

Dorchester Conference moves away from Seaside

GOP gathering heads to Salem

By R.J. MARX
The Daily Astorian

SEASIDE —The Dorchester Conference, a perennial gathering of Republicans at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center, is splitting up

with an old friend.

The conference, which has drawn U.S. presidents and national and state political leaders to Seaside for the past 46 years, booked the spring conference at the Salem Convention Center. The conference features “a new look, new direction and new location” in promotion for the March event.

Access to legislators at the state

capital, a search for a more centralized location, divisions within the membership and program changes were among reasons for the relocation, said Tom Simpson, Dorchester’s immediate past president.

“This was not a decision we made lightly,” Simpson said. “We looked not only at the last couple of years, we looked at where things are going in Oregon and the popula-

tion as a whole. We needed to make a fundamental shift.”

The conference was founded in 1965 by Bob Packwood, the future U.S. senator. Their first meeting at the Dorchester House in Lincoln City brought 200 Republicans and launched what is today the nation’s oldest political conference.

The event moved to Seaside in 1970 and has been a feature of

the community since. While the conference is not formally affiliated with the GOP, the guest list is a Who’s Who of the Republican Party: George H. Bush, Ronald Reagan, Nelson Rockefeller, Karl Rove and Jack Kemp, along with every Oregonian of note from the last half-century.

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HAMMOND STUDENTS FEED THE NEED



Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

Kamryn Wade, third-grader at North Coast Christian School holds a bag as others help fill it with food to be sent to families facing extreme hunger on Friday at North Coast Christian School in Hammond. About 80 students participated in the project.

North Coast Christian kids tackle hunger

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

HAMMOND — Caleb Hale, a senior at North Coast Christian School, had been on missions to Mexico and Colombia, helping build houses and volunteering at an orphanage. But when he learned of Haitians in the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew eating mud cookies — salt, vegetable oil and dirt — to stave off hunger, he was taken aback.

“I go home and eat brownies,” he said. “Knowing there are people barely surviving ... it’s terrible.”

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Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

Anna Ely, teacher and parent of children at North Coast Christian School, refills a bin with rice while stuffing food bags on Friday in Hammond.

TO DONATE

North Coast Christian School is taking donations for its Feed the Need fundraiser through January. For more information or to make an online donation, visit <http://igfn.us/vf/NCCS>. The school, located at 796 Pacific Drive in Hammond, can also be reached at 503-861-3333.

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Nygaard docked for filling wetlands

Clean Water Act violation last year

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has proposed a \$62,924 administrative penalty against Martin Nygaard and Nygaard Land LLC for unlawfully filling undeveloped wetlands near the Astoria Regional Airport without a permit last year.

The EPA alleges Nygaard Land violated the federal Clean Water Act after filling and leveling more than 70 acres of wetlands and 3,500 feet of intertidal channels along U.S. Highway 101 Business without a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

“This property was a farm for almost 100 years, but EPA’s interpretations take those rights away because it was not actively maintained for the last five years,” John M. Nygaard, an attorney with the company, said in an email.

Nygaard Land has agreed to restore the wetlands by May 31.

The EPA will wait 40 days from the notice of the proposed penalty to take action. The agency is accepting public comment on the proposed penalty through December.

Nygaard Land leveled and filled the wetlands while the Lewis and Clark Bridge was closed for repairs. The work was on property between Airport Lane and U.S. Highway 101.

The company had an application with the state Department of Forestry to log the land. But, along with logging, the company also leveled and filled wetlands to create pastures on the land, which was part of a former dairy farm.



The Daily Astorian/File Photo

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has proposed a \$62,000 penalty against Nygaard Land LLC for filling wetlands near the Astoria Regional Airport without a permit. The company must restore the wetlands by May 31.

Astoria will not pursue sanctuary status

But police chief acknowledges fear is ‘palpable’

By DERRICK DePLEDGE
The Daily Astorian

Astoria Mayor Arline LaMear on Monday night expressed her support for the Hispanic community but said the city will likely not become a sanctuary city.

Overheated rhetoric from President-elect Donald Trump on illegal immigration has unnerved human rights advocates who fear the Republican real estate magnate will order



Arline LaMear



Brad Johnston

mass deportations. Trump has also threatened to strip federal money from sanctuary cities, such as Portland, Seattle and San Francisco, that discourage the use of city resources to enforce federal immigration laws.

Oregon law prohibits state and local police from pursuing federal immigration viola-

tions unless immigration status is relevant to another crime. The Astoria Police Department does not participate in routine immigration investigations, but can make arrests for criminal violations of federal immigration laws and share information with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

There is no reliable estimate of how many people in the city are in the country illegally.

‘Window dressing’

LaMear said sanctuary city status in Astoria would be like “window dressing” given state law and Astoria Police policy.

“I think all of us on the council would express that

we are supportive of our Hispanic community,” the mayor said during a briefing by Police Chief Brad Johnston to the City Council. “We don’t want to see them unfairly targeted, and I don’t believe that’s happening in our city, and I’m grateful for that.”

LaMear said afterward that she asked for the briefing after getting letters from people who want Astoria to become a sanctuary city. The mayor said that while the city may “philosophically feel that we want to provide sanctuary and protect our immigrants and so forth, we don’t want to do anything that’s illegal.”

Jorge Gutierrez, the exec-

utive director of the Lower Columbia Hispanic Council, and several other Hispanics were in the audience at City Hall but declined the opportunity to speak.

Norma Hernandez, the chairwoman of the Parks and Recreation Board, said afterward the City Council missed the mark.

“I think the question that was missed tonight from the City Council was to ask our chief of police, ‘How can we make this community feel safer?’” she said. “‘What can we do?’”

Hernandez said the City Council did not have to adopt

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