

SEASIDE Sports



Gary Henley

A celebration of Gene Gilbertson's life takes place July 13 in Seaside.

Seaside mourns former coach Gene Gilbertson

Seaside Signal

Seaside Hall of Famer Gene Gilbertson, who coached four state championship teams, and 35 individual state champions, earning him Track and Field Coach of the Year three times for the state. Gilbertson died June 12, at the age of 79.

Gilbertson graduated from North Salem High School in 1959, where he was a state champion in track and field. He received scholarships in track and field, football and academics to attend Linfield, graduating in 1964.

Gilbertson moved to Seaside in 1965 to teach physical education and coach basketball and track. After earning a library degree from Portland State University, he served as librarian at Central School,

Cannon Beach Elementary School, Broadway Middle School and Seaside High School.

In 1973, he was hired as head track coach at Seaside High School, retiring in 2007. "Mr. G," in his years of teaching and coaching, numerous students and athletes were affected by his encouragement, inspiration and his ability to see the potential in all.

Family described him as "an educator, mentor, friend, master gardener, golfer, carpenter, cook and adept salmon fisher, which resulted in many amazing salmon dinners. He had unconditional love for all, even when occasionally out-fished or bested on the golf course.

A celebration of Gene's life will occur on Saturday, July 13, at 3 p.m., at Beacon On Broadway in Seaside.

The future of American track is strong

By NEIL BRANSON
For Seaside Signal

EUGENE — Because of the demise of Historic Hayward Field and the raising of a new state-of-the-art track facility at the University of the Oregon, the Prefontaine Classic — stop seven of 14 in the Diamond League series of track meets — was moved to Cobb Track and Angell Field on the campus of Stanford University.

From the media updates I was getting, it was obvious that the best athletes in their respective events were going to compete. My question was, will fans show up. Answer, yes.

The facility is much smaller than Hayward, so temporary seating was brought in. Not enough. All seats and standing room were sold out with 8,128 in attendance.

As I hovered near the will call window I saw many a disappointed fan turned away. No doubt in my mind a good 9,000-plus people would have attended given the opportunity.

While I was waiting for the meet to start I conversed with a few fans wearing "Go Pre," "Stop Pre," or "2016 (or earlier) Olympic Trials, Eugene" T-shirts to gage their anticipation for the Pre in this different venue.

While each one was looking forward to the competition's return to Eugene, they knew in their bones the athletes would perform to the highest standards.

What about novice attendees? What would their take be on this high caliber meet?



Contributed photo

Former Seaside High School track coach Neil Branson.

I caught up with sisters Chloe and Caitlin along with their father Conrad. They were certainly excited to watch and learn yet were most impressed with the T-shirts they picked up for being in a USA Track and Field promotional video.

When it came to watching the meet, with dad's encouragement, the two girls kept a keen eye on the multitude of events going on at the same time. I wasn't sure if they fully grasped the quality of what was happening in front of them, but they assured me the entertainment was worth the price of admission.

Athlete of the Meet was Darian Romani of Brazil, who had all six shot put attempts over 70 feet with a winning effort of 74 feet, 2 1/4 inches, setting a field and Brazilian National Record.

Previous to Romani's win, the women were in the

ring with Lijiao Gong of China setting the stage with a field record. She took control of the competition in the second round at 63-10 1/4 and wrapped it up in the fifth with a 64-11 1/4 put.

World leading times were posted in the 100 meters by Christian Colman as he sped 9.81 seconds. Going longer and topping the best so far this year was Timothy Cheruiyot of Kenya with a 3:50.49 mile. Running twice that distance, Ugandan Joshua Cheptegei came home in 8:07.54 for the eight laps of the two mile.

Meet records were established by USA's Rai Benjamin (47.16 in the 400 hurdles), two-time world indoor and outdoor gold medalist Marlya Lasitskene of Russia cleared 6-8 1/2 in the high jump, Kenyan Beatrice Chepkiech dusted the field by nine seconds

in the 3,000-meter steeplechase (8:55.58), and in the women's 800, South African Caster Semenya completed the two-lap race in 1:55.70.

The future of America's speed is strong. In the high school boys 100 the eight competitors flew down the track with the winner crossing in 10:41 and eighth place finishing in 11:43 to 11:75.

No question Track Town USA will be happy to have the Pre Classic back in Eugene next year, and yet I am sure a few more people in the Bay Area were converted to track fans and may well work their way north for the 2020 edition of the meet.

Pop Conrad assured me he would be bringing daughter Chloe and Caitlin up for the meet.

Marlantes: New novel explores coastal logging culture, immigrant experience

Continued from Page A1

And Astoria was basically logging and fishing and plywood mills, and, you know. That's the era I grew up in and I love my childhood.

I think that I also wanted to talk about the darker side about growing up in that culture. I mean fishing and logging today are still the two of the most dangerous professions in the world. And five of my friends in a tiny little town, Seaside's maybe 2,800 people when I was there.

Five of my friends lost their fathers in the woods to logging accidents. And my step-grandfather got his legs crushed in a log boom accident, had one amputated. My Greek grandfather lost an eye in a sawmill accident. They were dangerous times.

