

# Sheriff's Office warns of IRS scams

The Daily Astorian

As tax season begins this year, the Clatsop County Sheriff's Office is receiving calls from multiple people saying IRS scams are hitting the county.

The IRS is warning the public to be alert for telephone scams. Warning signs include callers claiming to be with the IRS, scammers often demanding money to pay taxes, callers saying a

refund is due.

The refund is a fake lure to give the scammers banking or other private financial information, according to the IRS.

The scammers can sound convincing and alter the caller ID to make it look like the IRS is calling. They also may know a lot about the person they are calling.

They use fake names and fake IRS badge numbers. They often leave an "urgent" callback request when they

leave a voicemail.

The following are actions the IRS does not do:

- Call to demand immediate payment. The IRS will not call about taxes owed without first mailing a bill;
- Demand the person pay taxes without giving a chance to question or appeal the amount they say is owed;
- Require person to use a certain payment method for taxes such as a prepaid debit card;

- Ask for credit or debit card numbers over the phone;
- Threaten to bring in local police or other law-enforcement for not paying.

If a resident thinks they have been contacted by a scammer, the IRS recommends calling 800-829-1040 to talk about payment options or setup a payment plan online at IRS.gov.

To report the incident, contact the U.S. Treasury Inspector General for Tax

Administration at 1-800-366-4484 or at www.tigta.gov.

Also contact the Federal Trade Commission at FTC.gov. Use their "FTC Complaint Assistant" to report the scam. Add "IRS Telephone Scam" to the comments of your complaint.

The IRS does not use unsolicited email, text messages or any social media to discuss your personal tax issues. For more information on reporting tax scams,

go to www.irs.gov and type "scam" in the search box.

The Sheriff's Office reminds the community that if the offer is too good to be true it probably is and do not provide any personal identification such as a social security number or birth date.

Law enforcement or regulatory agencies do not threaten a person with arrest for failing to pay immediately, the Sheriff's Office said.

## County kindergarteners measured in state test

By EDWARD STRATTON

The Daily Astorian

Kindergartners entering schools in Clatsop County had mixed results in the Oregon Department of Education's second-annual Kindergarten Assessment, released last week.

The assessment, a combination of teacher observations and one-on-one sessions, focuses on key skills predictive of success in later learning. One component is approach to learning, including teacher observations of self-regulation and interpersonal skills.

The assessment covers early literacy and mathematics. It measures fluency through timed assessments having kids create letter sounds and names. The early mathematics portion uses an untimed assessment covering counting, simple addition, simple subtraction and recognizing number patterns.

For the first year, the kindergarten assessment examined the understanding of Spanish letter names by English Language Learner (ELL) students, timing them for fluency, but in Spanish.

In general, Clatsop County's incoming kindergartners exhibited as much or more interpersonal skills and self-regulation as the state average. Most met or exceeded the state average in early literacy and mathematics. The data for districts as small as Knappa, which averaged 35 kindergartners, and Jewell, which averaged six, can easily be skewed by the performance of even one child.

ELL kindergartners in Clatsop County taking the Spanish letter names assessment knew a smaller portion of the letter names in their native language than the general population taking the English letter names assessment did in theirs.

Several trends emerged between this and last year's kindergarten assessment, including:

- Astoria, Jewell and Seaside kindergartners met or exceeded the observations on interpersonal skills and self-regulation; and scores on early literacy and mathematics, compared to their predecessors last year.

### Select Oregon kindergarten assessment scores, 2014-15

For more information, go to: [www.ode.state.or.us/go/ka](http://www.ode.state.or.us/go/ka)

Self-regulation/interpersonal skills (Average rating, 1-5)				
School	Avg. score, all students	Number assessed	Avg. score, Hispanic	Number assessed
Astoria	3.7	123	3.4	27
Seaside	3.6	126	3.4	29
Warrenton	3.7	105	4.1	12
Knappa	3.4	35	*	—
Jewell	3.5	6	*	—
State avg.	3.7	40,684	3.6	9,804

Numbers and operations (Avg. number correct, 0-16)				
School	Avg. score, all students	Number assessed	Avg. score, Hispanic	Number assessed
Astoria	8.8	124	7.2	26
Seaside	8.2	127	7.1	29
Warrenton	7.8	109	7.2	12
Knappa	6.5	35	*	—
Jewell	9.2	6	*	—
State avg.	8	40,299	6.9	9,593

English letter names (Avg. number correct/minute, 0-100)				
School	Avg. score, all students	Number assessed	Avg. score, Hispanic	Number assessed
Astoria	19.8	123	7.3	26
Seaside	17.3	127	7.5	29
Warrenton	17.5	108	14.7	12
Knappa	11.2	35	*	—
Jewell	23.2	6	*	—
State avg.	17.7	39,991	8.9	9,458

English letter sounds (Avg. number correct/minute, 0-100)				
School	Avg. score, all students	Number assessed	Avg. score, Hispanic	Number assessed
Astoria	8.8	123	2.5	26
Seaside	5.3	121	3.3	26
Warrenton	6.5	108	3.3	12
Knappa	2.7	35	*	—
Jewell	4.7	6	*	—
State avg.	6.6	39,847	2.8	9,458

NOTE: Items for which students were not assessed are excluded from these averaged scores. \*Denotes fewer than six students tested.

