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ONE DOLLAR

How big can you be, Astoria?

Great Ocean lures investors with plans to make area an international contender

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

A Taiwanese-American businessman has grand plans for Tongue Point, the Astoria Regional Airport and even Astoria itself.

The website, www.goastoria.us, describes the project as an investment opportunity in the Astoria-Warren-

ton region. The site envisions a new privately owned shipping port at North Tongue Point, a new cruise ship homeport, an international airport in Warrenton and a 30-acre tourism center in Astoria, among other projects.

Behind the website is Huy Ying Chen, the chief executive director of Kirkland, Wash.-based Great Ocean

Capital Holdings LLC. Great Ocean is a federally approved conduit for foreign investment through the EB-5 Immigrant Investor program, established by Congress in 1990. In the simplest terms, if a foreigner invests enough money, he may attain what's called Conditional Permanent Resident status.

Great Ocean was accepted by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration

Service (USCIS), which administers the program, in December 2013. Chen started speaking with the Port of Astoria about a year ago. Chen said he's also reached out to the Oregon Department of State Lands, the governor's office and state Sen. Betsy Johnson.

The Port, Chen and his adviser on this project, former Port commissioner Ric Gerttula, met with

North Tongue Point's owner, The Washington Companies in Missoula, Mont., about two months ago. At the meeting, Chen secured a letter of intent with Washington Companies to buy North Tongue Point, dependent on the Port Commission's approval.

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A Head Start for little ones



JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

Students work on creating patterns during a class at the Warrenton Head Start Center Tuesday.

New leadership to help kids in Clatsop County

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

This year is Head Start's 50th anniversary. Clatsop County's Head Start has new directors, new challenges and new efforts to publicize students' artwork during the Week of the Young Child April 12 to 18.

Created in 1965 by President Lyndon B. Johnson as part of the War on Poverty, the free, federally funded preschool program has served more than 30 million low-income children.

In Clatsop County, it serves 164 kids at centers next to the Warrenton City Park, Broadway Field in Seaside and on the first floor of Capt. Robert Gray School in Astoria.

Under new management

Overseeing the program here is Liz Visser, part of a completely new leadership team.

"From Seaside and from Warrenton, they just moved on to other Head Start programs," Visser said, who served as the director of the Astoria center last year.

Joyce Tangen, director of the Warrenton center last year,

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JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

Cristal Garcia-Alvarez, left, and Kadin Delgado, center, ride tricycles in the playground of the Seaside Head Start Center Monday.

Seaside vendors nix tax in survey

Businesses say no by 85 percent

By KATHERINE LACAZE
EO Media Group

SEASIDE — A majority of Seaside Chamber of Commerce and Seaside Downtown Development Association members do not support a local tax on food and retail sales to fund a Seaside Civic and Convention Center expansion, and some don't support the \$25 million expansion at all, according to a survey.

The Seaside Civic and Convention Center staff recently conducted a survey among 60 association members and 101 chamber members. Of the 161 respondents from both organizations, 85 percent said they do not support the creation of a business improvement district, or sales tax, on food and retail sales, one of three funding sources suggested in a study by C.H. Johnson Consulting completed last year. Seven percent said they would support a sales tax and 8 percent said they might support it.

The second question on the survey asked if respondents support increasing the transient room tax, or lodging/bed tax, as a funding source. Of the respondents, 57 percent said no, 28 percent said yes and 15 percent said maybe.

When it came to the third funding option, the development of a county-wide alliance with Astoria, Cannon Beach and Seaside, 50 percent said no, 33 percent said yes and 17 percent said maybe.

Finally, respondents were asked, all funding sources and costs aside, if they still supported the idea of expanding the convention center. Forty-four percent of respondents said no, 26 percent said yes, 6 percent said they were not sure and 24 percent said maybe.

"I was surprised," said Russ Vandenberg, general manager of the convention center. "I had not anticipated that 44 percent would not support an expansion at all."

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Lion roars... And students scream back

Photo and story
By Natalie St. John
EO Media Group

NASELLE, Wash. — By the time the lion dancers stormed onto the stage, something like the infamous "Beatle-mania" had taken hold of the crush of tiny fans in Naselle School's Chinese immersion program.

Amidst a clamor of traditional drums and bells and the ecstatic screaming of 5-year-old Mandarin students, performers from Seattle-based Northwest Kung Fu and Fitness performed an energetic dance inside of two large, sequined lion puppets.

When the lions jumped to the front of the stage to search the kids for treats, many students pressed even closer to offer up heads of lettuce and oranges, but one little boy started crying.

The Lion Dance was part of the grand finale to a Chinese New Year fundraising event intended to raise money and awareness for the Naselle-Grays River School District's Chinese

immersion program.

Organized by the parent's group, Liu Xing, or "Rising Star," the event featured a Chinese meal, auction, raffle, student demonstrations and cultural performances. Supporters of the program, many of whom were dressed in red clothing in honor of Chinese New Year, packed the Naselle Grange Hall.

The program is currently in its second year, and includes kindergarten through second grade. The school district has committed some money for the program during its first two years, but parents are responsible for raising additional funds through grants and community events like the New Year celebration.

In order for the program to continue in the most meaningful way, it is necessary to expand it by one grade per year, so that immersion students in this year's first grade can advance to second-grade level classes.

The year now beginning honors the sheep, goat or ram, depending on the subtleties of translating Chinese.



Students feed the hungry lion heads of lettuce and oranges, a traditional part of the Lion Dance.

