

# Seaside is the winner with Hood to Coast accord

The Aug. 29 weather was frightful, with a windstorm that shut down the coast, but the runners persevered. I can only imagine what it was like for them trudging at midnight and later through mud, lightning and high winds, on mountain paths and farmers' fields, and up and over that monumental engineering feat, the Roosevelt Drive overpass.

In Seaside, the beach was cordoned off because of the gusts and runners were funneled up Broadway. By late Saturday morning, the streets were crowded with race teams taking group selfies and comparing race times. Teams from 50 states and 39 countries participated in the annual 197-mile relay from Mount Hood to Seaside, bonding in what everyone we spoke with described as an unforgettable life experience. They were soaked through but exhilarated. They shared high-fives and hugged it out.

But what I saw as a journalist that day was not what many businesses in Seaside experienced.

Only a few weeks later, 73 merchants delivered a petition asking for a date change for the event. "Although the Seaside Chamber of Commerce and many of the area's lodging facilities benefit financially, many of us year-round business owners feel that the overall impact of hosting this massive event during the busy summer tourist is negative," businesses wrote.

That number grew to 84 by the start of October. Complaints

## SEEN FROM SEASIDE

By  
R.J.  
MARX



This year, Seaside and Hood to Coast came to the brink of ending it all.

flowed about race organizers closing down streets, vendors setting up in front of stores, and a dearth of business from runners who had no interest in "shopping Seaside."

These were people who were using Seaside as "a day-and-a-half destination and a party time."

On Facebook, Seaside residents took to the message boards and layered criticism on the race: "Please send them packing. That's what the citizens of Seaside want."

### Is this marriage worth saving?

The city's love-hate relationship with Hood to Coast seems not so much like anything as a marriage, in this case, a 24-year relationship. For a sense of the historic dynamic, I went back to

the archives.

"Most of these runners are adventurers," wrote the Signal's sports editor in 1991. "Not even the winners reap monetary rewards. These die-hards run this purely for fun. For the camaraderie along the route. For the beautiful and inviting Oregon scenery. Rest up and we'll look for you next year."

Five years later, crowd control, traffic and safety concerns led to a proposed race ban in 1996.

It was kisses again in 2000. "Welcome Hood to Coast!" read a banner headline.

"Hood to Coast gets ultimatum," I read in 2005.

In 2007, the newspaper ran a local and toll-free complaint line.

"Area braces for Hood to Coast," warned the 2010 headline.

Variations on this theme have continued on and off for the past five years, with more breakup rumors than Kanye and Kim.

"I can't believe we're going through this again!" City Councilor Dana Phillips exclaimed at this year's first workshop.

### Finding inspiration from the runners

This year, Seaside and Hood to Coast came to the brink of ending it all.

But like a broken marriage, there would have been fallout, in this case, blows to our health system, city parks and potentially the tourism dollars this city depends on. At Monday's council meeting



R.J. MARX PHOTO/SEASIDE SIGNAL

Track coach Jack Kilday makes an impassioned plea to keep Hood to Coast in Seaside.

track coach Jack Kilday described the incalculable loss his teams would have faced trying to make up for what Hood to Coast brings, and those losses would have been felt throughout the school district.

Beyond the money the race brings, nothing could serve as a better inspiration for healthy living than an event promoting the values of fitness and endurance. For young athletes, the values of teamwork and team-building displayed in this unique and challenging race can only be inspiring.

And there is the race's international cachet: Hood to Coast is perhaps the only time a visitor from Bonn, Paris, Ankara or Sydney may ever hear of Seaside.

In 2004, two dozen Oregonians from the Oregon National Guard's 1249th Engineer Battalion participated in a "shadow" Hood to Coast relay at the Forward Operating Base Sharana in Paktika Province, Afghanistan. "The Guard also has at least one team in the relay in Oregon, so it is pretty easy to be connected," said Russ Gibson, a Guard member from Salem. "It helps us keep connected to Oregon."

