

Boone wins re-election to state House

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

State Rep. Deborah Boone handily won a seventh term in the state House Tuesday. She bested Republican challenger Bruce Bobek, a physician at Columbia Memorial Hospital in Astoria.

House District 32 covers all of Clatsop, most of Tillamook and a western portion of Washington counties. Boone, who lives in Hamlet, was first elected the district's repre-

sentative in 2004, replacing Elaine Hopson. She had previously served 16 years as a legislative assistant to seven different legislators, as well as on the Clatsop County Board of Commissioners.

Boone, who was not available for comment Tuesday, said her main issues for running were to protect education and public safety, and to improve the region's economy.



Deborah Boone

"I basically wish Debby Boone well," Bobek said. "I was above board, and I ran a positive campaign. I appreciate all the people who voted for me and helped me."

Bobek, a physician and president of the medical staff at Columbia Memorial Hospital, decided in January to run against Boone and was unopposed in the primary. He said his biggest challenge was name recognition.

"The biggest problem I had was name recognition, I think," said Bobek, who last held office as a Warrenton city commissioner in the 1990s.

Bobek said there are a lot of issues in the state and Clatsop County, from schools and fishing to timber, that need to be addressed, but that he and Boone share some opinions. During his campaign, he espoused a fiscally conservative but open philosophy, and has said his focus was on improving health care and education throughout the state.

Jones takes Astoria council position

By ERICK BENGEL
The Daily Astorian

Bruce Jones, a retired U.S. Coast Guard commander, won a decisive victory Tuesday over Cory Pederson for an east side seat on the Astoria City Council.

Jones won 69 percent of the vote to Pederson's 30 and will succeed City Councilor Russ Warr, a three-term councilor who chose not to run for a fourth term.

"I'm very happy for all the support I received," Jones said, adding that going door-to-door throughout Ward 4 probably made a difference. "I'm very much looking forward to just serving on the City Council in January."

Jones, 56, will be joined by Tom Brownson, the new south-side representative who ran unopposed.

"Apparently there's a mandate out there ... I clearly have one," Brownson said, with a laugh.

Brownson, 63, a retired contractor, replaces former City Councilor Drew Herzig, who moved with his partner to Massachusetts in September before completing his first term in Ward 2. For two months, the council has had four members.

Mayor Arline LaMear and councilors Zetty Nemlowill and Cindy Price are up for re-election in 2018.

Jones and Brownson, newcomers to local politics, will join the council at a time when the city faces a slew of politically divisive issues.

Residents are split, for example, on what to do about the aging library, the fenced-in pit at Heritage Square, the citywide shortage of housing units and the place of tourism in the growing local economy.

Come January, when the new councilors are sworn into office, LaMear will be the last remaining figure on the council from the era of former Mayor Willis Van Dusen, who led the city for 24 years.

New dynamic

It is too early to know how the new personalities will change the City Council's dynamic. The last two years have been marked by occasionally ideological clashes between Herzig, a liberal, and the more conservative Warr.

In contrast to the savagely fought national election and some statewide battles, the Jones versus Pederson race was notably positive and cordial, virtually barren of mutual criticism.

"I'm proud of the campaigns that Cory and I ran," Jones said. "I think we both just focused on what our positions were, and nobody attacked each other, which I think is something we can both be very proud of."

Pederson, a music teacher, said the campaign season has been fun and educational.

"In the end, like I told my wife, I said, 'It's interesting, the process, just to watch how it works. And whether it works out or not, part of my thing is to get my foot in the door and see what happens,'" he said.

Pederson added that he plans to keep track of issues in his ward and in Astoria generally.

Jones ran a more visible and extensive campaign than Pederson, whose promotional signs mostly appeared in Ward 4. Brownson, for his part, did not make use of campaign materials.

None of the candidates ran on a specific agenda. Rather, each in his own way emphasized the City Council process and the importance of careful, balanced judgment. Brownson said his mission is to help keep the important issues — from housing to infrastructure — from stagnating.

"I'm really looking forward to this," Brownson said. "I think it's going to be a good council. It looks like we have people that are certainly not of the same mind except that I think everybody wants to get something done. So I think we're going to be OK."

Seaside School District voters back schools bond

Three schools to move out of tsunami zone

By R.J. MARX
The Daily Astorian

SEASIDE — Seaside School District voters said a resounding "yes" Tuesday to a \$99.7 million bond to move three schools out of the tsunami inundation zone.

