

# Local inventor serves up a charge

DR-1 gets its charge from many sources, even the sun

By MIKE WILLIAMS  
EO Media Group

One Astoria businessman hopes to make things a little brighter the next time the power goes out with the latest model of his portable power station.

This unit can jump-start your car, keep the lights on and even run the microwave, inventor Bruce Forster said. The Astoria resident recently demonstrated the latest generation of his portable power supply, called the Go Volt DR-1.

He's still researching the name with the U.S. Trademark office to make sure Go Volt is available.

Forster, a ham radio operator, got inspired by the devastation of Hurricane Katrina to create a versatile, portable power supply. In December 2007, the storm that walloped the region added urgency to the task. Forster was among those left without electricity for six days.

"And I didn't like it," he said.

The result is a rolling box with an inverter, three 120-volt AC outlets, eight Anderson Powerpole DC connectors and four 12-volt cigarette lighter-type outlets. It comes standard with a 2-foot-by-4-foot 100 watt solar panel that can charge the on-board battery while running electrical devices.

It's the fifth generation of the product Forster's developed. He got a research grant to develop two prototypes of the current model from an investor on the Long Beach (Wash.) Peninsula.

He's sold nine units of the earlier generations, and he's seeking investors to help market and develop the



MIKE WILLIAMS — EO Media Group

Bruce Forster describes the operation of the DR-1. The name of the unit stands for disaster relief.



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The panel and outlets of the DR-1 sit over a Group 31 deep-cycle marine battery.

project further.

Forster sees many applications for the product. He's a Seventh-day Adventist and volunteers for disaster response. The generator can be transported to areas off the grid and set up in a few minutes, he said.

In addition to charging from the solar panel, the DR-1 can also be charged by hooking it up to a running vehicle, a gas or diesel generator or from a wall outlet. And you can continue using it while it charges, he added.

"You have to take most systems offline to charge," he said.

The unit was charging more than 13 volts using the solar panel during a demonstration on a cloudy morning outside Englund Marine. Forster chose

the location for the demonstration because many of the components used to build the DR-1 were purchased at Englund Marine. Abe at Crossover Car Audio helped with the design, he added.

"The people that helped me deserve to be recognized," he said.

He's tested it at home. He and a friend used an earlier version of the unit to build a wing on his shed. They ran a drill, a saber saw and other tools and even made lunch in the microwave oven. At the end of the day the battery had a net increase in power from when the day started, he said.

The suggested retail price is \$2,495. Forster will deliver within 200 miles and train the



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Bruce Forster sets up the DR-1. The portable power station can be charged with a solar panel, a running vehicle, a generator or a wall outlet.

buyer to use the unit. He's also ready for wholesale offers.

The DR-1 uses a Group 31 deep-cycle marine battery, which accounts for most of its 80-pound weight. It comes with a power cord and connectors.

For more information on the unit call 503-325-7161 or 503-308-2372.



EDWARD STRATTON — The Daily Astorian

John Kimbrough runs Eye On You Security Guards LLC out of Seaside.

## Making the Dollar

INTERVIEWS WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES  
BY EDWARD STRATTON

John Kimbrough,  
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His employees aren't security guards, says John Kimbrough; they're security officers. Kimbrough provides trained, licensed and insured security officers to local businesses. Each employee has gone through at least 14 hours of training, background checks and certification by the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training. Kimbrough said he's looking for employees, especially bouncers, and starts them off at a minimum of \$12 an hour.

### How would you describe your business?

"We're a security guard contract company. If somebody needs security for something, they call me, and I send a security officer out. Currently, I have four other employees, then myself."

### How did you get started in this business?

"An acquaintance needed a bouncer, asked me. I said 'sure,' then I got into security, because you have to be a security officer, certified, to be a bouncer. So then I worked with Hauer's Security out in Astoria, and he (Ed Hauer) had talked about someday he'll retire ... So guys need to stay employed. So I figured 'why not?' I could start up my own business, get it going, hopefully two, three years down the road, he might retire, and I'll take over everything. That's why. That, and I want to provide jobs in the area, because a few years ago, jobs were really hard to find. Now you can't find employees, because everybody's got a job. This is my third year."

### Who are your main clientele?

"Right now, My two main are Merry Time Bar & Grill in Astoria and Chart Room bar in Astoria. Those are every weekend, then of course I work with the chambers (of commerce), Seaside Convention (center), the Astoria Event Center, the Armory. Anything that happens at the Armory, they need security, they call me. And then also the fairgrounds."

### What are some of the quirks or challenges of running your business?

"Especially being a bouncer, you have to be really patient. I call it, as security officers, we're glorified babysitters, because that's our job, to babysit people; that's it. So it's stressful; it's challenging, because you have to do a lot of listening. You have to understand the laws, what we can and cannot do. We're private security. Basically, we're in a sense cops for the private sector. We're doing the stuff the cops don't want to do. Going to the bars, watching every single person all the time. A person could be drinking, having a good time, then all of a sudden, just instantly, their face changes, their body changes, and you have to get over there and figure out why before he goes and starts beating up on somebody. It's preventative."