Military teams continue to run in every Hood to Coast, Chief Executive Officer Jude Hubber said Monday night after the City Council and Hood to Coast committed to two more years of partnership.

Now that is inspirational.

## Side Rail

JON RAHL

# An educational experience is brewing along the coast

Earlier this year while attending the 2015 Oregon Governor's Conference on Tourism, I met Brandon Holmes, co-founder of technology startup Bandwango. Holmes, along with co-founder Mo Parikh, was getting set to launch an attractions pass in Salt Lake City (my old stomping ground) with a consumer interface that blew me away. Their system takes advantage of mobile technology, gives tremendous value to the traveler and makes it easy to track success. As a destination marketer that loves creative projects, this got my wheels spinning.

We initially jumped into a conversation aimed at the creation of an attractions pass for this area. It made sense to me, was similar to something I'd helped create during my time in Salt Lake and would give the Oregon's North Coast coalition a dynamic way to promote our tremendous as-

sets from Astoria all the way down to Cannon Beach. We envisioned at least five to six participants but could see as many as ten easily fitting into the pass.

Ultimately, we hit a snag with the attractions pass. Perhaps the timing just wasn't right, but we kept talking and the left the door open to doing something later this fall. Enter Beer 101. Holmes was working on the basis of a craft beer pass for an area in Portland and it gave us the idea to capitalize on the success of the 2013 advertising campaign run by the Oregon's North Coast group.

You might recall that two years ago, the marketing coalition of Astoria-Warrenton, Seaside and Cannon Beach unveiled a promotion called Beer 101. The month-long focus was on craft breweries, educational events and a contest that allowed consumers to help name a one-of-a-kind



JON RAHL

collaborative beer. All three elements were designed to drive visitation and overnight stays to this area during the late fall and winter season of 2013-14.

Late this summer, this year's campaign and the idea of a Beer 101 Pint Pass really started to take shape. I initially ran it past a few local establishments while Bandwango made sure it was something

that would work within the guidelines of the Oregon Liquor Control Commission. We received enough positive feedback to know this was something we could move forward with.

In early November, the Beer 101 Pint Pass will go on sale as the successor to the campaign from two autumns ago. It's a new step for Oregon's North Coast and, quite honestly, it's a new way to promote tourism and travel. The pass will sell for approximately \$20-25, and give the consumer a \$5 mobile gift card from each of approximately ten (the final number is still being finalized) participating locations. The pass will be valid through the end of February 2016 with a few minor restrictions. Advertising for the pass will start on November 9 and we'll quickly be able to tell exactly how effective this campaign is. As usual, I'll keep you posted on



SUBMITTED PHOTO/SEASIDE SIGNAL

North Coast communities team to introduce the local brewing experience.

the efforts, and the results. Learn more — beginning early next month — at thepeoplecoast.com/north.

Have a thought or a question about tourism in Seaside, or maybe an idea for a future

column? Drop me an email at [jrahl@cityofseaside.us](mailto:jrahl@cityofseaside.us). Jon Rahl is the director of tourism for the Seaside Visitors Bureau and assistant general manager of the Seaside Civic & Convention Center.

## Scene and Heard

CLAIRE LOVELL

# Columnist jots a few notes from 'this point in time'

Did we think during the Nixon years that when John Dean kept talking about "this point in time," we'd still be using the stupid expression years later? For one thing, he should have stopped at point. Of course, it's in time. That's where we live. I should accept the fact that copycat phrases have always been the way of the world, but some clichés just tick me off.

Our August storm on the 29th was really exciting. It came a little later than expected — a little after 6 p.m., but when it really began in earnest, I enjoyed the wild tossing of leaves and branches — the wind whipping around the trees, doors slamming in the breeze. It was fun after so long a time.

The national weathermen quoted our wind velocity at 90 m.p.h.

