

Hoekstre: Athlete wants to be the best in the world

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she couldn't compete that spring, hindered by a serious bout of mono, she went back the spring of her sophomore year and subsequently qualified for state that year.

"I just fell in love with the idea of an individual sport," she said. "It's so much easier to not be reliant on people to succeed in a sport. ... I always struggled with that, because I'm a very competitive person."

Although she continued to play volleyball her freshman and sophomore years and lettered in basketball as a freshman, sophomore and junior, she decided her senior year to put all her focus on discus-throwing and shot-putting, along with theater.

Small town, big goals

Throughout the year, Hoekstre's broken several personal records and captured a couple key achievements: throwing 50 feet in the shot to become No. 1 in the nation and throwing the discus about 158 feet at state to break the meet record previously held by Astoria's Laura Bobek. She also started planning for the future.

"In a small town, you're always told, 'You're probably not going to go D-1, you're probably not going to be the best in anything,' just because you come from a small school and you

don't have the opportunities provided for you," she said. "And I really wanted to prove that wrong."

She considered other Seaside graduates — such as Ben Archibald, a former San Francisco 49ers offensive tackle, and Maddi Utti, Seaside's basketball standout who is currently playing at Fresno State on a full ride — and knew national success was attainable.

"I want to be the best, and if I'm going to compete, I want to compete at the highest level that I can," she said.

Her first decision to make was where to attend college. At first, was hesitant to sign with Brigham Young University, in Provo, Utah, uncertain about going to "a church school" and being "that typical Mormon girl," she said. One visit to the campus, however, and she saw an unparalleled opportunity for her athletic potential to be further cultivated.

"I fell in love with the coach, the athletes, the atmosphere, the idea of going to a school of that caliber," she said.

Hoekstre knows she will be challenged academically and athletically, and also fully supported in her journey to achieve success at the next tier. She plans to compete in a variety of indoor and outdoor track events — including the weight throw, shot, discus and hammer — during winter and spring.

She was only recently introduced to hammer throwing last summer, but instantly appreciated the track event and how it could play off her particular strengths.

"It's very complicated, it's very demanding on your body, but it's a beautiful sport," she said. "The way it's done, it's like a dance. ... Because of my build and natural strength, and my natural weight in my legs and my trunk, I think I could really succeed."

Heading into her college career, she hopes to place in two events by her sophomore year and to be a national champion during her junior and senior years.

Going for global success

Hoekstre's dreams stretch beyond collegiate achievement, though. Another massive one: Competing at the 2024 Olympics in Paris. She will need to get her numbers up in the shot, hammer throw, and discus to qualify for the Olympic trials, but she perceives that as a manageable, and worthwhile, goal.

"I don't want to just be the best for a small town or the best in the state of Oregon," she said. "I want to be the best in the world. I want to take that challenge."

Hoekstre is no stranger to making sacrifices to pursue her passion. She has spent countless hours weight-lifting and practicing and put

other activities on the backburner, particularly during her senior year.

"I've given up parties, and a lot of friends, and dates, anything you can think of that a high schooler or teenager would like to do, to be able to succeed," she said. "I've given up a lot already, and every time I PR or I succeed on the field, it is worth it. Every time."

She knows the Olympics is a lofty goal, as only the best athletes in the world are given the chance to participate, and she has a backup plan: Studying exercise science, becoming a physician's assistant, and working with the international nonprofit Doctors Without Borders.

Given the opportunity to participate in the Olympics, though, she feels confident she can make the most of it given her aptitude for hard work and discipline. Even now, when struck with a sense of awe or disbelief about the goals she's already accomplished, she recalls the massive amount of work she's invested and feels justified.

"Sometimes it is kind of scary to think, 'Wow, what if I'm not the person that people say I am?'" she added. "But I've proven to myself, especially recently, that the work I've put into the sport is worth everything and it has gotten me to the point that I really can succeed."

Memoir: What it's like to be a white family in a brown country

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had anything to learn from them."

It was this growing awareness between the lives of the Haitian people and the distance created by the white foreigners that stuck with her. Haunted her. Propelled her to write a book.

She said it took her nearly 15 years to write "The Gospel of Trees."

"I didn't want to just tell the story of our family, but also to talk about the history of colonization," Irving said.

As part of her process, she worked from her own journals, boxes of missionary newsletters, and her parents' own journals, which they eventually turned over to her. She said what went less smoothly was the inner work that had to be done as she wrestled with the hard stories of failure and shame.

