

Tide gate failure threatens Brownsmead

By KYLE SPURR
The Daily Astorian

BROWNSMEAD — A broken tide gate over a culvert near Grizzly Slough off Penttila Road let water pour toward more than 1,000 acres, including near at least 16 homes, the Brownsmead Grange Hall and livestock.

In response, local landowners along with the Clatsop No. 1 Drainage Improvement Co., Sheriff's Office and Army Corps of Engineers worked Monday to install a temporary tide gate made of sheet metal.

"It was very successful," Clatsop County Commissioner Dirk Rohne, who grew up in Brownsmead, said. "People worked together and were pretty resourceful when necessity re-

quired it. What they did was a technical challenge."

The crew lifted the broken tide gate out of the water, waited for the tide to settle Monday afternoon and installed the replacement gate. Today, the crew will use an inflatable "air bladder" to plug the culvert.

No structures or roadways flooded from the tide gate break, which was first noticed Sunday by the

Drainage Improvement Co.

Rohne said the break caused water levels in the area to rise two feet since Sunday, one foot per day. The water fills the sloughs, then the ditches then could have reached homes and roadways, he said.

About half a dozen residents gathered around to watch the crew work Monday. The area behind the tide gate includes 28 homes, nine

farms, the grange hall, livestock and four county roads.

Hazel Barendse, a Brownsmead resident whose house overlooks the tide gate, could see the water reaching about five feet from her deck. Some daffodils on the edge of Barendse's property had already sunk in the water.

See TIDE GATE, Page 12A

Steadfast is home again



Natalie and Kendall Jenks, of Astoria, greet Jeremy Jenks after the Steadfast docked at its Astoria homeport. The ship returned Saturday morning after a two-month deployment.

JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

The Daily Astorian

The Coast Guard Cutter Steadfast returned to its homeport in Astoria Saturday morning after a two-month deployment that included the interception of a boat south of El Salvador carrying 725 kilograms of cocaine with a wholesale value of \$23 million.

The Steadfast cutter intercepted the 35-

foot "go-fast" boat, which had been spotted by maritime patrol aircraft, and discovered 16 bales of contraband that tested positive for cocaine. Three suspected smugglers were taken into custody, according to a statement from the guard.

The drug seizure was part of Operation Martillo, an international partnership to intercept illegal drugs, weapons and money along

trafficking routes in the waters off Central America.

The Steadfast also participated in the North American Maritime Security Initiative's Pacific Exercise off Ensenada, Mexico.

The exercise, which involved the Mexican Navy and Canadian Navy, was designed to test and improve the interception of suspect vessels and persons of interest.



ABOVE: A crew member of the Steadfast smiles as he's greeted on the docks of Astoria. The ship returned to Astoria Saturday morning after a two-month deployment. LEFT: Madison, right, and Leah Hibbs hug Brian Hibbs after the Steadfast docked in Astoria Saturday. The ship returned to Astoria after a two-month deployment.

JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

Backlog clogs West Coast ports

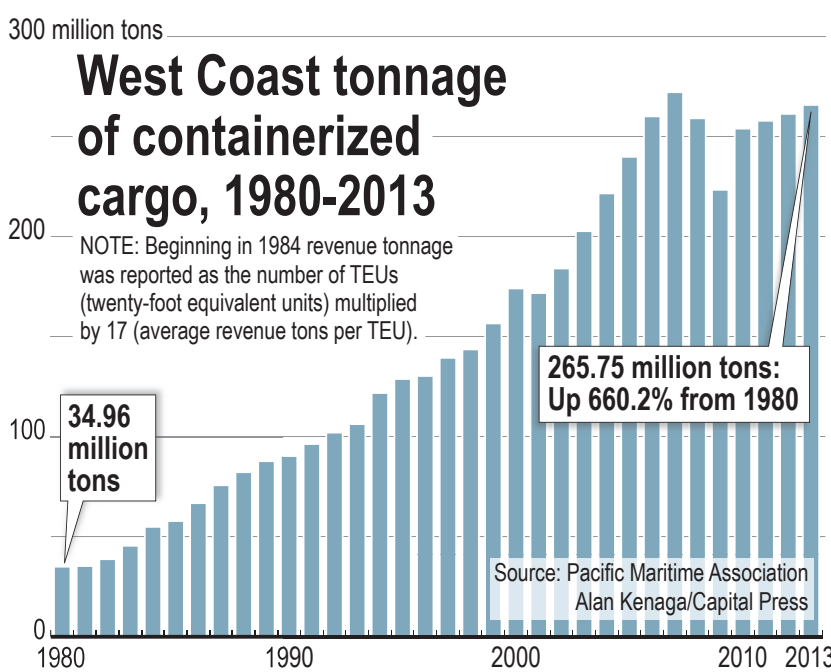
Thousands of containers will take months to clear

By DAN WHEAT
Capital Press

It will take two to three months to clear a massive backlog of containers at West Coast ports and allow exports and imports to flow at normal levels again, a Pacific Maritime Association spokesman says.

A tentative contract agreement between the PMA and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, reached late Feb. 20, ended a nine-month work slowdown at 30 West Coast ports, from San Diego to Seattle, that cost billions of dollars in lost trade.

See PORTS, Page 12A



A new cutter for here?

Coast Guard could homeport two fast response cutters in Astoria or Newport

By DERRICK DePLEDGE
The Daily Astorian

The Coast Guard may homeport two fast response cutters in Astoria or Newport that would replace aging patrol boats in the Pacific Northwest and help the guard close a patrol boat gap.

The 154-foot Sentinel-class cutters are replacing the 1980s-era 110-foot Island-class patrol boats that are approaching the end of service life.

The Coast Guard is conducting an environmental assessment, and seeking public comment, on homeporting two of the new cutters in either Astoria or Newport. A draft is expected in May.

Chief Warrant Officer Chad Saylor of the Coast Guard's media relations office in Washington, D.C., said site visits were held last November and that a feasibility study involves potential ports in the guard's District 13, which is based in Seattle and covers the Pacific Northwest.

"Upon completion of this study, the Coast Guard will evaluate viable locations based on several factors,

See CUTTER, Page 12A



Kevin Michael Burnham

Joshua Lee Fitch

Two men charged in attempted murder

By KATHERINE LACAZE
EO Media Group

SEASIDE — Two men were arrested and charged with attempted murder in connection with an incident that occurred about two weeks ago.

On the morning of Feb. 20, officers with the Seaside Police Department responded to Providence Seaside Hospital after receiving a report of a man who had sustained a serious head injury.

The man reported being assaulted with hammers by two other males, according to a news release from the police department. The victim was later transported to a Portland-area hospital. He had been released from the hospital as of Monday.

The police officers contacted Seaside detectives to investigate the incident. The detectives identified Kevin Michael Burnham, 25, of Seaside, and Joshua Lee Fitch, 23, of Longview, Wash., as the two suspects.

Fitch and Burnham were caught and arrested Friday in Seaside after a weeklong investigation, the release states. They were lodged in Clatsop County Jail on charges of attempted

See CHARGED, Page 12A

