

Mission: ‘She puts a lot of heart and soul into it’

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Project Homeless Connect, an annual outreach initiative, links the homeless with social-service providers. Shelters such as the Astoria Rescue Mission and Helping Hands in Seaside offer meals and guidance in drug- and alcohol-free settings.

Contentious issue

Nationally, the question of whether individuals or non-profits should feed the homeless on the streets has become contentious. Underneath the compassion, some social-service experts worry that food-sharing programs can enable homelessness if not tied to services such as substance abuse treatment, mental health counseling or housing assistance. Several cities have restricted food sharing with the homeless, according to the National Coalition for the Homeless, a Washington, D.C., advocacy group, requiring permits to distribute food on public property or imposing standards to ensure food safety. Such restrictions are motivated by complaints that feeding the homeless allows them to remain in business districts, parks and neighborhoods where they can be disruptive. But the National Coalition for the Homeless argues that fighting hunger is a moral imperative and that “meals



Corri Buck hands people water from her car in the parking lot at 12th and Exchange streets Wednesday.

should not come quid pro quo” as conditions of seeking treatment or services. “I certainly think society, definitely, from the simple citizen all the way up to the government, I think we need to always think about folks in need,” said Dusten Martin, the operations manager for the Clatsop Community Action Regional Food Bank. “And I think we need to have a clear and constructive and simple way of helping people. “There’s a lot of regulations and restrictions and ordinances and that kind of a thing. We have to really make

sure, as a society, we’re doing justice by the folks who are in need, and not creating such a complex web that’s difficult for them to navigate to get services.” **Filling a need** While the homeless in Clatsop County may have access to food, Buck has found — and is filling — a need. “It sounds like it’s somebody with a big heart,” Martin said. “And I can only hope that there is maybe some steam that gets gathered behind it and there’s folks and organizations willing to help

out with getting food and getting it out in a safe manner.” Kallie Linder, the owner of Salon Boheme, said she learned about Buck’s mission on Facebook. The downtown salon has held a food drive for Filling Empty Bellies over the past few weeks. “We are really involved in the community,” she said. “We do lots of food drives, coat drives, toy drives, shoe drives. “We just like to help.” Linder was not concerned that Buck is feeding the homeless on her own, rather than working through an es-



DERRICK DePLEDGE — The Daily Astorian
Salon Boheme held a food drive for Filling Empty Bellies for the past two weeks.

tablished charity. She recommended others get involved. “Absolutely,” she said. “I say jump in with both feet.” Buck has branched out from lunches. In the back of her silver Ford Edge — the one with the bone-shaped “I (Heart) My Grandogs” magnet — she has bins with socks, gloves, scarves and pants. She also hands out hygienic packets with toothbrushes and shower supplies. Buck knows most of the men she helps feed by name. They know her as the woman who comes to them at noon at 12th Street and Exchange Street, with no strings — or preaching — attached. “She puts a lot of heart and soul into it,” said Chris Crone, who has done outreach with Helping Hands and was

among the men waiting for lunch on Wednesday. At first, Buck described the experience as personally gratifying. “I feel so good right now my insides are dancing!” she wrote on Facebook in November. But as she has gotten to know the men, and as “angels” like Linder and others have donated food and money, it has become something deeper. “They’re my friends,” she said. “And that’s what I’m doing. I’m simply feeding my friends. And I have a whole bunch of friends helping me do it.” Buck does not know when her mission might end. “I can’t answer that question,” she said. “I will go until I can’t go no more. I do not see an end.”

Boatyard: No fines for the Port as long as it deals with stormwater treatment

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There’s still a 45-boat waiting list in Ilwaco’s boatyard, Green said, and the Port needs to advertise that its boatyard is still open for business. “They’ve completely put a halt to hauling anything that might be a derelict vessel,” Green said of Ilwaco’s policy toward suspected derelicts, adding there is a minimum requirement of \$300,000 in liability insurance to haul out there, along with a limit of 30 days. Green added the Port should put some pressure on the Oregon State Marine Board to help deal with the boats that have been in its yard for years. Knight said AFP laid down some finer gravel behind the Best Western Lincoln Inn, where it had been storing logs, but where the several derelict vessels and long-term stays of the boatyard will be moved. The committee discussed short-term improvements to the

boatyard, including making boat owners sign a copy of the Port’s boatyard rules; covered work spaces; erecting fences to improve security and, with privacy slats, cut down on crosswinds; sweeping the boatyard; and storm drain filters. Regarding any short-term improvements, Knight said he would have a better idea in the coming weeks of where the Port stands financially, when it receives its 2013-14 audit being performed by Moss Adams.

