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ONE DOLLAR

INSIDE



50TH ANNUAL SCANDI FEST

Astoria Police are stretched thin

Astoria Police Department Officer Jair Macareno has been with the force for about four years.

Colin Murphey
The Daily Astorian



Staff shortage puts a strain on department

By JACK HEFFERNAN
The Daily Astorian

Astoria Police Sgt. Brian Aydt turned on the sirens in his police car Saturday night and raced from Tongue Point to the Astoria Bridge to respond to a reported accident.

He arrived minutes later to find no accident had occurred, but a recreational vehicle was unable to reach the top of the slope on the bridge and rolled back into the guardrail. The RV was blocking the southbound lane, so Officer Jair Macareno helped direct traffic as Aydt advised the driver on how to make it to the top.

With people swarming the city for Astoria Pride and the Second Saturday Art

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PARADE OF CHAMPIONS

KNAPPA CELEBRATES WINNING BASEBALL TEAM



Photos by Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

TOP: A young fan of the Knappa Loggers prepares to enjoy the parade Tuesday to celebrate the team's state championship victory earlier in the month. ABOVE LEFT: The Knappa Loggers baseball team holds the state championship trophy high in the air as they ride a float in their victory parade Tuesday. ABOVE RIGHT: The state champion Knappa Loggers have their pictures taken by dozens of fans as they celebrated their victory with a parade and award ceremony Tuesday.

Baldwin named to Warrenton commission

Vacant post filled after Mitchell withdraws

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — Mark Baldwin, a former city commissioner, will fill the Warrenton City Commission's vacant seat.

The four current commissioners were split 2-2 Tuesday night between Baldwin and a second candidate, Columbia Memorial Hospital Community Outreach Manager Paul Mitchell. As they discussed whether or not to hold another vote or simply delay their decision to a future meeting, Mitchell called out from the back of the room. He was withdrawing, he said, in favor of Baldwin.



Mark Baldwin

"I think I'd rather see you all come together than have a split decision," Mitchell said.

Baldwin will be sworn in at the commission's next meeting June 27.

Three contenders

Three men had applied for the appointment — Baldwin, Mitchell and newcomer Ronald LeChurch, a retired mechanical engineer. City Commissioner Tom Dyer said choosing between the three men was one of the toughest decisions he has faced. He and the other commissioners thanked the men for applying and Mayor Henry Balensifer commented that it seemed as if everyone on the commission had lost sleep over the decision leading up to this meeting.

The three men were vying for a seat left vacant after Balensifer was appointed by the commission to serve out the rest of former Mayor Mark Kujala's term. Kujala resigned in March to spend more time with his family and business, and the commission has carried on with only four people ever since, struggling with the possibility of a tied vote in many decisions.

The commissioners cast their votes by ballot to determine who to appoint. Balensifer and Commissioner Rick Newton voted for Mitchell, who serves on the city's Planning Commission and budget committee. Dyer and Commissioner Pam Ackley voted for Baldwin.

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Newest Warrenton Police officer has nose for drugs

Gabe 2.0 makes City Hall debut

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — After Officer Robert Wirt announced he had hidden methamphetamine somewhere in the City Commission's meeting room at City Hall Tuesday night, there was a bewildered silence. The newest member of the Warrenton Police Department stopped

chewing on a tennis ball and went to work.

Gabe — also known as Gabe 2.0 — a 2-year-old German shepherd trained in drug detection, paced the chambers at the start of the commission's regular meeting, his first introduction to the City Commission.

Gabe, who is trained only to find drugs, not chase crime suspects, joined the police force two months ago and passed his certification tests in May. He arrived in Warrenton already

trained, but went through additional drills with other narcotic K9s in Clatsop County.

In the commission chambers, Gabe's long nose investigated Deputy City Recorder Dawne Shaw's desk. Nothing. He moved on. He took Wirt up and behind the commissioners' seats and around to City Manager Linda Engbretson's desk. Engbretson watched dubiously, but Gabe passed her by, too.

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Katie Frankowicz/The Daily Astorian

Gabe, the Warrenton Police Department's new drug detection dog, sniffs out drugs hidden inside a chair during a demonstration at the Warrenton City Commission meeting Tuesday night.