

Pacific County, Astoria highly rated in different ways

LONG BEACH — SmartAsset, a financial technology company that provides personal finance advice on the web and which performs interesting comparisons of how counties and states perform in terms of tax efficiency and other measures, said in March that Pacific County ranks ninth among Washington's 39 counties for getting the most "Bang for their Buck."

In addition to property taxes, the study analyzed the quality of local schools and the local crime rates to find where people were seeing the most value, SmartAsset said. Other Western Washington counties in the top 10 were San Juan, Clark and Island.

Clatsop County ranks 26th among Oregon's 36 counties for effective use of property tax dollars, the firm said.

On the other hand, SmartAsset ranked Astoria one of the 10 best places to retire in Oregon, based on taxes (both income and sales), the number of doctors' offices and opportunity for recreation and social life. Astoria ranked ninth, behind number one Roseburg, followed by Hood River, Brookings, Florence, Ontario, Grants Pass, Ashland and Dallas.

Learn health insurance basics at local workshop

SEASIDE — The Oregon Health Insurance Marketplace will sponsor "Building Blocks of Health Insurance," a free 90-minute workshop on understanding health insurance, this month in Seaside.

The event, which is open to the public, will be held from 5 to 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 26, in the community room at the Seaside Public Library, 1131 Broadway.

Attendees will receive information to help them be confident health coverage consumers. An experienced health-insurance educator from the Marketplace will present on:

- Types of health insurance, including Medicare, the Oregon Health Plan, and individual and family plans

- Summary of Benefits documents
- Explanation of Benefits letters
- Eligibility for financial assistance

To attend, register in advance by calling 855-268-3767 (toll-free) or emailing info.marketplace@oregon.gov.

County jobless rate up slightly from 2017

LONG BEACH — With a rate of 8.1 percent, Pacific County was one of 10 of Washington's 39 counties with joblessness above 8 percent in February, most of the other being east of the Cascades.

All the Washington coastal counties were close to being in the same boat, with average

joblessness of about 7.8 percent on the outer coast, plus neighboring Lewis and Wahkiakum.

Pacific County's rate declined from 8.3 percent in January, but was slightly higher than it was in February 2017.

Washington's statewide rate was 4.7 percent. "Job growth remains strong," said Paul Turek for the Employment Security Department. "A growing labor force is supplying workers to meet labor demand while unemployment remains low."

Oregon's unemployment rate was 4.1 percent in January and February. For 14 consecutive months, Oregon's unemployment rate has been close to 4.1 percent, its lowest level since comparable records began in 1976. The U.S. unemployment rate was also 4.1 percent in both January and February.

Rates for Oregon counties were not available by CRBJ's press time.

New study reveals cost of 2017 salmon fisheries closure

LONG BEACH — Last year's closure of the commercial ocean salmon troll fishery off the West Coast is estimated to have cost \$5.8 million to \$8.9 million in lost income for fishermen, with the loss of 200 to 330 jobs, according to a new model that determines the cost of fisheries closures based on the choices fishermen make.

Scientists hope the model, described for the first time earlier this month in *Marine Policy*, will help policy makers anticipate the economic toll of fisheries closures. Such foresight may be especially useful as conditions in the California Current off the West Coast grow increasingly variable, leading to more potential closures, said lead author Kate Richerson, a marine ecologist with NOAA Fisheries' Northwest Fisheries Science Center and the University of Washington.

"We're probably only going to see more of these closures in the future," she said in a press release, "so being able to predict their

effects and fallout for coastal communities puts us ahead of the curve in terms of considering those impacts in planning and management decisions."

The new model estimates the future losses associated with fisheries closures based on the way fishermen reacted to previous closures. It anticipates, for instance, that many fishermen will simply quit fishing rather than shift their efforts to another fishery instead. In this way, the model accounts for the difficulty fishermen face in entering other fisheries with limited permits, Richerson said.

The study estimated that the closure led to a loss of \$12.8 million to \$19.6 million in sales. Richerson noted that the model estimates only the economic consequences of the closure to the commercial ocean salmon fishery and does not include the toll on recreational fisheries or in-river fisheries, which would make the total losses even higher.

Forest stewardship short-course aims to aid families

ABERDEEN — Is your forest healthy? How do you know? When harvesting timber, what is your fair share? Is a handshake good enough? How do you enhance wildlife habitat and protect your land from wildfire? How do you harvest timber sustainably without harming your land? A Forest stewardship short-course will help answer these questions.

From April 23 through June 18, a series of weekly classes will be conducted in Aberdeen for owners of small-scale family forests (typically 5 to 500 acres) in Aberdeen.

This award-winning program is known as the "Forest Stewardship - Coached Planning Shortcourse," and is conducted by WSU Extension and the Washington Department of Natural Resources. It is called "coached planning" because a major part of this training involves "coaching" participants as they develop simple management plans for their forests that are tailored to fit personal land management goals.

Course fee is \$75 per person, family or land parcel. Participation is limited to 15 registrants on a first-come, first-served basis upon receipt of the registration and fee. Classes will be held weekly on Monday evenings from 6 to 9 p.m. in Room 4330 of the Schermer Building of Gray's Harbor College. To register or for more information, call the WSU Extension office at (360) 740-1213 or email at patrick.shults@wsu.edu.

Family forestlands committee meets April 20

SALEM — The Committee for Family Forestlands will meet Friday, April 20, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. The meeting will be in the Tillamook Room at the Oregon Department of Forestry Salem Headquarters, 2600 State St. Board of Forestry Chairperson Tom Imeson and State Forester Peter Daugherty will offer comments to the committee.

In addition, the committee will receive updates about and discuss the Private Forests Division, the marbled murrelet rule process, rulemaking related to food plots and landowner assistance.

For more information, call Susan Dominique at 503-945-7502. More information on the committee can be found at www.oregon.gov/ODF/Board/Pages/CFF.aspx.

Pacific EDC offers Internet marketing workshop

RAYMOND — The Pacific County Economic Development Council is hosting an internet marketing workshop in Raymond all day April 25.

"As Millennials become an ever greater percentage of the market, businesses must adapt their marketing strategy to the media these customers rely upon," the EDC said.

The workshop presenter will be Misty Lambrecht, owner of Webfoot Marketing & Design. For more information, call or email 360-875-9330/360-642-9330 or edpcog@pacifiedc.org.

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