Hood to Coast, an annual moneymaker, was well nigh ruined by the storm. Beach activities, an enjoyable part of the holiday where pretty much destroyed. Where I live, except for an occasional van going by on Roosevelt, the run might never have happened. This week will go down in Hood to Coast annals as a washout. We've been lucky before to have had good weather, plenty of help and happy runners with snappy slogans. Next year it will be good again if we say our prayers. (Maybe I shouldn't have prayed for rain for the fires. I did think of the guy in the Bible who prayed for rain. It came and



CLAIRE LOVELL

lasted for three years.)

Does anyone know if the puppy dog had her knee operation so she could walk? I haven't seen any follow-up info in the paper and have been watching. There is so much good that can be done for handicapped animals

these days. I like to hear about it.

Sorry to learn of the death of Dave McDonald on Aug. 19. Before he moved to Warrenton, he and Emadine were a part of Seaside's up and comers, including the Junior Chamber of Commerce and a lot of young people's activities. I don't know if he'd moved to Longview or that he'd just gone to the hospital there.

Katherine Lacaze is a prolific writer for Eastern Oregon Media. I always enjoy her articles because she's a girl after my own heart. She's not afraid to go for the nostalgic stuff. If she hadn't written about Seaside Union High School aging 100 years old next year, I would have forgotten all

about it. As it happens, my youngest brother was born while it was being built. Most of my siblings and I graduated from that school. I was in the class of 1937 as salutatorian, ha. Grade wise it was an honor I shared with my best pal Evelyn Stewart, although I gave the speech. Whenever my own kids brought home stories of happenings at their school, I always visualized them in the old building. When it was torn down, the razors threw out class pictures as well as mottoes and quotations that were framed to hang on our walls. One I would have loved to have had was from President Lincoln's second inaugural address beginning "with malice toward none..." It was in our as-

sembly hall next to the stage and some of us committed it to memory from countless readings in study hall. When Leo Marlantes was principal, he rescued some of the pictures but there should have been a pre-demolition sale for all of us to have a chance at something which otherwise would be plowed under or thrown on the garbage. I actually knew one of the people on the board of director's list — Leona McKay and have heard of others like Otto, Lounsberry and Kables. The old gym was used with the new building for a while.

### Laugh Lines

It's hard to make a comeback when you haven't been anywhere.

## Letters to the Editor

### A thank-you from Hall of Fame Committee

The Seaside High School Hall of Fame Induction Committee consisting of Jim Auld, Tom Maltman, James Folk, Stubby Lyons, Wally Hamer, Dr. Shelia Roley, Larry Elliott, Gene Gilbertson and Donna Sunell wish to thank Gearhart Market leaders and crew.

and cleanup. They performed magnificently and above the call of duty.

We served over 200 diners; got the tables, chairs and the Seaside High School cafeterium in good shape Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 26 and 27. The night was a complete success. Thanks to Gearhart Market leaders and crew.

The Induction Committee would also like to thank Nike. Mike Burk, Julie Nelson and their crew led the clean up

department after the Seaside High School Hall of Fame induction event. During the ceremony they walked around and made sure that guests had coffee, water, etc. and worked well with Gearhart Market.

They always had a smile on their face, asked questions about what they could do next and because of their tremendous help, we were able to get out of there before 9 p.m.

Mike and Julie have done a tremendous job of teaching

and coaching those young people to perform the way they did. Without them there, it would not have been the successful night that it was.

The Seaside Hall of Fame has inducted 127 individuals and 28 teams since it was started in 2001.

Stubby Lyons  
Seaside

### Stop short-changing our schoolchildren

I'm an old guy who taught school in the 1960s

and 70s. We had band, orchestra, "after school" sports (with no fees), a librarian and library aide, a music teacher, an art teacher, we had field trips and PE at least three times a week — at each grade level and class sizes of 20 to 25 students. And that was in elementary school!

I am truly saddened by the stories I hear today of all the school budget troubles and the subsequent cuts to programs. It's time

— millennials and others — to step up and stop short-changing our children! You can start by voting "yes" in the upcoming election, which will at least sustain our current level of school funding. A "yes" vote will also encourage our teachers and staff. They will feel appreciated by our community and that goes a long way toward excellence in the classroom.

Marcus Simantel  
Seaside