In a 65 percent to 35 percent vote, residents endorsed the plan to replace deteriorating schools at an 80-acre location in the city's East Hills adjacent to Seaside Heights Elementary School.

"This victory belongs to our community which had the foresight to see how important high quality schools are to the future of everyone who lives in the Seaside School District," Superintendent-emeritus Doug Dougherty said. "New schools benefit the entire community, strengthen our economy and, in this case, provide a safe place for all in an emergency. From retirees to those just starting out, employees to business owners, children and families; education touches everyone and strengthens the fiber and opportunity of our community."

The bond came three years after a failed \$128.8 million dollar plan. The scaled-back proposal eliminated an auditorium, covered bleachers, long-term emergency shelters and a varsity playing field. The new bond equates to about \$1.35 per thousand, a 37.5 percent total reduction in cost from the previous bond. A home with an assessed value of \$200,000 would see a tax hike of about \$270 and a \$400,000 home about \$540.

Advocates of the proposal, including Vote Yes For Our Local Schools, presented a sustained campaign

to promote the bond, which, they said, was necessary not only for the safety of the students but because of the condition of the schools. Gearhart Elementary School, Broadway Middle School and Seaside High School were built with an expected life span of 45 to 50 years. Each has been used beyond that span. Dougherty described the schools as unsafe, deteriorating and "very inefficient."

With a land gift of 80 acres from Weyerhaeuser Co. in the East Hills, along with favorable interest rates and a likelihood of limited matching funds from the state, proponents said "this was the best time" to pass the bond.

"It really shows that this community cares about its kids, its families and its economic prosperity," said Gail Dundas of Vote Yes for Our Local Schools. "I'm still just reeling from the wonder of it all."

"We're very happy," said Seaside School District Superintendent Sheila Roley. "What I'm feeling is an incredible level of gratitude to our community and our students, and the way people have come together to support our students and our learning. It's a wonderful testament to how our community operates."

Next steps, Dougherty said in October, the school district would approach the City Council for an urban growth boundary expansion, a process joined by the county and the state. The expansion enabling roads and services could be completed within a year. Schools are expected to be completed at the new location within four years.

"Thank you to so many people who made this happen for our kids," Roley said.

"I couldn't be more proud of our community for stepping forward and making a truly historic decision that will improve the lives of children and families for generations to come," Dougherty added.

'I couldn't be more proud of our community for stepping forward and making a truly historic decision that will improve the lives of children and families for generations to come'

Doug Dougherty
superintendent-emeritus

Horning wins Seaside council race

By LYRA FONTAINE
The Daily Astorian

SEASIDE — Tom Horning, a geologist who has called for greater disaster preparation, defeated Seaside City Council President Don Johnson on Tuesday.

"It goes to show that the public is expecting more actions toward tsunami preparedness than they're receiving," said Horning, who serves on the city's Planning Commission. "I'm looking forward to being of service."

Johnson said he was "disappointed" and congratulated his opponent.

"I feel an honor and privilege to have served the community and I'll do my best whenever called upon again," he said. "It's been great working with all the councilors I worked for all these years. They've got some great things in store for Seaside."

Horning was with friends when he learned of the initial results.

"We were all thrilled. I got a lot of hugs and a lot of people shook my hand," he said. "I guess I'm really gratified that the public feels confident enough to vote for me."

Horning said a tsunami is long overdue in Seaside, and campaigned on building up the city's evacuation

infrastructure.

Horning estimated the cost of replacement at \$5 million for each of seven at-risk bridges. Upgrades could be financed by five-year city bonds, he has said.

During the Ward 3 campaign, Johnson emphasized his 16 years of council experience and past leadership on the budget committee and Planning Commission.

Johnson had said the city is doing a "great job" of preparing for the Big One with limited resources. He said the city should not only consider the dangers of a potential tsunami, but remember storms come through much more frequently.

Johnson said Wednesday that the vote to move the schools was "a wonderful thing."

Ward 4 Councilor Seth Morrisey and Wards 1 and 2 Councilor Randy Frank ran unopposed and will retain their seats.

Morrisey previously served for two years, making this his first full-time term. He thanked his constituents.

"I've had the pleasure of working with a talented city staff and caring City Council," he said. "While we don't always agree on the issues, we always work together respectfully for the good of Seaside. Going forward, I encourage feedback and participation from residents over the next four years."



