

Fishermen, Gulls run at Tualatin Invitational

The Daily Astorian

TUALATIN — Runners from Astoria and Seaside braved the smoky air of the Willamette Valley to take part in the 13th annual Tualatin Invitational Saturday at Tualatin High School.

Competing against a field of runners from mostly

5A and 6A schools, the athletes from Clatsop County managed to find some success in the 5,000-meter varsity races.

The Seaside boys did not field a complete team, but Gulls' senior Rafi Sibony ran the course in 17 minutes, 15 seconds for seventh place individually. Jerik Embleton

of Marist took first in 15:51.

The Astoria girls placed seventh out of 10 teams.

Freshman Sophie Long was Astoria's top finisher, running the 5,000 in 22:27 for 29th overall. Teammate McKenzie Burnett was close behind (31st, 22:36), followed by Kathy Perez (39th, 23:04).

Astoria spikers find 'Silver' at Cascade Tournament

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TURNER — Two days after losing a nonleague match at Cascade, the Astoria volleyball team returned to Turner to compete in the Cascade Invitational Saturday at Cascade High School.

And their second trip was a lot more successful, as the Lady Fishermen won the 'Sil-

ver Bracket' with victories over Madras (25-14, 25-13), Kennedy (27-25, 25-12) and Seaside (25-15, 25-14).

Sisters defeated Cascade in the top 'Gold Bracket.'

"My setters, Madi (Landwehr) and Julia (Norris) did a great job and made good decisions all day," said Astoria coach Jessie Todd. "My hitters put the ball down

and played great, and we were just clicking at a level that we haven't played at this season."

Astoria played six matches, "so my girls were pretty tired," Todd said. "There were a lot of good teams there."

The Fishermen open Cowapa League play this week, as they host Valley Catholic Tuesday.

Col. Perez: 'It's a great opportunity'

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In his new position, Perez will work under a new U.S. Army program that prioritizes talent specialization after soldiers are recruited.

"It's a great opportunity," said Perez, who plans to return to Astoria following his two-year tour.

A 'gem'

Perez' stint as the head of 90-year-old Camp Rilea did not last long. Although Perez described Rilea as a "gem," three other training centers in the state — Adair, Biak and Umatilla — have been in need of improvements. State National Guard leaders identified lack of coordination between the camps as an issue.

Soon after his appointment, he collaborated with a group of other state National Guard leaders to create a more efficient system to manage the sites. Born out of those discussions was the Oregon Training Command, and Perez became its first commander in 2013.

Oregon Training Command, with 82 soldiers at its disposal, now decides which camps receive the resources and manpower necessary to sustain themselves. The differing environments at the camps also allow soldiers to train for various types of warfare.

"The model has worked pretty well," Perez said. "We've created a lot more capacity to manage our lands and our facilities. We're much better able to serve our soldiers with better training."

While this transition was taking place, Perez accepted

a position with Clatsop County as administrative services director. He moved to Bothell, Washington, in 2015 to become a human services coordinator with the Seattle suburb, though he continued in his role with the Oregon Training Command.

Management skills

Perez said personnel and resource management skills are key to being successful in the position.

Hoback, who lives in Grants Pass, is also a program director at Rogue Valley Youth Correctional Facility. He has more than nine years of command experience that includes deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan.

"The most rewarding part is going to be training soldiers throughout the state of Oregon," Hoback said.

Hoback, 48, said he does not foresee many changes at Camp Rilea. Instead, much of his focus will go toward improving Camp Umatilla.

"There's nothing changing at Camp Rilea," Hoback said. "It's the premier Oregon National Guard training center."

Hoback met with Lt. Col. Peter Helzer, the camp's commander, earlier this month and will be his immediate supervisor. Helzer said he does not know Hoback well yet, but his patience is similar to that of Perez.

Because of Rilea's stability, relations with the command will mainly center on long-term planning.

"Now it is really about balancing the standing up of Umatilla with not letting things fall by the wayside at other facilities," Helzer said.



Staff Sgt. Anita VanderMolen

Oregon Army National Guard Brig. Gen. William J. Edwards, left, presents Col. Dean Perez, outgoing commander of the Oregon Training Command, with a Meritorious Service Medal in recognition of his service during a ceremony in Salem on Sunday.



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Local dignitaries joined Walmart representatives in Warrenton on Friday for a ceremonial groundbreaking event at the construction site for the new development.

Walmart: Foundation built on geopiers

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Walmart representatives first announced plans to build on the North Coast in 2009, announcing the North Coast Retail Center as the location in 2012.

