



# THE DAILY ASTORIAN

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ONE DOLLAR



JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

Nick Clark, owner of Nature's Choice Alternative Medicine, holds a bud of mango-strain marijuana under a magnifying glass.

## Astoria Column closed until fall

Restoration work more complex than expected

By DERRICK DePLEDGE  
The Daily Astorian

The Astoria Column will not open by the Fourth of July after all. The city had hoped the popular landmark, which was closed in June for a \$1 million restoration project, would reopen to visitors in time for the holiday weekend.

But the city has chosen to keep the column closed to the public through September for construction and safety reasons.

While visitors will not be able to enter the column or climb the 164-step spiral staircase to the viewing platform, the park grounds at Coxcomb Hill, which offer panoramic views of Astoria, will remain open.

A Fourth of July party and fundraiser will be held at the park Saturday.

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## Smoke 'em if you can find 'em

Consumers will have to wait for retail sales of marijuana

By EDWARD STRATTON  
The Daily Astorian

Recreational marijuana became legal to possess and use in Oregon today.

Where do you get it? Nowhere legally for at least another three months, but medical marijuana dispensaries are poised to become the state's one-stop pot shops.

Measure 91, passed by voters in November, allows anyone 21 and older to possess up to 8 ounces of dried marijuana flowers or leaves and carry up to 1 ounce in public. Growing is limited to four plants per property regardless of number of occupants and must be out of public view. Recreational marijuana cannot be used in public, nor can it be taken across state lines.

But the law is coming into effect without an industry to serve law-abiding citizens who want to buy marijuana. The state won't start taking applications for recreational stores until Jan. 4, and retailers aren't expected to start opening until fall 2016.

To provide legal marijuana in the interim, state Senate Bill 460 would temporarily allow recreational sales of up to a quarter ounce of buds per person per day, as well as seeds and plant starts, at medical marijuana dispensaries starting Oct. 1, with no taxes until Jan. 4. The bill passed the Senate 23-6 Tuesday and was sent to the House for a vote Thursday.



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Omar Guerrero, left, and Nicholas Palazzo, right, are poised to begin offering recreational marijuana once it becomes legal to sell.



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Nick Clark of Nature's Choice Alternative Medicine holds a bud of raspberry kush.

The Legislature sent House Bill 2041 to the governor. It will im-

posed a 17 percent state tax on recreational marijuana once retailers are

allowed to open in late 2016. Local governments can add another 3 percent tax, if their voters approve. Also headed to the governor is House Bill 3400, which limits medical marijuana grows to avoid diversion to the black market; allows voters to approve bans on retailers; submits marijuana products to standardized testing for mold, mildew and other contaminants; prohibits packaging of edibles in a manner attractive to children; requires two years of residency for anyone opening or working at a marijuana business and requires recreational growers to do "seed to sale" tracking, while making medical growers report their inventory and sales.

### Medical going recreational

As of June 12, Clatsop County has 19 applications for medical dispensaries — four pending, five approved and three operating, including Nature's Choice Alternative Medicine, Sweet Relief Natural Medicine and The Pharmacy. All are in Astoria, the only city in Clatsop County that did not place a moratorium on dispensaries.

"I talked to some places in Aspen (Colo.), and they said flat out 'you will not be ready. You will not have enough product,'" said Oscar Nelson, the co-owner of Sweet Relief. He added dispensaries in Colorado saw three to four times the business shortly after legalization, before it plateaued.

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## Ilwaco jumps with salmon business

August looks to be really busy

By KATIE WILSON  
EO Media Group

ILWACO, Wash. — If the past month is any indication, charter boat owners in Ilwaco say they could be looking at the start of another good year.

"Everybody's hitting limits," said Milt Gudgeon, owner of Pacific Salmon Charters on June 17. "It doesn't get any better than that as far as salmon is concerned."

The recreational ocean fishery for Chinook and hatchery coho began June 13. On the Columbia River, recreational spring Chinook fishery closed June 15 and the summer salmon season began the next day, with both summer Chinook and sockeye salmon forecasts well above average.

### Good predictions

"We predicted this would be a good year for salmon and we're

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## Port closes 'attractive nuisance' in Warrenton

Property known as Bayfront was site of recent fires

By MCKINLEY SMITH  
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — Robert Evert stood near a pile of fire-blackened garbage Tuesday afternoon beneath a blue sky.

"Look at all this junk people have dumped over the decades," the Port of Astoria's permit and project manager said.

The slice of land off King Avenue, known locally as Bayfront, has been closed off by concrete blocks since June

18 after two fires in the area. The region is a popular spot for off-road sports but has earned a shadowy reputation.

The concrete will block off the road until the gate, which had been vandalized, is repaired. The port owns the property past the gate on the Skipanon Peninsula and is liable for injuries or deaths that occur as a result of activities on the land, Evert said.

"If we close it, people get pissed. If we leave it open, we get sued," he said.

Evert said money is the primary reason Bayfront has not been closed off before. "We just haven't had it in the budget," he said.

The area has been the site of vandalism and ille-



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Robert Evert, permit and project manager with the Port of Astoria, inspects the burned shell of the pickup truck that caught fire on the property near Bay Front Road June 17.

gal dumping, according to Evert, who said there have been abandoned vehicles

left on the property.

"The sad part is that everything the port has to take care

of like this detracts from what we could be doing as an economic engine," Evert said.

Fiberglass roofing, beer cans, cigarette butts, paint canisters and more litter the area.

"We've been after them for about two years to close it off," Warrenton Fire Chief Tim Demers said.

Demers, who described the narrow roads on the property as "goat paths," said the fire department has to send out a four-wheel drive vehicle to navigate.

"If you see smoke out there and say, 'Oh, that's nothing,' it can come back to bite you," Demers said.

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