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Brooks intermodal passed over for Millersburg

Bill Poehler
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Oregon Transportation Commission on Thursday passed over the Kevin Mannix-led group trying to bring an intermodal facility to Brooks in favor of a facility in Millersburg at the former International Paper site.

An intermodal facility transfers containers carrying goods from trucks to railroad cars so they can be shipped more efficiently to ports and then overseas.

The Millersburg group and Treasure Valley both received grants -- \$25 million to Millersburg, \$26 million for Treasure Valley -- that were funded through the \$5 billion House Bill 2017 transportation package.

Both were fronted by State Rep. Greg Smith.

In not choosing the Brooks proposal, the commission voiced concerns about the Oregon Port of Willamette's lack of commitment from the BNSF Railroad for service, its economic viability, its desire to build the



Mannix

facility on land currently zoned exclusive farm use and the ability for the infrastructure in Brooks to handle more traffic.

"It's very difficult to make a decision when there isn't that commitment," commissioner Julie Brown said about the railroad.

The commission repeatedly delayed making its decision about choosing one of the intermodal projects in the Mid-Willamette Valley or one in Treasure Valley, citing concerns about spending public funds with no guarantee the benefits would be realized by taxpayers.

An independent third-party reviewer, The Tioga Group, repeatedly stated the intermodal facility proposals in the Willamette Valley would not be commercially viable.

Much of the Tioga group's skepticism centered on the groups' lack of agreements with rail and shipping

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An area west of the Powerland Heritage Park in Brooks is being considered by group including former state representative Kevin Mannix to create Oregon Port of Willamette, an intermodal rail and freight site in Brooks.

KELLY JORDAN / STATESMAN JOURNAL



Heidi Schindler is pictured in her backyard in Silverton on July 16, 2019. Her home and garden were built to work for her abilities. MICHAELA ROMÁN / STATESMAN JOURNAL

Paraplegic woman can't return home

City sewer system backs up her house through bathroom

Bill Poehler
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

When Heidi Schindler purchased a quaint ranch house on James Street in north Silverton in 2011, the dwelling gave her independence for the first time since being paralyzed.

It's the perfect size for her, about 1,000 square feet with concrete decks in front and back, hardwood floors leading to two bedrooms and accommodations so Schindler can get around in her wheelchair.

On July 2, Silverton's sewer system backed up into her house and sewage poured up through the drain of her shower and spread to the floors of her living room and bedroom.

Since then, Schindler has been not able to go home for more than a few minutes to water her immaculate landscaping.

For three weeks, the 36-year-old Schindler has stayed at the Gervais home of her parents, John and Diane.

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APOLLO 11 : MOON MISSION

Silverton native helped in recovery



Forward This
Capi Lynn
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Larry Zetterberg was flying over the Pacific Ocean at 8,000 feet when Apollo 11 returned from its historic moon landing.

From the cockpit of his Grumman E-1B Tracer — a world away from Silverton where he grew up — he watched in wonderment as the command module gracefully re-entered the Earth's atmosphere.

"When I picked them up, all three parachutes were streaming," Zetterberg said from his home in Langhorne, Pennsylvania. "Then pop, pop, pop — just like popcorn — they opened, and the capsule started swinging back and forth like a pendulum. "It's etched in my mind."

His aircraft, one of only a few in the air the morning of July 24, 1969, was based on the USS Hornet and provided the line of communication between the as-

tronauts and Mission Control in Houston during the recovery mission 50 years ago.

"Millions of parts had to all perform flawlessly for it to succeed," Zetterberg said, "and it did. It worked."

Now 50 years later, the retired U.S. Navy captain reflects on one of the highlights of his aviation career. "I get kind of long-winded talking about Apollo 11," he said. "If I get too longwinded, just cut me off."

If only he could find the holdback fitting he snagged from the tail of his aircraft that day. That was his only souvenir, misplaced years ago.

Historic mission with local ties

The name Zetterberg is well-known in the Silverton area.

Larry's grandparents emigrated from Sweden in 1896 and settled just above what is now Silver Falls State Park. His father was born on the homestead and later logged the area for six decades.

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Amazon begins to fill 800 positions in Salem

Local packing, shipping center to open in August

Jonathan Bach
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Amazon on Friday kicked off a hiring spree for more than 800 positions at its Salem packing and shipping warehouse.

The Seattle e-commerce giant is taking a staggered approach to fill its earlier promised target of about 1,000 jobs at the approximately 1-million-square-foot Salem outpost.

The warehouse, 4775 Depot Court SE, opens in August. Workers can expect to pack and ship larger products including sports equipment, gardening tools and patio furniture.

Amazon has adopted a \$15 hourly minimum wage. Oregon's minimum wage in the Salem area rose to \$11.25 on July 1 and will increase to \$13.50 in 2022 under state legislation enacted in 2016.

The company offers employee benefits such as up to 20 weeks of paid parental leave. Candidates for the Salem jobs have to be at least 18 years old and have a high school diploma or equivalent.

Applicants can go online at www.amazon.com/salemjobs or text SALEMNOW to 77088.

During a recent tour of the warehouse, rows of massive shelves can be seen towering toward the ceiling.

Once the warehouse hums to life, forklift-like machines operated by workers will zip around the facility, placing and plucking large products from the shelves. The packing department will ready products to ship out. And during downtime, employees will share break room computers.

Although the company touts its pay and benefits as competitive, the company has come under fire recently for working conditions.

In Portland, workers complained about excessive heat and an overly loud warning siren at the warehouse there, according to OPB.

At a warehouse in Shakopee, Minnesota, Amazon workers staged a protest Monday to raise awareness of what they say are unfair working conditions. A group of tech workers in Seattle, called Amazon Employees for Climate Justice, is supporting the strike. Amazon said roughly 15 workers participated in the event outside of the Shakopee fulfillment center.

A company spokesperson issued the following response:

"The fact is Amazon offers already what this outside organization is asking for. We provide great employment opportunities with excellent pay — ranging from \$15-\$18.50 an hour in the Portland region — and

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The Amazon fulfillment center in Salem on July 9. The 1-million-square-foot packing and shipping center will open in August with about 1,000 employees. ANNA REED/STATESMAN JOURNAL

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