Fred Lindstrom Park
- add, remove, replace or repair playground equipment
- improve signage throughout the park system

Selling parks?

A line on page 55 caught the eye of George "Mick" Hague, a local who attended Thursday's committee meeting.

Under a section concerning where the department should be putting its energy, one recommended action reads: "Evaluate reconfiguration or sale, of surplus or underutilized facilities or land, to allow more resources to be allocated to the core (services)."

Hague pointed out that residents indicated, by and large, that they would rather see their underused parks become green spaces than sold for residential or commercial purposes if the parks department can't maintain them.

"There's nothing that the city or the parks can point to that says the citizenry is in favor of selling," he said. Cosby said Hague is correct.

Hague added that he fears future city councilors and city staff will use the line as "cover" for selling off parks.

Scott Tucker, a committee member and superintendent of Lewis and Clark National Historical Park, said most of the deeds for city parks preclude selling them. Some deeds, however, may allow for land to be sold, and Cosby said the department is requesting legal guidance to identify them.

Tucker suggested amending the master plan in the future to enumerate the parks that could be put up for sale, the ones without such deed restrictions. But City Councilor Zetty Nemlowill, a committee member, said the master plan need not be so specific.

"In order to improve services, we need to give something up; that's the bottom line," Nemlowill said. "It would be great to have more money for parks but, going through two budget committee cycles now, I don't see where that is ever going to come (from)."

She added that letting the underused parks become green space is a possibility.

Brooke Stanley, a committee member and coordinator at the North Coast Watershed Association, said she supports selling some parks — especially the underused parks that are full of invasive species and don't provide an ecological benefit — because she would rather the city have fewer sites that are well-maintained than too many sites that aren't. This is a view shared by many people in the community, Cosby said.

Ian Sisson, the planner and project manager, said the section Hague objected to will be clarified to read that the master plan is not recommending selling or otherwise repurposing the majority of parks but the underused parks in areas with an abundance of parks.

He reminded the group that, if the city considers selling parkland, the decision will be part of a public process.



Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

Astoria's Burke Matthews, left, is tagged out by Clatskanie's Dustin Luquette at home as Astoria Ford swept past the Tigers in Junior State baseball Thursday at Aiken Field, 12-2, 10-0.

Astoria Ford opens with sweep

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The Astoria Ford summer team opened the Junior State season with a doubleheader sweep over Clatskanie Thursday night at Aiken Field, 12-2 and 10-0.

Game 1 went six innings, with the Fishermen opening up with an 8-0 lead through two innings.

Ole Englund led the hit parade with a single, double and triple, while Tyler Lyngstad, Calvin Kaul and Trey Hageman pitched two innings apiece.

Astoria Ford is scheduled to host a doubleheader with St. Helens at 1 p.m. Saturday.



Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

Astoria's Mackenzie Pierce is picked off diving back to first base in Game 1 of Astoria Ford's doubleheader sweep over Clatskanie at Aiken Field.

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