



▪ ELECTION RESULTS ▪

Gomez is front-runner in competitive Seaside School District board race

Seaside Signal

Sondra Gomez held a decisive lead late Wednesday in her bid to represent the Seaside School District Zone 5, Position 1 board seat. In unofficial results from the Clatsop County Board

of Elections, Gomez earned more than 51% of votes cast. "I'm excited to continue to serve and support the school staff and students of Seaside," Gomez said Wednesday. Gomez won 927 of 1,724 votes cast; Mills, 690 votes for 38% of the total; and

Dunzer, 189 votes, 10% of the tally. There were two write-ins. Gomez is a local operations manager at Vacasa and served in the consulting office at the Seaside School District from 2016-18.

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Morrison is winner; Chapman holds lead in tight four-way SEPRD race

Seaside Signal

A tight four-person race showed John Chapman with a narrow lead in the Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District race for Position 4 late Wednesday. In unofficial results

from the Clatsop County Board of Elections, Chapman held about 26%, of the total votes cast, earning 313 of the 1,195 votes counted. Candidates Katharine Parker and Marti Wajc each received 25% of the vote; Parker with 300 votes, one more than Wajc, who

garnered 299. Shirley Yates received 278 votes, 23% of the total. The Position 4 seat came vacant after current board member Edward Hassan announced plans to move outside the district.

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OLYMPIC HOPEFUL

By KATHERINE LACAZE
For Seaside Signal

Over the past three years, Seaside High School senior Gretchen Hoekstre has orchestrated the perfect blend of natural talent and hard work to produce the type of nationally recognized success most high school athletes dream of. In her mind, though, she's just getting started.

"I was nervous that I would peak somewhere in high school, but I'm still getting better and I'm still succeeding," said the track star, who captured another title at the state championship last weekend. "I have the natural ability to push my body to its limits, and that has been something I love."

Hoekstre's always possessed a vividly competitive nature, one that she previously channeled into team sports, including basketball, softball and volleyball. After butting heads with the softball coach her freshman year, she decided to give track a try and the sport clicked right away. Although

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Katherine Lacaze



STATE CHAMPION

Senior Gretchen Hoekstre, winner of two state titles at the Class 4A meet in Gresham.

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Seaside High School senior Gretchen Hoekstre has achieved notable success as a track star in high school, but is now ready to take her talents to the next level. She is headed to Brigham Young University in the fall and also has her sights set on the Paris Olympics in 2024.

Construction traffic headed to Spruce Drive

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

Spruce Drive and nearby residents will see a bump in construction traffic as work begins on The Heights Elementary School, Cary Bubenik of Hoffman Construction told the Seaside School District's School Construction Citizen Oversight Committee on Tuesday, May 14.

With the district's architect and construction teams finalizing schedules, work is expected to begin in June and continue through summer 2020. The Heights will be closed to all community access this summer.

The renovation at The Heights is part of the \$99.7 million plan approved by voters in 2016 to move schools out of the tsunami zone. Students from Gearhart Elementary will join students in the Heights' renovated building September 2020.

Workers on the middle and high school site have been using Beerman Creek Road, including most concrete and heavy materials delivery.

Hoffman Construction, BRIC Architecture and the school district will be presenting their plans at a barbecue at the Heights on June 8, Bubenik said, with the goal of reaching out to local residents.

"The push this summer will be the metal (gym) building and the site work for the existing school, and seismic upgrades to the extent we can get it done," Bubenik said. "There's going to be a lot more truck traffic for the Heights."

Expected traffic includes workers coming and going to the site and materials for the gym building.

Once the access road from the Heights to the middle and high school building is complete, Beerman Creek Road access will "go away," Bubenik said, with the exception of large concrete or material trucks.

Work at The Heights gym is expected to be finished by the end of the year.

Work ahead at the middle and high school site include water and stormwater management, electrical, data, gas and sewer line work.

Further uphill, the city will begin work on a new reservoir concurrent to meet the new school's water needs.

After completion of the access road, the bulk of the high school work will come up Spruce, Bubenik said.

By summer's end, masonry, gravel, and concrete trucks will be "somewhat minimized," project manager Jim Henry added.

Apricot Irving reads from her memoir of Haiti

By EVE MARX
For Seaside Signal

On Wednesday, May 8, Apricot Irving, recipient of the 2019 Oregon Book Award for creative nonfiction, gave a talk and read from her memoir, "The Gospel of Trees" at Beach Books as part of the Lunch in the Loft series. The memoir retraces the story of Irving's family, missionaries working in Haiti, and the shattered history of colonization.

"These are the stories we didn't talk about," Irving said to her audience, many of whom had already read the book. Irving and her family arrived

in Haiti when she was six years old. Even at her tender age, she was aware of her privilege. Her father was deeply interested in ecology.

"His first language was trees," she said.

Years after the family returned to Oregon where her parents have a blueberry farm, the Haiti experience was not a topic for discussion. Irving said she felt her parents were trapped by the weight of the burden of their expectations. Despite having lived in Haiti for much of her childhood, Irving said she was never taught during that time any Haitian history. Nevertheless, she learned to love Haiti.

Her parents weren't traditional missionaries, Irving said.

"They were recruited to run this agricultural center in the north of Haiti in the 1980's," she said. "We were surrounded by sugar cane fields."

Irving went to a "tiny, English-speaking missionary school," as the family tried to figure out how to become part of the community.

"Later we moved to a hospital compound, a cluster of a dozen houses. We celebrated American holidays, not Haitian ones. We postured ourselves as if we had a lot to teach Haitians, but not that we



Eve Marx

See Memoir, Page A7 Apricot Irving