Source: Oregon Dept. of Education

EO Media Group graphic

• Knappa kindergartners experienced an across-the-board decrease from kindergarten scores and observations last year.

• Hispanic kindergartners in the Warrenton-Hammond School District exhibited an increased level of self-regulation and interpersonal skills, as well as increased scores in mathematics, compared to last year.

Districts such as Astoria have been working the results into their efforts to combat what Superintendent Craig Hoppes referred to as an "opportunity gap" and the need to create more equity in learning for both low-income and Hispanic students.

Dan Gaffney, a spokesman for the P-3 (prekindergarten to third grade) Early

Learning Council, said the group will be using the kindergarten assessment data to gauge their efforts. The group is focused on helping connect child care and preschool with kindergarten, and on helping students read proficiently by third grade, one of the biggest indicators of academic and career success.

Gov. John Kitzhaber's proposed budget for the 2015-17 biennium included \$135 million in early learning, including child care subsidies; early intervention and special education; family coaching and support; early literacy strategies; preschools; and early learning hubs.

For more information on the 2014-15 Kindergarten Assessment, visit <http://bit.ly/1E64uy>

## Port mulls fixed-base operator for airport

By EDWARD STRATTON

The Daily Astorian

With a decent amount of certainty, Port of Astoria Director of Business Development and Operations Mike Weston said, he can say the Port earns a net profit of about \$136,000 at the Astoria Regional Airport.

The Port Commission and its Airport Advisory Committee has been evaluating the costs and benefits of the airport as the agency decides whether to pursue an offer by Brim Aviation to take over as a fixed-base operator (FBO). Brim, based in Ashland, provides transportation for the Columbia River Bar Pilots and proposed to take over operation of the airport in October 2013.

"In order for this to work out, I've come up with an assumed base rate of about \$80,000 rent (yearly) with a flowage fee at about 20 (cents) per gallon," said Weston in a report about the profits and costs of the Port operation and a possible fixed-base operator.

Fuel service is the main income generator at the airport. Weston said the flowage rate on fuel, a charge for every gallon potentially pumped by Brim, is flat, adding that the Port should incur a minimal loss on the airport as a result of using an FBO. Brim's operations already consume the majority of fuel at the airport.

If an FBO takes over, said Weston, it would mean about a \$13,000 net annual loss for the Port, which could also decrease its expenditures on staff at the airport, which it would still maintain.

"For that net loss of \$13,000, we're also gaining services," said Weston. "We're gaining a pilot lounge; we're gaining a cafeteria; we're gaining services; we're gaining flight services; we're gaining charter services. And those are the things we're trying to put a price tag on."

Weston said he still needs to ask Brim Aviation for a list of services they are willing to provide.

Kyle Fortune, Brim's maintenance base manager in Astoria who originally came to the commission nearly a year and a half ago, said the company wants to provide 24-hour fuel service, courtesy cars for transient pilots and regional marketing for the air-



ALEX PAJUNAS — The Daily Astorian

The Port of Astoria is looking at whether to hand over many operational aspects of its Astoria Regional Airport in Warrenton to tenant Brim Aviation.

port. After that, it depends on what the Port wants.

Brim has 13 people full-time at the airport, said Fortune, and would add at least two people if it took over FBO status, with more coming depending on what services the Port wants and how much business grows at the airport.

The company has been providing transport for the Columbia River Bar Pilots since March 2012, taking over for Santa Maria, Calif.-based Arctic Air, which had serviced the pilots for 10 years. Fortune said that no matter what, Brim is on contract to provide them transportation for at least another seven years.

The company has also been providing pilot training through a related company, Air Rescue Systems, also principally owned by Brim Aviation owner Burl Brim. For that training, they have temporarily stationed a black MD-902 Explorer helicopter at the airport, Fortune said.

The Port had originally explored sending out a request for proposals, but Executive Director Jim Knight recently indicated that the Port should move first to help an existing tenant, Brim, expand its business.

"One of the missions to do this is so we can improve the quality of the services being offered at the airport," said Knight.

While the Port is negoti-

ating with Brim, the company is contesting a \$220,000 civil penalty proposed by the Federal Aviation Administration Dec. 3. The FAA alleges that Brim Aviation on June 26, 2013 performed at least 20 flights hoisting people using hooks designated only for non-human cargo and lacking the approved type of quick-release devices for this purpose on.

The FAA further alleges the company used single-engine aircraft when its flight manual requires helicopters having at least two engines for such operations. Brim Aviation has requested to meet with the FAA to discuss the case. Fortune said the incident was related to operations near Brim's headquarters in Ashland.

In April, the National Transportation Safety Board opened an investigation against Brim Aviation after a Columbia River bar pilot fractured a shoulder blade during a transfer April 4.

The bar pilots started using helicopters for their transfers in 1998 to augment their two boats stationed in Hammond. They now do 70 percent of transfers from the air, including more than 25,000 since 1998. The incident April 4 has been the only accident with helicopters, and the bar pilots and Brim Aviation agree that the air-borne delivery is much safer than using boats.

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