



THE DAILY ASTORIAN

142nd YEAR, No. 216

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2015

ONE DOLLAR

Local tourism jobs No. 1 in Oregon



JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

A line forms outside the Bowpicker Fish & Chips during lunchtime on a sunny Saturday. Expanding restaurant choices are helping drive a shift in visitor demographics.

On a given night, 27 percent of population is visitors to county

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

Clatsop County has many reasons to be celebrating its cash cow during the U.S. Travel Association's National Travel and Tourism Week, May 2-10.

Travel Oregon's recently released annual report on travel impacts by Dean Runyan Associates quantifies the massive economic impact of visitors to Clatsop County.

"Nationally, travel and tourism has become America's No. 1 services export," CEO Todd Davidson of Travel Oregon said, adding that tourism services comprise 10 percent of all U.S. exports.

Travel Oregon is a semiseparate state agency created by the Oregon Legislature in 2003 to promote tourism to Oregon. Davidson and Linea Gagliano have been on a tour of the state, promoting the Dean Runyan study and the revamp of its "7 Wonders of Oregon" marketing campaign (<http://traveloregon.com/7wonders>), the closest wonder being the entire Oregon Coast.

Year-over-year increases

The report shows year-over-year increases in tourism's impact on Clatsop County, including a more than 27 percent increase in direct spending, from \$405.2 million in 2010 to \$516.7 million in 2014. The report found that every \$94,460 spent by visitors creates one job; and every \$100 in visitor



ALEX PAJUNAS — The Daily Astorian File

Tourists from the Star Princess cruise ship pose with a Port of Astoria welcome sign before venturing beyond the Port's Pier 1 security check point and into Astoria in September 2013. Cruise ship traffic is a significant drive of tourism traffic and dollars.

LEARN MORE

To access an interactive online database for Dean Runyan Associate's study on the economic impacts of tourism, visit <http://tinyurl.com/l429voj>

spending generates \$27 in employee earnings and \$4.20 in local and state tax revenue.

"It's probably been ... five years of real increases in real spending," said Bill Klein, who

specializes in economic and market research for Dean Runyan and has been doing such reports for the past 15 years. Dean Runyan's reports on Oregon stretch back to 1991.

According to the most recent report, 22.3 percent of Clatsop County's employment in 2013 could be tied to the travel industry, the highest mark in the state and just barely ahead of Lincoln County. Clatsop County's annual overnight visitor days in 2014, divided by the county's population, translated to 27 percent of its population on a given night being visitors.

See **TOURISM**, Page 10A

Library, cemetery, aquatic center upgrades planned

Spending would address public concerns about maintenance

By DERRICK DePLEDGE
The Daily Astorian

Astoria, which is exploring a new library complex with housing and retail at Heritage Square, could spend \$80,000 next fiscal year to replace the roof at the city's existing library on Duane Street.

The proposed capital improvement fund money for the roof is an expensive reminder that the city will have to maintain its aging library even as it pursues a long-delayed upgrade.

A city budget committee Tuesday night tentatively endorsed library spending for the next fiscal year, which starts in July.

The budget committee, which will make a recommendation to the City Council, also supported a spending plan for parks and recreation that would address maintenance challenges at Ocean View Cemetery and repairs at the Astoria Aquatic Center.

Public complaints about the condition of Ocean View, the city owned cemetery in Warrenton, led the City Council to significantly increase burial and cremation fees.

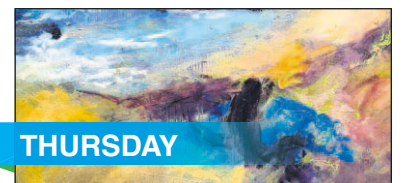
While the proposed budget does not include a dedicated maintenance supervisor for Ocean View, the city would expand professional service contracts to help improve maintenance at the cemetery and other park grounds.

The city would also spend \$72,000 in capital improvement fund money for weed eradication and reseeding at Ocean View and, perhaps, other park grounds.

The Aquatic Center, meanwhile, would get \$250,000 in capital improvement fund money for repair work such as replastering the pool.

The proposed capital improvement fund budget also includes \$35,000 for a parks master plan, which would chart community interest in existing and future city parks, and \$55,000 for a point of sale system and registration software for park facilities.

coast weekend



THURSDAY

Spring Unveiling



JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian
Warrenton senior Cale Biel shakes hands with Archie Cook, workshopful master of Gateway Lodge No. 175, as he accepts his honor student certificate. The banquet was sponsored by members of Gateway Lodge No. 175 Ancient Free and Accepted Masons.

Masons honor top Warrenton scholars

\$32,000 in scholarships given at banquet

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — In 1960, Gateway Masonic Lodge member Ervin Lee Atkins suggested the idea for the Honor Student Banquet paying tribute to Warrenton High School's top performers to fellow lodge brothers John T. Carden, and Forrest Hensley. By the next year, they'd held the initial event at the Crab Pot Restaurant in Warrenton.

On Monday night, 55 years later, his son Ron Atkins Jr. sat at the entrance to the WHS gym, where he and his fellow brothers from Gateway Masonic Lodge No. 175 gathered with students and their families to honor their performance in school.

They also gave 13 graduating seniors a total of \$32,000 in scholarships.

The bulk of the lodge's scholarship money comes from the fortune of former WHS teachers Dick and Harriet Baldwin, a childless couple who bequeathed more than \$1 million for the lodge to invest in student scholarships. Since 2000, Masons estimate the fund has given more than \$1 million to about 160 students.

Gil Gramson, a Warrenton luminary and mason, said the lodge actually awarded about \$90,000 this year. Scholarships given from the Baldwin's fund can be renewed up to four years in a row, meaning many former WHS grads and current college students are still taking advantage of the scholarships. The fund, which Gramson said is

more than \$1.5 million, pays for them all out of its interest.

Top awards

In addition to the Dick and Harriet Baldwin/Gateway Lodge Scholarships, the Masonic Lodge gives out two awards. Senior Katherine Carey took home the Edwin L. Mowick Outstanding Student Award, and senior Brianna Marsch earned the Murl G. Peterson Award for Scholastic Achievement.

"I've been in this for four years," said Marsch, an honor student for all four years of high school and now WHS' valedictorian. She was one of eight honor students in the senior class at the ceremony, along with eight juniors, eight sophomores and seven freshmen, many surrounded by family members Monday over a prime rib dinner.

See **MASONS**, Page 10A

