

Pier 3 Boatyard lands a reprieve



EDWARD STRATTON — The Daily Astorian  
The audience, mostly in attendance to hear about the Pier 3 boatyard, packed Tuesday's Port of Astoria Commission meeting room and bled into the surrounding hallways. They included Englund Marine & Industrial Supply President Kurt Englund, standing.

Port sets up committee to explore options

By EDWARD STRATTON  
The Daily Astorian

The crowds at the Port of Astoria Commission meeting to discuss the Pier 3 Boatyard filled all the seats in the meeting room and spilled into the surrounding hallways.

Before taking public comment, Port Executive Director Jim Knight announced that, following a meeting with state agencies, he was canceling the impending boatyard closure.

"It's never too late to make the right decision," Knight said, apologizing for missteps on the handling of the potential

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— Jim Knight  
executive director of the Port of Astoria  
apologizing for missteps on the handling of the potential closure

closure, adding that if people can't trust the Port, it will have problems.

In August, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality notified the Port it would have to adhere to Tier II Corrective Action requirements after two years of sampling revealed unacceptable levels of copper coming from its stormwater drains near piers 1 and

3. It mandated that by Dec. 30, the Port turn in a treatment plan, which it did; and that by June 30, 2016, it install treatment.

On Monday, Knight said he met with the North Coast Regional Solutions Team, a collection of state agencies meant to streamline the response to local issues, and it became clear the Port doesn't face imminent fines from the boatyard's operation.

Knight said the Port would create an ad hoc committee to look at how to improve the operation of the boatyard, updates, where it would best be located and how large it should be, before coming to the Port Commission with a recommendation.

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DIRT TO DELICIOUS



JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

Teresa Retzlaff, outreach director of North Coast Food Web, waters lettuce sampler "plant starts" in her greenhouse at 46 North Farm. Retzlaff helped found the North Coast Food Web in 2010. The plant starts will be sold to local farmers who want to grow their own plants.

North Coast Food Web aims to grow it, sell it, then serve it

By EDWARD STRATTON  
The Daily Astorian

Much like other businesses, farms in Clatsop County are largely a collection of small entities, loosely woven together by organizations such as chambers of commerce. In food's case, the binding agent is the North Coast Food Web.

"It's a different kind of farming than what you think of when you think of farms," said Teresa Retzlaff, a co-owner of 46 North Farm

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JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

Chefs, including Harald Gruetzmacher, of Wet Dog Cafe, left, and Gehrett Billinger, of Astoria Golf and Country Club, mingle with local farmers during the Farmer-Chef Connect event at Cannery Pier Hotel Monday.

Court of Appeals rejects gillnet lawsuit

By KYLE SPURR  
The Daily Astorian

A lawsuit challenging changes to the lower Columbia River gillnet policy was rejected Wednesday morning by the Oregon Court of Appeals.

Steve Fick, owner of Fishhawk Fisheries, and Salmon for All President Jim Wells sued the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife over the process of rule-making regarding a proposed gillnet policy.

The policy, created by former Gov. John Kitzhaber in August 2012, orders that gillnetting be phased out on the Columbia River's main stem.

Fick said he plans to review the court's decision with his lawyer and review his options moving forward, including possibly appealing the decision to the Oregon Supreme Court.

"The state can continue to implement their plan and we have to look at our options to either modify or stop it," Fick said.

In addition, Fick said, he plans to reach out to newly appointed Gov. Kate Brown.

"The hope is Gov. Brown will take the time to review this and have more transparency," Fick said. "This was essentially designed for the friends of John Kitzhaber to get special benefits of the state's salmon resources."

In the meantime, the policy is still in effect, slowly removing gillnetters off the lower Columbia River. In two years, Fick said, there may not be any gillnetters on the river where they have been since the mid-1880s.

Wells and Fick, a Salmon for All board member, are attempting to not let that happen.

Salmon for All, a pro-commercial fishermen association, is striving to return gillnet policies to the way they were before the former governor's plan went into place in 2012.

Without local gillnetters, the fishing economy will shift to urban guides and out-of-state, out-of-county tackle manufacturers, Fick said.

"Those are the people who benefit at the expense of the rural community," Fick said.

This is a spring chicken

Small farms make way with new rules

By EDWARD STRATTON  
The Daily Astorian

In their day jobs, Kelly Huckestein and Sam Seulean work at the Astoria Coop Grocery.

At home, they're trying to join the new wave of small-scale egg and poultry farmers.

At their small plot of land near Knappa, the couple are in the process of starting Spring Up Farm to grow produce and provide eggs and poultry. They run an assortment of about 20 leghorn, Amer-

aucana, Ancona, silver-laced Wyandotte and pioneer chickens, which is down because of a recent wild mink attack.

In April, they are taking on 50 more, half for breeding and laying and half for meat production.

The two met at the University of Oregon and worked on organic farms in Central America and Eugene before moving to Clatsop County, where Huckestein has family, to start their farm. Seulean said the eggs were originally meant for personal use, but they've found quite the demand for them locally.

New laws

"What we're really taking advantage of is the di-

rect-to-consumer laws that have been passed," Seulean said, adding that he and Huckestein will test the waters with selling chickens directly to consumers to see what sort of price they can charge.

They've been helped by recent Oregon laws to ease regulations on poultry farmers slaughtering fewer than 1,000 chickens per year, along with laws like the Farm-Direct Bill, exempting sellers of certain agricultural products directly to consumers from state laws regulating produce dealers and restaurants.

In the Oregon Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources is Senate



JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

Chickens walk the yard at the Spring Up Farm in Knappa. Kelly Huckestein and Sam Seulean have several different breeds of chickens on the farm including leghorn, Ameraucana, Ancona, silver-laced Wyandotte and pioneer chickens.

Bill 320, which would allow a "food establishment located within residential dwelling to produce limited amounts of certain foods for sale to pub-

lic without being regulated by State Department of Agriculture."

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