So I wanted to try to express the juxtaposition of what a wonderful time it was: there were dances, there was community. Those loggers made their own violins and they played them with their friends. The men and women mended nets together.

What I feel is just the irony of the heroism of these people.

You think about it they're little, 5-feet-9-inches tall, and these trees are 14 to 15 feet in diameter, over 200 feet high.

My great-uncle told me sometimes it would take a couple of days to get these things down, because all they had was axes and handsaws.

One of the things I loved about the research is that somebody estimated the caloric consumption of a logger was 16,000 calories a day.

Think about that physical kind of work. They worked

from dark to dark and six days a week — and still went dancing.

The irony is there's no more old-growth forests. We cut it all down. And the same goes for the damn building, heroic effort. Seventy-two, 73 guys died building Grand Coulee Dam. So we could flip a switch and get electric-

cookies in any language.

Q: Speaking of your family, you talk a lot about the immigrant's experience in your book. Can you tell me a little more about that?

Marlantes: Absolutely. There's two things. First of all, I wanted to show the immigrant's experience from the immigrant's

political view was that capitalism was bad and she had very sound reasons for it. She grew up under the Russian czar, an extreme form a capitalism that hadn't been mitigated by laws. I could understand that. But she's not a demon, she's my grandmother! So my character Aino, she's a radical com-

"Aino, it doesn't make any difference whether we're communists or capitalists, it's whether we have good people or bad people running the place."

Q: Exactly. So, to change gears here, describe what it was like growing up in Seaside? I hear your dad was the principal.

go to high school — which was just horrible.

He was a really good principal. To this day people talk about what a wonderful educator he was. I'm very proud of him. And, you know, my mother started the Lutheran church in Seaside because there wasn't one. And so she was very sort of "active." She left school when she was 14 and she was the brains of the family, everybody knew that, even though my dad got the education. And I had a paper route with the Astoria Budget when I was in second grade. Nineteen customers.

Q: Do you have any plans after Deep River? Are you going to keep writing from this personal perspective?

Marlantes: I do have plans. The next novel is actually going to explore what I call "American naivete." That's what I'm sort of thinking about right now. I'm going to set it in the American embassy in Helsinki. I might take one of the characters from Deep River.

Q: So still exploring your roots a little bit, but in a different setting.

Marlantes: Way different! I'm going to have to do some research on what life was like in Helsinki in 1947. But I have been cross-country skiing so I do know a little bit about that. But I really do tend to agree that good writing is to write what you know about.

Marlantes now lives near Duvall, Washington, but he'll be coming to the Cannon Beach Book Company on Thursday, July 11, at 7 p.m. as well as Beach Books in Seaside on Tuesday, Aug. 27, at 7 p.m. as part of his nationwide book tour. "Deep River" comes out this week.



'FIVE OF MY FRIENDS LOST THEIR FATHERS IN THE WOODS TO LOGGING ACCIDENTS. AND MY STEP-GRANDFATHER GOT HIS LEGS CRUSHED IN A LOG BOOM ACCIDENT, HAD ONE AMPUTATED. MY GREEK GRANDFATHER LOST AN EYE IN A SAWMILL ACCIDENT. THEY WERE DANGEROUS TIMES. SO I WANTED TO TRY TO EXPRESS THE JUXTAPOSITION OF WHAT A WONDERFUL TIME IT WAS: THERE WERE DANCES, THERE WAS COMMUNITY. THOSE LOGGERS MADE THEIR OWN VIOLINS AND THEY PLAYED THEM WITH THEIR FRIENDS. THE MEN AND WOMEN MENDED NETS TOGETHER.'

Karl Marlantes

ity. But there is no Columbia River anymore, it's a series of dams and lakes.

And then I have my own background. My mother's first language was Finnish and my step-grandfather was a Swedish speaker but born in Finland. My biological grandfather who inspired one of the characters in the novel, was a Norwegian speaker. My brother and I called it cultural-linguistic schizophrenia because there were five languages in the house.

Q: That's a lot.
Marlantes: We ended up speaking English because it was just too crazy, you know. I wish I had learned a couple of those languages. I tell people I can name all the

side and just the difficulties of language. In the novel, whenever they're speaking from outside their own culture, they have a difficult time speaking. The have like three words like "Good worker" or something and it's pretty tough and they don't catch what people are saying. Having a novel gets you into the skin of people like that. And another thing is that I've also thought about is that it's human nature — not America, it's humans. We are so capable of demonizing anybody other than ourselves.

And my grandmother was a communist, right? She baked cookies and danced on Friday night. I mean, she was a grandmother! Her

munist, but she's just a girl. We have to get over demonizing because we won't get anywhere with that.

Q: It's just very divided now.

Marlantes: Yeah, but the thing that's interesting is that it was that divided 100 years ago, too. It may have been worse. Look, we have problems with income inequality, but we're not shooting each other. The National Guard isn't wading in with axe-handles. I mean it's pretty bad, but we've been there before.

Q: Yeah, I mean you could say division kind of defines America.

Marlantes: It is human nature. Aksel is the character that keeps telling Aino: