

OPINION

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OUR VIEWS



Bob Hilson/For the Chinook Observer
Lt. Jessica Shafer, center, listens to opening remarks at the change of command ceremony.

New commander symbolizes a sea change

The appointment of Lt. Jess Shafer as commanding officer at U.S. Coast Guard Station Cape Disappointment is both symbolically and substantively important. For anyone who started their service career there as an enlisted person to return, years later, as the top boss is an extraordinary professional achievement.

That the Coast Guard is overcoming antiquated gender biases in favor of recognizing talent speaks well both of the organization and Shafer.

Cape D station — while always highly valued by the people of the Lower Columbia and North Coast — has not been without problems. Nine years ago, top managers at the station were summarily relieved of command and transferred due to a “loss of confi-

dence” among higher-ups.

Late last year, two younger male enlisted members were implicated in an alleged rape, that police said also involved sharing a video of the crime with an unknown number of other station personnel. Coast Guard District 13’s openness and speed in dealing with the matter have been unimpressive.

Shafer exemplifies the Coast Guard that acted with quiet heroism and competency to the Hurricane Katrina catastrophe, a response in which she participated. We look to her to be an inspiring leader on the local and regional level. Her qualification as a “surfman” — the top tier of professional maritime rescuers — should be more than enough to make every young enlistee stand up straighter and pay attention.

Society shouldn’t live by the gun

The experience of former Ilwaco Pastor David George in killing a violent gunman on June 17 in the Walmart parking lot in Tumwater, Washington, is worthy of deep consideration.

George, an impressive citizen during his decade-plus on the Long Beach Peninsula before moving to a ministry in Oakville in Grays Harbor County, is accurately called a hero for intervening when a carjacker assaulted innocent civilians. He clearly acted with deliberation during a fast-moving emergency, using a licensed concealed firearm to stop an attacker who otherwise might have caused more deaths and injuries. An EMT, George then immediately pivoted to providing first aid to one of the victims. It’s hard to imagine a more indispensable set of skills for the situation.

Watching a video of George struggling with the aftermath of killing a man — even someone who left him with few if any options — it’s clear he has a struggle ahead. What he did presents a daunting quandary for any true man of God, or indeed any moral person. It is good to see that he is well-supported by loved ones.

George’s actions were immediately made into a talking point by those who regard a citizenry carrying firearms as the only solution to America’s epidemic of mass shootings, as well as more mun-



David George

dane crimes. And this might perhaps be a valid point — if all armed citizens were like George, which is to say thoroughly trained, mature, calm, responsible and morally grounded. You can safely bet he does not leave weapons lying around where his grandchildren reach them, nor is he likely to commit suicide with a firearm. (Statistically, middle-aged men who own pistols are far more likely to turn them on themselves than use them for self-defense.)

Some of us are lucky in having Wild West ancestors who wore sidearms day in and day out as matter of personal protection. They worked extremely hard for communities in which being armed to the teeth wasn’t required. We should never surrender to once again becoming a “live by the gun, die by the gun” society.

SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

Is your running shoe hurting you?

Every shoe can make you run farther and faster. At least what their manufacturers want you to believe.

“Our J-Frame supports and guides your foot without the use of heavy, rigid or unforgiving materials,” reads a promotion from Hoka shoes. “It gets its name from the ‘J’ shape, which uses a firmer density foam to support the inside of your foot and heel. It’s stability plus Hoka comfort.”

Ever since P.F. Flyer’s sent kids dreaming of speed — “shoes guaranteed to make a kid run faster and jump higher” — the goal has been to get us to purchase a competitive edge.



R.J. MARX

Stakes rose and the velocity of our runners increased. The shattering of the 4-minute mile, the legend of Olympian Steve Prefontaine, the Oscar-winning, cross-country journey of Forrest Gump — all created a cultural image of the runner against the world, a solo unaided by gadgetry, an engine, a horse or a ball.

With one exception: the running shoe.

Running shoes matter

Justin Ter Har will be the first OSU-Cascades undergraduate to begin a doctoral program in OSU’s neuromechanics program. He starts in the fall and is the recipient of a graduate teaching assistantship.

The Seaside High School grad is part of an academic team that delivered the thesis, “Influence of Maximal Running Shoes on Biomechanics Before and After a 5K Run” on June 7 at the American College of Sports Medicine Northwest Chapter conference.

