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ONE DOLLAR

A Craft of their own



TOP: Pygmy Boats kayak-building instructor Chuck Bollong tightens a wire stitch on the hull of Amy Hatton's kayak during a session Tuesday. ABOVE: Phil Hatton and Amy Hatton, of Boise, Idaho, work on the hulls of their Pinguino 145-4PD kayaks during a weeklong kayak-building class at the Barbey Maritime Center Tuesday.

Photos by JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

Former staffers sue Port

Defendants allege retaliation; seek millions in damages

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

Anne Foster, the attorney for recently fired Port of Astoria employees Colleen Browne and Tami Herman, has filed a suit for each against their former employer in federal court. The suits were filed Tuesday, and the Port was served Thursday.



Mike Weston

The defendants listed in both cases include the Port; Michael Weston, former interim executive director and current director of business development and operations; and up to 10 more people unidentified defendants unknown to the plaintiffs, Browne and Herman.

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Eye on the capital

New newsletter covers Oregon government and debuts today

Oregon Capital Insider, an electronic newsletter covering Oregon government, begins distribution today.

Oregon Capital Insider provides specialized news for individuals and businesses that require a deeper understanding of the trends, issues and personalities in state government.



Oregon Capital Insider

The newsletter will provide timely intelligence and in-depth reporting delivered to subscribers Friday mornings, and at other times breaking news demands.

Based in Salem, the newsletter is a collaboration between two family-owned media companies: EO Media Group and Pamplin Media Group.

A team of veteran journalists produce Oregon Capital Insider.

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Enthusiasts learn to build their own kayaks

By KYLE SPURR
The Daily Astorian

Phil and Amy Hatton drove nine hours from Boise, Idaho, to take a weeklong kayak-building class at the Barbey Maritime Center in Astoria.

The Hattons said their trip was worth it to partake in the class, held Monday through Sunday by Pygmy Boats Inc., a Port Townsend-based wooden kayak and canoe kits company.

"We were looking for some places to build kayaks," Phil Hatton said. "The other options were a different kind of kayak or too far to take it back. We wanted to build some kayaks and there are not a lot of places."

The kayak building class, which costs \$800 per student, is the first of its kind in Astoria. It is hosted by the Columbia River Maritime Museum.

Museum Executive Director Sam Johnson said a passer-by came to the museum last year and sug-



Phil Hatton uses an orbital sander to smooth out the deck of his kayak while Amy Hatton, left, watches.

JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

gested a partnership with Pygmy Boats, which recently expanded its kayak building classes to Florida, Maine, Ohio and Oregon.

Johnson, who wanted to start offering full-size boat building, reached out to Pygmy Boats.

The simple design and con-

struction in the classes is similar to historic boat-building processes, Johnson said, although the materials used are modern plywood and fiberglass.

"Because they use modern materials in their construction many would say they are not traditional,"

Johnson said. "But traditional or not, they help preserve the process of boat building."

The Maritime Museum is hosting two more kayak building classes April 6 to 12 and June 1 to 7. Both classes are sold out. Only four participants can enroll in each class, so the instructor has time and room to work with each person.

If people are interested, Johnson said, the museum is planning to offer more classes. Those interested are encouraged to contact the museum at 503-325-2323.

"These are very straightforward boats to build," Johnson said. "For people to be able to start with a boat like this, it's fun and it's a challenge."

Kayak building

The Hattons spent this week each building their own Pinguino 145-4PD kayak, a 14-foot kayak known for being more stable than other touring boats.

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Warrenton voters may hold sway in land deals

Amendment would restrict land swaps, such as Tansy Point

By DERRICK DEPLEDGE
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — Residents who objected last year to a potential land swap between the city and Warrenton Fiber at Tansy Point are being a ballot initiative that could severely restrict city land transfers.

The Warrenton Property Protection Committee, led by Ken Yuill, has offered a char-

ter amendment that would require double majority voter approval before the city transfers or disposes of assets valued at more than \$100,000.

The threshold, which would require that a majority of eligible voters participate in an election and that a majority approve the asset transfer, would be difficult for the city to meet.

Yuill's committee filed a petition with the city this month to qualify the initiative for the September ballot.

"It just gives the voters more say in their government," said Yuill, a senior utility technician in Astoria who serves



Gil Gramson

on the Warrenton Planning Commission and has run unsuccessfully for the City Commission.

Yuill and Gil Gramson, a former Warrenton mayor and city manager, were involved with a coalition against the land swap at Tansy Point that included a descendant of the Carruthers family, which once owned the riverfront property.

Warrenton Fiber, which leases 43 acres from the city at Tansy Point for its forest products operation, had wanted to acquire the property in exchange for 20 acres off Dolphin Avenue and a pledge



Daily Astorian file

A proposed swap involving this 43-acre piece of land at Tansy Point, occupied by Warrenton Fiber, prompted a ballot initiative by Warrenton Property Protection Committee.

to build the city a new Public Works center.

The Tansy Point land was appraised at \$3.8 million in

late 2013. Warrenton Fiber has a lease through 2035.

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