



SUBMITTED PHOTO

"Team 911" were victors in the Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District's summer softball league championship. The team is sponsored by Public Coast Brewing in Cannon Beach and several of the players, including Chief Joey Daniels, are members of the Seaside Fire Department as staff and volunteers.

Volunteers needed, commitment is 'priceless'

Our volunteers are priceless," Seaside Fire Department Chief Joey Daniels said from his office at the Broadway firehouse.

In one week in October, a tornado slammed Manzanita and damaged more than 100 properties. In Portland an explosion cleared city streets. In Astoria, a warehouse fire injured two.

October is National Fire Protection Month and coincidentally — the week of the tornado, gas explosion and warehouse fire — Seaside Fire Department Chief Joey Daniels reached out to the community with a call for volunteers. The dramatic impact and need for a firefighting response was seen at each of these events.

"I think there's a strong need nationwide, not just Clatsop County," Daniels said at the Broadway firehouse.

Volunteers are harder to come by, he said.

"As the community builds, not only the tourism we have coming in, as the valley builds, people come down here, we have an obligation to protect citizens and tourists," Daniels said. "I think some people are hesitant to join because they assume we don't need the help. I don't think there's a volunteer agency fire department in the county that wouldn't like to see people come in."

Daniels, along with Lt. Chris Dugan and Division Chief Dave Rankin, is one of three paid Seaside firefighters.

While the department is operating with a contingent of 30 to 35 volunteers, calls have increased dramatically. Seaside Fire and Rescue jumped from an average of 700 to 800 calls a year to 1,300 calls a year within the past decade. They run about three to five calls a day, he said, but sometimes they get 15 or 20.

Businesses used to release their employees for fire calls, but today that's not always an option.

"We have only the three paid staff during the week, so we rely heavily on volunteers," Daniels said. "You could have 40 to 45 volunteers and still have only five or 10 available at certain times. You never really have enough."

Despite mutual aid agreements, a countywide shortage puts stress on all agencies.

The addition of even one or two new volunteers to the pool would be "priceless," Daniels said. "It's not just for Seaside. If 10 people go join Astoria, that's 10 more people we can go to ask for help. We all help each other."

Daniels said he recognizes volunteering with Seaside Fire and Rescue is "a huge time commitment," but, he added, the rewards are great. You don't have to be a "physical specimen," and anyone 18 or older is eligible.

All prospective volunteers undergo a six-month training to learn basic mandates. There is no difference between requirements for volunteer or career firefighters.

"Everybody here gets their training in firefighting," Daniels said, though most of the department's calls — 75 to 80 percent — are medical emergencies. "We train everybody to fight fires. When you call 911 you need us to make sure we have firefighters."

Seaside volunteers are often first on the scene fighting wildland fires in wooded areas and mountains to the east of the city. Volunteers train for medical emergencies, search and rescue operations, as lifeguards, drivers and pump operators. "If a volunteer doesn't want to go into a burning building, that doesn't mean they can't join the fire department," Daniels said. "There are other needs. People kind of find their niche."

Volunteers provide a "wealth of knowledge," with careers from professional firefighters to public works employees, law enforcement and hospital personnel. "Everybody provides their own expertise," Daniels said.

Medical calls take firefighters to Saddle Mountain, Hamlet or Tillamook Head for low-angle rope rescues, and to the beaches for water rescues.

The department prepares for catastrophic events like earthquake and tsunami — "but those aren't our everyday," Daniels said.

SEEN FROM SEASIDE
R.J. MARX



R.J. MARX/SEASIDE SIGNAL

Chief Joey Daniels of Seaside Fire and Rescue invites volunteers to join the department.

Volunteers help out at emergencies — Seaside volunteers pitched in after the recent tornado struck Manzanita — and provide traffic and safety assistance at parades, football games and special events like Seaside's Volleyball Tournament and Hood to Coast.

The service is not without a time commitment.

"Our guys not only step up, they're training every Wednesday night for three hours," Daniels said. "We train on weekends and come in for civic events. Don't come thinking you can only give a half hour a week to your commitment. You have to be committed, but there's a lot of reward."

That reward, Daniels explained, is the strong sense of camaraderie that comes from working as one group. It's not only the commitment from volunteers that make a difference, Daniels said, "it's the commitment of their families."

"Our families give up a lot," he said. "On the Fourth of July volunteers are here 14 to 16 hours a day. That's a holiday for most people. We're always having our volunteers, our spouses, better halves brought in to make them a part. If I don't, we lose them."

Daniels and his wife Jaime are parents of a 7-month old son, Jacob. They live in Seaside.

"I grew up in this community," Daniels, 39, said. "That's why I enjoy working here. I went through the school system. I was a volunteer for Gearhart for 16 years. I've always worked with Seaside."

wDaniels received an associate of arts degree in fire science and an associate of arts degree in criminal justice, both from Clatsop Community College.