Ter Har, 24, knows the joy of running, first developing an interest as a freshman in Bend. “Competing against myself every day was an important thing to me,” he said. “Now I run every other day about five to seven miles.”

Locally, he likes to run at Gearhart’s Del Rey Beach.

Ter Har and co-author Christine D. Pollard studied the impact of shoes on a runner’s lower extremity biomechanics — actions of the ankles, knees, hips — important for clinicians to reduce injury.



Justin Ter Har

Justin Ter Har, a co-author of a study of running shoes.



Justin Ter Har

The two running shoes used in Justin Ter Har’s study: the Hoka One One maximal and New Balance traditional.

‘Born to Run’

Ter Har’s thesis offers not only a mini-buying guide, but a history lesson.

In the early 2000s, author Chris McDougall’s “Born to Run” inspired runners to emulate the barefoot style of Native Mexicans who could run distances of up to 100 miles at incredible speed.

Madison Avenue touted the image, with the introduction of the minimalist running shoe and claims that a lack of cushioning would reduce injuries by promoting a more natural foot-strike pattern. The weekend warrior could opt to run barefoot or in a minimalist shoe like a Merrill Glove, with no “heel to toe” drop and no midsole cushion.

The industry pivoted the other direction as the company Hoka One One introduced a “maximal” running shoe,

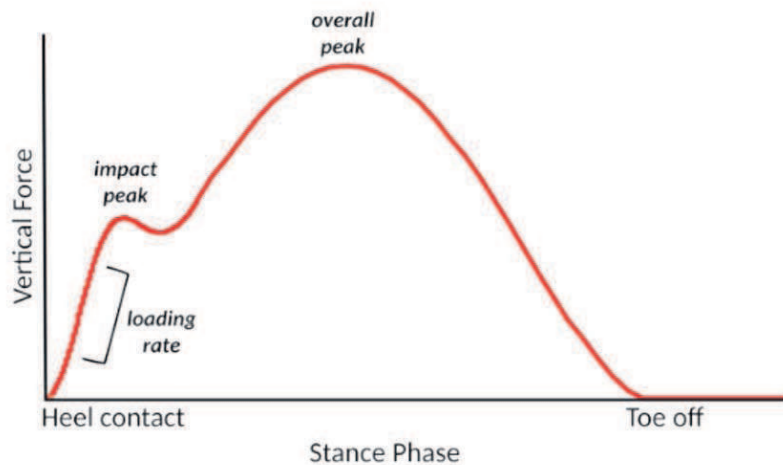


Figure 4. Example of vertical ground-reaction force trajectory for the stance phase of a runner classified as a heel-striker. Key variables of this trajectory are identified.

Justin Ter Har

Chart measuring the wear of running shoes on a runner’s lower extremities — ankles, knees and hips.

thought to reduce the risk of injury with a highly-cushioned midsole.

“The sweetest cushion” is how a 2016 television ad illustrated it, with “Mallowman,” a giant running marshmallow in a white padded suit reminiscent of the Michelin Man, racing all over town to a doo-wop soundtrack, leaping over sidewalks and little white dogs.

Surprising results

Ter Har and Pollard sought to measure the loading force impacts of the maximal and the traditional shoe.

In the study, 15 female recreational runners, from age 23 to 51, with a mean age of 34, ran a minimum of 15 miles per week. Two shoes were chosen for comparison: the maximal Hoka One One and a traditional New Balance.

Participants attended the biomechanics laboratory for two separate testing sessions, with seven to 10 days between sessions.

For one of the testing sessions, the participants wore the neutral running shoe. For the other, they wore the more cushioned.

What surprised Ter Har and Pollard was that despite their cushion, lower extremity impacts of the cushioned Hoka One One were greater than the traditional shoe, a phenomenon Ter Har called “totally counterintuitive.”

Runners should consider this potential increased risk when choosing shoes, authors concluded, although more work is necessary to better understand the longer-term impact of maximalist shoes.

Ter Har wears an Altra Superior 3.5, with “a little bit of cushion,” considered a partial minimalist shoe.

Meanwhile, after his June commencement, he plans to continue his studies as a postdoctoral scholar and graduate teaching assistant.

“I’m interested in footwear in preadolescent children,” Ter Har said. “How an implementation of a minimalist shoe in children could actually make a large effect on running-injury risk down the road.”

R.J. Marx is The Daily Astorian’s South County reporter and editor of the Seaside Signal and Cannon Beach Gazette.