

Oregon unemployment falls to prerecession levels

The Daily Astorian

Oregon's unemployment rate declined to 5.2 percent in April, the lowest mark since July 2007, according to the Oregon Employment Department.

The state's unemployment rate was 5.4 percent in March.

Unemployment is now back to pre-recession levels. The rate had held steady between 5.0 and 5.5 percent from 2006 to early 2008.

Oregon's payroll employment grew rapidly, adding 7,600 jobs in April, following revised gains of 2,600 jobs in February and 2,700 jobs in March. April's gain was on track with the rapid growth seen from September through January, when growth averaged 6,200 jobs a month.

The rapid job growth is consistent with Oregon's performance prior to the recession. Jobs expanded by 3.2 percent between April 2014 and this April, a similar pace as seen during mid-2004 through 2006, when Oregon's annual gains averaged 3 percent.

In April, four major industries grew rapidly over the month and over the year, with each adding between 1,000 and 2,900 jobs in April, and each growing by close to 5 percent since April 2014.

- Health care and social assistance increased by 11,200 jobs over the year. The sector was boosted by all four of its component industries, but its social assistance component grew at the fastest rate, adding 3,000 jobs.

- Manufacturing increased by 9,800 jobs over the year. The sector was led by semiconductor and electronic component manufacturing, transportation equipment manufacturing, and food manufacturing, with each adding close to 1,500 jobs.

- Professional and business services grew by 9,700 jobs over the year. The sector was led by computer systems design, management of companies, and administrative and waste services, which each adding about 1,600 jobs.

- Leisure and hospitality grew by 9,100 jobs over the year. The sector was boosted by rising demand at restaurants, which led to food service and drinking places adding 6,900 jobs.

For more information, visit the Oregon Employment Department's website at www.QualityInfo.org. For help finding jobs and training resources, visit one of the state's WorkSource Oregon Centers — 450 Marine Drive in Astoria — or visit www.WorkSourceOregon.org.

Brenda McNaughton joins Coastal Family Health

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Brenda McNaughton, a family nurse practitioner, has joined the provider staff at Coastal Family Health Center.

She comes to Coastal Family from Sunrise Children's Hospital in Las Vegas, where she worked for the past 16 years as a pediatric and neonatal critical care nurse, and flight nurse.

McNaughton received her master's degree as a family nurse practitioner from Georgetown University in 2014. She has been recognized by the March of Dimes and the American Association of Critical Care Nurses for her outstanding work in pediatric intensive care.

Passionate about meeting the healthcare needs of at-risk and underserved communities, with a particular interest in pediatric health, McNaughton is excited to become a part of Astoria's community as a primary care provider.



Brenda McNaughton

Seaview brewery ramps up production

By MIKE WILLIAMS
EO Media Group

SEAVIEW, Wash. — North Jetty Brewing christened its new 10-barrel brewing system in April, tripling its capacity at least two years ahead of schedule.

Erik and Michelle Svendsen bought the brewery in December 2013. It had a 1 1/2-barrel system then. A barrel is 31 gallons. The Svendsens would brew two batches back-to-back to make about six kegs of beer. The new capacity is far more efficient.

"So a single batch will give us about 18 to 20 kegs," Erik Svendsen said. "It's less work for a lot more product."

Growing fast

North Jetty produced about 165 barrels of beer in 2014. This year, the brewery expects to hit 750 barrels with the new system coming online in the second quarter. It will give the Svendsens the capacity of about 1,000 barrels in a full year.

Demand for North Jetty beer forced the couple to move their timetable up a few years. Their product is distributed by Kendall's Pioneer Distributing in southwest Washington as far north as Olympia. Fort George Brewery & Public House distributes North Jetty in Clatsop and Tillamook counties. Their beer is also sold on the Long Beach Peninsula.

"Trying to keep up with all that and the taproom, it just makes sense," Erik Svendsen said. "We weren't expecting to expand this fast; we had more like a two- to three-year plan, but the demand was there and we were sort of beating ourselves up with the little system."

The success of the business has meant changes all around. Michelle Svendsen owned Tidy By The Sea, a cleaning business, for four years. She planned to keep it operating, but the taproom and brewery began demanding more and more time.

An employee bought the van and took on her cleaning clients.

"This just takes so much of my time because I do the sales, the marketing, all the social media, brew a couple times a week and run the taproom," she said.

"So a cleaning company on top



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Erik Svendsen shows off one of his new fermenters.



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Michelle Svendsen (above) and her husband, Erik, expanded to a 10-barrel brewing system at their company, North Jetty Brewing in Seaview, Wash.

of that was just too much."

It's also meant changes inside the Seaview facility. When the taproom opened in April 2014, the company employed one part-time worker. Now the taproom has four part-timers, and the Svendsens may hire another for the brewery operation.

The taproom opened with just eight taps; that has increased to 18 with room for guest beers.

Their first summer in the tourism-heavy area kept the entire operation hopping.

"Last summer we sold more than half of all the beer we produced in 2014," Erik Svendsen said.

While tourism helped drive growth, local demand has helped sustain North Jetty through the lean off-season. The taproom's regulars have provided moral and logistical support,

the Svendsens said. Some offered to help move equipment, and more importantly, they have kept coming back for more beer.

"They got us through the winter," Michelle Svendsen said. "We expected to see a huge drop in beer sales, but the taproom and brewery paid for themselves. It was fantastic. The community's been really supportive."

Supportive competitors

Local breweries have also been supportive. They offered

advice on equipment, and helped out with supplies if they have them available.

The Svendsens see potential for more growth. They may add even more fermenters, the tanks that hold the beer-to-be while the yeast does its magic. Space in the former dairy building is the main limitation to further growth.

Fortunately there is room to expand on their lot.

For now, the Svendsens are just happy to have the new system fired up. They were coasting through the inventory from when they stopped brewing in February. They have a lot of events on the horizon in addition to supplying the taproom and customers in the region.

They were the concessionaire for the beer garden at the Long Beach Razor Clam Festival in April.

The couple also plan to attend the Washington Brewers Festival in June, the Olympia Brew Fest in August, the Vancouver Summer Brew Fest in August and the Pacific Northwest Brew Cup in Astoria.

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