"As the community builds, not only the tourism we have coming in, as the valley builds, people come down here, we have an obligation to protect citizens and tourists," Daniels said. "People look at Seaside growing, I look at the valley. Hillsboro, Forest Grove, Portland. They all come down here. This is their driveway down 26."

"All of our people love their community," he added. "If you're community-oriented, we're the place to be. Our voters have always been supportive. Now we're asking if there are people who want to join us. They see us out there, they might not know we need help."

Those old rivalries of fall

Fall arrived without fanfare. Talk about fall! There are scads of leaves already fallen, not to mention the thousands of cotyledons sifting down, another tree possible in every one. When I was a kid we had a few clusters of firs and pines but an old-time resident coming back to town would not recognize us from all the maple trees which have grown way up to change our landscape. My own yard is a case in point. I call it overgrown with underbrush.

One day, being pretty much out of everything, I walked to Safeway in the hot sun. I arrived just as they were winding up some high drama inside. Someone had used mace or pepper spray on another person in the parking lot. The fumes were sucked into the store by the wind, causing many people there to experience respiratory problems. I never saw a story about this written in the paper. Eventually they got the premises aired out and business went on as usual. I didn't learn what happened outside to make a person use that defense but the police had been there to sort it out.

I never have any trouble crossing the highway when I walk to the Signal office. Usually when there's a break in traffic, I go to the middle lane and wait for another opening. Although I had waved him by, a mile long RV with a car tied behind stopped for me. I don't like to cause a big rig to do that but it was nice of him. The road much traveled is always full of surprises. The grassy spot north of the theater looks much better since it's been mowed. Thanks Dale. I was also upset about a crow in traffic, darting fearlessly among the cars to attack some small bit of food. I didn't want to see him get killed and don't believe he did. So there are small triumphs to make the trip worthwhile. I know we're in tough times because no one ever drops anything but pennies nowadays and it used to be otherwise.

When The Daily Astorian made such a to-do in the Oct. 3 paper about Astoria besting Seaside at football, it really took me back. When I was in high school, I can't remember a time when our team won out over the Fishermen, although there must have been an isolated case, it was almost unheard of. They were the big boogymen of the north. I can remember imaginative yells at the games like "Beat, Beat, Beat Astoria," but we rarely did. Before an important contest, we had serpentine downtown where we screamed our heads off with routines that were supposed to help us be victorious, largely it was a futile exercise and it seems strange to me now. How they crow about a defeat of little old Seaside! Time marches on.

Doggone, I forgot a pancake feed again! It was on my list to go and go easy on the syrup, but my schedule of shopping, etc., intervened and used up all the time. Guess I'll have to wait for the Kiwanis Club to do their thing.

SCENE & HEARD
CLAIRE LOVELL



OBITUARIES

Edmond 'Eddie' Whitlock

June 27, 1968 — Oct. 19, 2016

Edmond "Eddie" Whitlock passed away Wednesday, Oct. 19, 2016, at the age of 48. He had fought diabetes for 46 years, and kidney failure twice. He was always upbeat, and never thought his health was a hindrance for any activity.

He took pride in being the last first grade class to attend Central Grade School in Seaside, and the first grade class to attend the new Seaside Heights Elementary School in one year. He wrestled and played football for Seaside High School, and spent several seasons as a catcher on several youth baseball teams in Seaside. He held many jobs in Seaside, and when asked which was his favorite, he said "they all were."

Eddie was a member of the young men's Order of DeMolay and was also a member of the Seaside Elks, serving as exalted ruler twice. He served on the Elks' State Visual Committee, was Elk of the Year in 2006 and received numerous commendations from his peers, both locally and statewide. He enjoyed photography, was exceptional at music trivia, and had a passion for life, military history and guns, but history was his love. He cared very deeply for his friends. His favorite pastime was cooking, which many of us got to enjoy. He was an avid Huskies and Seahawks fan.

Eddie was a lifelong resident of Seaside, where he was born on June 27, 1968. He was preceded in death



Edmond Whitlock

by his brother, Marshall, in 1972. He is survived by his mother, Patricia (Patsy) Kerwin and Hugh; father Eugene (Gene) Whitlock and Carole; sisters Sally and Cathy Dawson (Allan); brothers Sherman (Cindy), Richard (Kirsten) and George (Angela); half-brother Joel (Karen); four nieces and four nephews; numerous great-nieces and nephews; and so many others. He was privileged to have had a medical community that cared for him deeply, and for whom he cared deeply, as well.

Memorial services will be held Sunday, Nov. 6, 2016, at 1:30 p.m., at the Seaside Elks Lodge.

In lieu of flowers, donations should be directed to the Oregon Elks State Visual Committee or the Seaside High School Band.

Hughes-Ransom Mortuary & Crematory in Seaside is in charge of the arrangements. Please visit www.hughes-ransom.com to share memories and sign the guest book.

SEASIDE
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