Tom Horning

Brown dominates in Gearhart mayor's race

By R.J. MARX
The Daily Astorian

GEARHART — Matt Brown dominated the Gearhart mayor's election with a convincing win over Bob Shortman on Tuesday.

The candidates pitted two visions of Gearhart and some sharp contrasts on the direction of the city.

Two City Council candidates, Dan Jesse and Sue Lorain, ran unopposed.

"We've very excited," Brown said from New York City, where he was celebrating the win and an award for Merchandiser of the Year from the PGA of America. "Looks like we got a good percentage, for sure."

Brown said the key was citizen involvement. "We ran on a platform of citizens being involved, following our comprehensive plan, which is a blueprint for a sustainable, residential Gearhart, and making common-sense decisions," Brown said. "That's what the majority of

residents of Gearhart believe in and that's what resonated with our citizens, for sure."

Shortman, a general contractor, ran in 2012 against Mayor Dianne Widdop. A full-time Clatsop County resident since 1979, he is semi-retired and manages long-term rental properties. He said he saw the mayor's role as "a business and management position." He conceded the election Tuesday night.

"I concede him the race and wish him the best of luck," Shortman said. "I think the city will be in good hands with Mr. Brown."

Brown, 41, attended Gearhart Elementary School, Seaside High School and Linfield College, where he graduated with a degree in business. As a PGA professional, Brown served at Astoria Golf & Country Club, Bandon Dunes Golf Resort and Pumpkin Ridge Golf Club before returning to his hometown in 2006, where he lives with his longtime girlfriend, Julie Visser, also a native.



Matt Brown

Pot ban fails in Cannon Beach

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

A measure to ban marijuana sales in Cannon Beach narrowly failed Tuesday with a 51 percent to 49 percent vote.

Astoria, Seaside and Cannon Beach voters, meanwhile, overwhelmingly approved a 3 percent local tax on recreational marijuana sales to support public safety.

In 2014, marijuana-legalization Measure 91 passed with 63 percent of the vote in Cannon Beach. In July, a group of residents gathered 155 certified signatures and successfully brought forth Measure 4-179, asking voters whether recreational sales should be banned. Heading the committee of residents were Jeremy Randolph, Marlene and Gary Laws, Nancy Giasson and Molly Edison.

In all, more than 50 cities and counties across Oregon considered banning marijuana sales Tuesday.

"The primary purpose of putting the measure on the ballot was to let the people of Cannon Beach vote on it," Randolph said.

Randolph said he was a prosecutor in Washington state and supported legalizing marijuana. "None of us dealt with marijuana users committing crimes," he said.

Randolph said he is not excited about the prospect of marijuana stores opening near his home, but that the stores would not have a significant effect on crime.

"People do not come to Cannon Beach to buy marijuana," he said. "If they want to get high, all they have to do is look at the natural beauty of this area."

The Cannon Beach City Council had already voted 4-1 in July to restrict marijuana sales to three separate commercial zones. Under the ordinance, retailers could operate downtown from Ecola Creek south to Washington Street, midtown from Harrison Street south to Elliot Way and in Tolovana Park from Delta Street south to the Sandcastle Condominiums.

"To have marijuana sales in the window downtown where there are families, it seems out of character," Councilor Mike Benefield said at the time. "It doesn't seem like a proper image for Cannon Beach."

City Manager Brant Kucera said marijuana retailers have waited to apply for spots in Cannon Beach until after Tuesday's vote.

"They have so much access in other communities, it doesn't seem to be a pressing need," added Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Court Carrier in July.

Meanwhile, voters in Manzanita, home to Oregon Coast Cannabis, also rejected a ban on marijuana businesses in city limits.

Pot taxes

Under Measure 91, the state set a 17 percent tax on all marijuana sales. The measure also allowed cities to tack on an additional 3 percent tax to support public safety.

Some marijuana retailers have been supportive of the local tax. Nicholas Palazzo, co-owner of The Pharmacy in Astoria, said it's only fair that police get extra funding while having to cover all the new marijuana stores.

Besides The Pharmacy, there are four other dispensaries operating in Astoria, along with three in the planning stages. Seaside has four marijuana stores, with a fifth near the Oregon Highway 103 turnoff for Jewell.

Warrenton, which has adopted an ordinance restricting marijuana stores to the east side of U.S. Highway 101, has one in the planning stages on East Harbor Drive. The business was granted a license before the restrictions came into place.