# Unemployment rate drops slightly

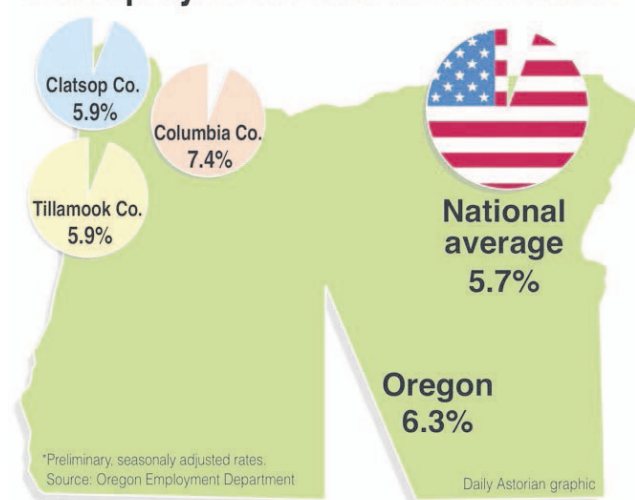
Clatsop County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for January was 5.9 percent, down slightly from the previous month and year. It was below the statewide rate (6.3 percent) and slightly above the national rate (5.7 percent). Clatsop County has the seventh-lowest unemployment rate in the state, tied with Tillamook and Yamhill counties.

Seasonally adjusted nonfarm payroll employment in the county fell by 430 in January, 50 more than expected. That left its total nonfarm job pool at 17,430.

In January, the private sector cut 310 jobs, and government employment dropped by 120. Retail trade lost 140 jobs; leisure and hospitality cut 120; and food manufacturing trimmed 40. Private educational and health services showed the only real growth in January, adding 30 jobs. Local government, excluding education dropped 80 jobs in January, and government education shed 50.

January's total nonfarm payroll employment was 400 more than its level last year. Industries adding the most jobs over the past year included retail trade (130); leisure and hospitality (120); professional and business services (110); and construction (60). Industries shedding the most jobs in the past year were nondurable goods manufacturing (160) and state government (20). Lo-

## Unemployment rates for Jan. 2015\*



cal government education added 80 jobs over the year.

### Columbia County

Columbia County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in January was 7.4 percent, a .3 percent decline from December but the same as one year prior.

The county lost 160 nonfarm payroll positions in January, 70 fewer than expected. That left nonfarm payroll employment at 10,070.

The private sector shed 130 jobs, and government employment decreased by 30. Trade, transportation and utilities shed 50 jobs; construction dropped 40; educational and health services trimmed 20; and local government education decreased by 30 jobs.

Total nonfarm employment in January was 110 more

than one year before. Private sector employment rose by 30 over the year, and government employment increased by 80. Industries adding the most jobs since last year were manufacturing (110); and trade, transportation and utilities (50). Industries losing jobs included professional and business services (100); and construction (50).

The apparent loss of many jobs in professional and business services is likely due to the lack of reporting detail by a firm in the that industry. An unknown number of the jobs may still exist in the county, but are simply not reported. Local government added 60 jobs over the year.

Many Columbia County residents commute elsewhere for work, so it is not uncommon for the total number of

employed people residing in the county to change without a similar change in the number of payroll jobs located within the county.

### Tillamook County

Columbia County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in January of 5.9 percent was down slightly from the previous month and even more from the year prior.

The county lost 120 nonfarm payroll jobs in January, as expected. That left nonfarm payroll employment at 8,680. The private sector cut all 120 jobs, and government employment was unchanged. Leisure and hospitality shed 70 jobs; and retail trade cut 40.

January's total nonfarm employment was 290 more than one year before. The private sector added 270 jobs, and government chipped in 20. Industries adding the most jobs included retail trade (90); professional and business services (60); educational and health services (50); and food manufacturing (30).

The Oregon Employment Department plans to release the February county and metropolitan area unemployment rates March 24, and the statewide unemployment rate and employment survey data for February March 17.

For more information on the employment data, visit [www.qualityinfo.org/press-release](http://www.qualityinfo.org/press-release)

# Final QuickBooks class coming soon

Clatsop Economic Development Resources (CEDR) continues its series of QuickBooks workshops from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. March 19 with a session on using the program to create financial reports.

In the workshop, participants will learn how to create an income statement, a statement of cash flows and a managerial report. It will also show how to review standard reports to see how a business is performing.

The instructor is Mark

Redwine, a Clatsop Community College accounting instructor and adviser for the college's Small Business Development Center.

Preregistration is required, and space is limited. Email [SBDC@clatsopcc.edu](mailto:SBDC@clatsopcc.edu) for a registration link, or call 503-338-2402. The workshop costs \$39, payable at the event by check or credit card. It will take place at CCC's South County Campus, located at 1455 N. Roosevelt Drive in Seaside.

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## Clatsop County Property Transactions

**Sellers:** Stewart M. Butler and Thomas M. Butler  
**Buyer:** Stewart M. Butler  
**Address:** 401 Pacific Way, Gearhart  
**Price:** \$539,220

**Sellers:** Thomas D. DeGandi and Susan J. DeGandi  
**Buyers:** George P. Vance and Deborah A. Vance  
**Address:** 35364 Searls Lane, Astoria  
**Price:** \$410,000

**Seller:** Susan Hill  
**Buyers:** Carmen G. Gaston and Patrick J. Gaston  
**Address:** 116 Watts Way, Cannon Beach  
**Price:** \$400,000

**Sellers:** Timothy D. Elliott and Paula G. Elliott  
**Buyers:** Sean R. Corbin and Marion P. Olmsted  
**Address:** 37885 U.S. Highway 26, Seaside  
**Price:** \$318,000

**Sellers:** Kurt M. Rummell and Cynthia Rummell  
**Buyers:** Justin D. Malin and Michelle L. Malin  
**Address:** 1520 Northwind Court, Hammond  
**Price:** \$250,000

**Seller:** Lindi F. Overton  
**Buyer:** Fidelity National Title Insurance Co.  
**Address:** 936 Grand Ave., Astoria  
**Price:** \$236,486