Clatsop Residents Against Walmart formed in 2010 to oppose the retailer, successfully appealing elements of the new store to the state Land Use Board of Appeals. The group also sued the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in U.S. District Court for granting a wetland fill permit to Walmart. The case was dismissed in August 2016, but an appeal was filed in 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

Tim Beshone, the project manager for general contractor Deacon Construction, said ground work began in October and cost more than \$10 million to turn the shrub-covered dunes into a level site for the supercenter.

"We had 151,000 cubic yards of dirt that had to be removed from the site," said Eric Evenson, construction manager for Walmart, of the soils taken out for neighboring developments.

Deacon Construction took out 20 feet worth of soil in some spots, leveling the entire



A ceremonial groundbreaking was held at the construction site of the new Walmart in Warrenton on Friday as work on the building continued in the background.

site to 42 feet above sea level. The company brought in more than \$2 million worth of rock from the Teevin & Fischer Quarry in Seaside for use in the foundation.

Deacon had to move a city sewer lift station and stormwater pond out of the main building site, while constructing its own stormwater facility to handle up to 2.5 inches worth of rain in a day. The site has faced at least one day with 4 inches of rain, but did not

experience any spills into the surrounding wetlands, Evenson said.

"This is sand and silt, and it's got clay in it," Evenson said. "It's just absolutely unsuitable to build on. You have to do something to stabilize it."

The foundation of the store is built on geopiers dug 35 feet into the ground and rammed full of gravel to stabilize the building. Tiered, caged-in gravel beds line the south end

of the building site to keep the store from slipping toward the adjacent wetlands. A compaction layer of rock in the foundation can hold 420 pounds per square foot.

"Once the ground has stopped moving and settled, then we can start building the pad," Evenson said.

Building the outer shell of the building before the rainy season is the first step, Beshone said, after which interior work can start.

Henri: 'I don't think this is a temporary home. ... This is heaven'

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office. Once a week, though, she has to commute to Portland. It can be an isolating schedule, she said.

Henri, who grew up in Bend and Issaquah, Washington, wanted to connect more with her new community. When Community Development Director Kevin Cronin suggested applying for the open planning commission position, the volunteer aspect of the appointment as well as the clear commitment it required appealed to her.

"Before I knew it, I was a planning commissioner, which I think is such an honor," Henri said. She

said she has asked herself, "Is it OK for me to be making these (land use) decisions when I moved here 16 months ago?" At the same time, with her background and experience, she feels she has something to contribute.

She is especially happy to find herself in the company of other women, Commissioners Jan Mitchell and Jennifer Cameron-Lattek.

"Places like that I often find I am the only woman," Henri explained.

And she says it is clear she is part of a very committed group. "We try to stick to the city codes, but when it comes to making a decision, we're often interpret-

ing code," she said, "and we help each other with these deliberations. It's very transparent."

Astoria feels like a place where she can, as she says, "make places for people while we are also being good stewards of the earth." She points to a track record of urban reclamation here — taking old buildings and making them useful again while retaining historical characteristics — as well as the care and interest citizens show in the woods surrounding Astoria and the Columbia River.

"I don't think this is a temporary home," Henri said. "For me this is heaven."

Probe: 'I believe in all our officers'

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not been publicly identified by the city or prosecutors — were on administrative leave.

Warrenton swore in new police officers in February and April. Pierce was promoted to sergeant in February, a move widely praised because of his experience. He had been a Warrenton Police sergeant in the 1980s before his long career with the state police.

Engbretson said she could not speak about specific personnel actions at the police department. She said in an email that the investigation shows that "the system works. We investigate concerns thoroughly and take necessary steps and appropriate action where necessary."

The city manager also said she has "full confidence in

Chief Workman. He is a good man. He has the highest of ethics. He works extremely hard — goes above and beyond really. He is totally committed to this community and that shows in all he does for the community."

"I believe in all our officers; they work hard for Warrenton, and I think you will find the majority of the community has high confidence in our department and that is demonstrated in the many ways folks support our officers."

Mayor Henry Balensifer said he could not comment on personnel matters within the police department, but stressed that the city took the district attorney's concerns seriously. The mayor and the City Commission oversee Engbretson, while the city manager supervises the police chief.

"The city takes our relationship with the DA's office seriously, just as we did with his suggestions," Balensifer said in an email. "Appropriate actions have been taken, as evidenced in the DA's statement. We look forward to a continued, positive working relationship with the DA's office."

"Force levels are an issue across the county. That said, Warrenton has come a long way. It was not long ago we didn't have 24-hour police coverage. We currently do. The commission has added officers over the past few years, and recently we added a sergeant and drug dog. We have one officer just getting out of the academy and another soon to be going."

"You ask if citizens should have confidence in our police department — they should."