Background

In August, the Port found out from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality it would need to follow more stringent monitoring requirements after testing high in copper at outfalls on Pier 3 and underneath Bornstein Seafoods between Piers 1 and 2. At the end of last year, it submitted a required stormwater treatment plan to DEQ, a biofiltration pond located on the western edge of Pier 3.



EDWARD STRATTON — The Daily Astorian
A conceptual drawing from 2005 shows the plan for the Port of Astoria’s Pier 3 to become a boatyard, with shops, covered work spaces, multiple places for boats to be hauled or towed out and a park on land owned by the Department of State Lands.

Knight announced in late February that, because of pollution concerns and potential fines from DEQ, the Port would tentatively close the boatyard down by April 1. He canceled the closure after saying the state assured him the boatyard wouldn’t

cause fines, as long as the Port moves forward with stormwater treatment. The Port has troubled over the source of copper, because the outfall near Bornstein Seafoods is away from the boatyard. There are some rusted, crushed

cars near the Oregon State Patrol offices that could be contributing to the issue, Knight said. OSP is moving from its Port location on Gateway Avenue this summer to Dolphin Avenue in Warrenton, which outside of the tsunami inundation zone, The Port’s stormwater plan depended Department of State Lands approval to place the system on Pier 3 land. DSL recently notified Knight it would be willing to lease the strip of land to the Port for \$750 a year for the system. He added they offered to sell it to the Port, albeit with a price tag likely in the millions.

Next steps

Knight envisions two or three more meetings about short-term planning with the boatyard, with monthly meetings after that looking at the long-term. At the last boatyard meeting, members suggested adding names such as Greg Morrill, president of Bergerson Construction, and Willie Toristoja,

who helps run WCT Marine and Construction Inc. at North Tongue Point. Some members again mentioned Bill Cook, the former deputy director of the Port and a central force in its concept of a Pier 3 boatyard, could be a good source of information on the boatyard committee, and his presence might improve the committee’s image through such sources as the Save Our Boatyard Facebook page, created by Cook. Knight said he still had lingering reservations, noting some potentially hard feelings between Cook and some of the Port commissioners. He said he keeps the lines of communication open with Cook. “If Bill can help us, I’d be happy to call him,” Knight said. *Coming Friday, the Port of Astoria’s boatyard committee also discussed a possible new location on the central waterfront for the boatyard, related to the agency’s attempt to clean up past petroleum contamination.*

Fair: Participation rate of youth in the workforce has fallen by nearly half since 2000

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“Right now, we have about 400 job listings,” she said. “At least a third of them don’t require previous training or experience.” According to an article called “Youth Employment in Northwest Oregon,” put out by the Employment Department in February 2014, the participation rate of youth in the workforce has fallen by nearly half since 2000. The Census Bureau estimated an annual average of nearly 2,700 youth of ages 14 through 18 working in Clatsop, Columbia, Lincoln and Tillamook counties in 2000. By 2012, that number fell to about 1,500. The unemployment rate for Ore-

gon youth aged 16 through 19 topped 30 percent during the recession the report said, and nationally, labor force participation for that age group fell from 47 percent in 2002 to 34 percent in 2012. In the meantime, college enrollment soared during the recession, a national trend. “They’re more focused on school than in the past,” Sykes said.

Resume-building

The mission of the job fair was threefold, providing information on immediate jobs, training opportunities and careers. While many employers were offering immediate jobs, from Wyndham and Baked Alaska to Fort George Brewery

and retail outlets, others provided future training opportunities, such as Clatsop Community College and Tongue Point Job Corps Center. “At least a quarter of our officers were born and raised in Clatsop County,” Astoria Police Department officer Brian Aydt said, adding that while police officers need to be 21, dispatchers can be 18. The market for those jobs is competitive and the department was mostly at the job fair to tell the teens how to prepare, he said. Executive Director Alana Garner from the Astoria Downtown Historic District Association was there with another volunteer, advertising on behalf of downtown employers and for volunteerism with the associa-

tion as a resume-builder. Corbin Lampa, a junior from AHS, said he was there seeking immediate employment, in maybe the forestry or construction sector. But the short-term experience could likely play into his longer-term goals of studying forestry at Oregon State University and becoming a forest engineer. It’s been a long time since there was a high school job fair, AHS Principal Lynn Jackson said. His hope was for students to come away with at least one

or two ideas of what’s available locally, in terms of employment. “It isn’t like it was in my day, when you just moved away,” Kevin Leahy said. As executive director of Clatsop Economic Develop-

ment Resources, Leahy played a central role in organizing the job fair. It took months to put together, he said, including a volunteer committee of employers to educators. The hope, he said, is to have it every year from now on.

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