"It was going back to face those hard questions that took me the longest," she said.

She sold the book before she completed it, and went back multiple times to restructure. Due to the vagaries of modern publishing, she had multiple editors. One of them asked her to go back into

the manuscript and be kinder to herself.

Irving was born in Corvallis and returned there to finish her last two years of high school. She is the recipient of a Rona Jaffe Foundation Writers' Award and Literary Arts Creative Nonfiction Fellowship. She's taught literature and writing to students in Indonesia, China, the U.S., the U.K., and Ireland and reported on post-earthquake recovery efforts in the north of Haiti for the radio program This American Life.

Being a white family in a brown country is not an easy story to tell, but Irving approaches her subject matter with lyrical writing and love in her heart. She's returned to Haiti multiple times since the catastrophic earthquake of 2010 and continues to be deeply interested in the future of the country and its people.

"Restoring the earth is not the work of one lifetime," she said.

On June 19, Erica Baumeister, author of "The Scent Keeper" will be doing a reading and book signing at Beach Books. For more information or to reserve space for Lunch in the Loft, call Beach Books at 503-738-3500.

SSD race: Gomez is leader in Zone 5 race

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Shannon Swedenborg, running unopposed for Cannon Beach's Zone 1, Position 1, received 1,294 votes, with 15 write-ins.



Sondra Gomez

ogy in the Renton, Washington, School District.

In another uncontested race, Mark

Truax, won 1,279 votes for re-election to Zone 4, Position 2, based in Seaside. There were 15 write-ins.

Board president Truax is a Seaside High School graduate and Astoria firefighter.

SWEDENBORG, TRUAX LOOK AHEAD

Shannon Swedenborg, who was selected earlier this year to serve the remainder of Patrick Nofield's term through 2019, will continue representing for another four years. She looks forward to being "involved in some good decision-making" and supporting students, staff, and administration.

"I think educating and exciting young people for the next steps of their lives is just a great way to give back, to be involved in the community," she said. "Lots of people have their things and education is mine."

A former teacher, Swedenborg takes particular interest in student-related aspects of leadership, such as student activities, curriculum, and graduation rates.

"I'm excited to be involved with the school district in a higher capacity than just a parent," she said.

Mark Truax also was elected to serve his sixth term on the board in an unopposed race. After this upcoming term — which he adamantly assures is his last — he will have been a board member 24 years. He decided to run again to see a couple of key projects to



Shannon Swedenborg

Mark Truax

completion, including the district's strategic plan implementation, the hiring of a new superintendent after Sheila Roley retires, and the transition of three schools to the new campus.

"I've been in the middle of all of it," he said. "We've bitten off a lot in the last year."

During the next four years, he looks forward to "seeing a culmination of a lot of hard work with the buildings," along with improving high school graduation rates and executing the strategic plan.

After nearly 20 years of service, he still finds the work and devotion to the district rewarding, particularly when school board members get to give diplomas to graduating seniors or seeing individuals he knew as high-schoolers now serving on the board.

—Katherine Lacaze

SEPRD race: Morrison wins; Chapman holds lead

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In Position 5, Lindsey Morrison held about 42% of the vote in unofficial results, receiving 462 of the 1,108 votes counted. Patrick Duhachek garnered 386 votes, about 35% of the tally; Rodney Roberts followed with 257 votes or 23% of the total.



Lindsey Morrison



John Chapman

the other three board seats. Each of their terms expire in 2021.

The timeline for the transition will recognize the new director and outgoing directors, executive director Skyler Archibald said at a district board meeting earlier Tuesday.

The last day of service for the outgoing directors will be the last day of June.

New board members will be sworn in at the July board meeting, at which time the board will select a board president and officers.

McClaine has lead in Port race

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

Challenger Scott McClaine has a healthy lead on Commissioner Bill Hunsinger for Position 3 on the Port of Astoria Commission after initial results.

McClaine, who ran Clatsop Coin in Astoria, quit his job as a security guard at the Port to run against Hunsinger. Originally from central Washington state, he has 28 years in the Coast Guard, including tours on the cutter Resolute at Tongue Point and with Group Astoria, the precursor to Sector Columbia River.

McClaine has stressed

the need for increased civility on the Port Commission, often beset by infighting and drama, and touted himself as a set of fresh eyes.

Hunsinger, a retired longshoreman and commercial fisherman, has served on the commission for 12 years. He has emerged as a self-appointed whistleblower of what he sees as mismanagement by Jim Knight, the Port's executive director.

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