

Bringing out the best of kids in youth sports programs

SKY BOX

SKYLER ARCHIBALD



In my numerous interactions with sport and competition, I frequently wonder about the best answer to the following question: What is the value of sport?

Youth sports represent a market of more than \$20 billion per year in this country. Families with youth sport participants spend an average of \$693 per child, per sport, each year, according to research conducted by the Aspen Institute. Considering registration fees, equipment, travel, specialized instruction, and coaching, you could easily see how that figure would be surpassed.

Our society goes to great lengths to foster opportunities for children to recreate, compete and play. In our community, we are fortunate to be able to provide low-cost or no-cost sport access through local providers: Seaside Kids Inc., Pacific Basketball League and the Lower Columbia Youth Soccer Association all come to mind. But there are other providers as well.

The abundance of opportunities and all that accompanies that, as well as the competitive nature of sport that is prominently featured in those environments may be at the root of distracting those involved to forget



Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District
Youth runners James Roehr and Zander Moha at a summer Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District beach run.

what it's all about.

For some the value of competition and winning is supreme. Development, equality (in terms of playing time), sportsmanship and other potential values can take a back seat. Others may prioritize healthy outcomes, teamwork, and responsibility or even (gasp!) fun. The best coaches seem to have the ability to help harmonize the values of the team while helping the individual members of the team have their goals met.

From my perspective as a public servant work-

there are dozens of positive ones.

In the heat of the moment, it can be hard to maintain our values and not lose sight of why we want these experiences for the youth of our community.

I encourage you to be mindful of what is the ultimate goal here: we want our youth to develop, to learn healthy skills that will enable them to be successful later in life. All the other objectives might be nice, but the true essence of sport simply put, is a vehicle which fosters human development.

I've had countless conversations with my children as they learn more about teamwork and responsibility and I'd expect that just about every parent, grandparent and coach has done the same. Sometimes there are hard lessons to learn about what it means to be part of a team and the need to occasionally sacrifice our own values and goals for that of the team or a vision by a coach for that team.

As the Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District works to expand our programming and sport opportunities available at the Sunset Recreation Center, we are working to facilitate more opportunities for healthy sport, coupling those with the other offerings in our community.

We encourage you to come join us for basketball, pickleball, Start Smart sports or other opportunities and bring your set of values to share with us!

ing in this field, coupled with my avocation for officiating and being a parent, I have observed these values, play out, sometimes with uncomfortable conflicts that directly oppose the idyllic nature of youth sport.

I've seen children as young as 7 or 8 years old register a desire to throttle their opponent, which is one value (competition) coming to life. I've seen parents and coaches react poorly to poor play or officiating and lose sight of opportunities to teach and influence. For every negative experience

NEWS IN BRIEF



Jeff TerHar

Scott White, Keith Chandler and John Morris with a check for Seaside Kids.

SDDA donates to Seaside Kids

The annual Seaside Golf Classic tournament at Gearhart Golf Links on Aug. 25 benefited Seaside Downtown Development Association and Seaside Kids Inc.

The association presented Seaside Kids with a check for \$8,225.80

Extended hours at food bank

The South County Community Food Bank will remain open until 6 p.m. on Thursday, October 21, for the convenience of working families.

Normal hours are Tuesday and Thursday from 12:45 to 3:45 p.m. The food bank is located at 2041 N. Roosevelt.

Wildlife Center hosts virtual fundraiser

The Wildlife Center hosts their 2021 virtual Founder's Event.

This annual fundraiser helps raise critical funds needed to keep the Wildlife Center's doors open to every wild animal in need of care. Event access tickets and grand prize raffle tickets are on-sale now at event.gives/foundersevent. Tickets to the event are \$15 for single admission and \$100 for a virtual table of 8. All ticketed attendees receive five entries into the door prize drawing that will take place during the live-streamed event on Sunday, Oct. 17, at 6 p.m., hosted by Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce Executive Director David Reid. The silent auction opens on Oct. 10 and concludes during the live event.

There will be a separate, live auction on the night of the event as well as an update from executive director Josh Saranpa on all the center has accomplished over this past year, and things to look forward to in the coming years.

For more information about the center, visit www.Coast-Wildlife.org.

Fall fun fest returns Oct. 23

This year's Fall Fun Fest will be held on Saturday, Oct. 23, from 3 to 7 p.m. at the Sunset Recreation Center at 1120 Broadway. Activities include a cake walk, games, a costume contest, and a pumpkin decorating contest.

The cost is \$2 per child with a \$10 maximum for families. Participants are required to wear masks, and event activities will use social distancing. Admission to the event will be staggered to assist with social distancing.

To volunteer or serve as sponsor, contact Melissa Ousley at mousley@sunsetempire.com.

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