

Farmer: 'It's a very favorable climate for growing ...'

Continued from Page 1A

"We need more farms. We need more people producing food, more people processing food, more people making jams and jellies and salsas and baked goods selling at farmers markets," she said. "Food entrepreneurship: That's what we need."

'A food hub'

Fortunately, when Retzlaff moved to the North Coast to farm in 2003, her idealism — some might say naiveté — wasn't affected by those who told her that "nobody farms here," she said.

"It seemed like you could grow things here. I looked around, and it was a rural community, and there were cows, and there was agricultural land," she said.

It's not that one cannot physically grow crops on the available land. "You can: absolutely. It's just that we don't."

She and Coleman launched their agricultural adventure on leased land in Seaside, where they worked for about five years before purchasing land in Olney nine miles east of Astoria. Now, at 46 North Farm, they grow a mix of produce, cut flowers and plant starts, and keep a small

flock of chickens for eggs.

Within the last decade, she and Coleman have witnessed both a surge in farmers markets and what they believe is a promising shift in how many consumers think about food, especially about where their food comes from and how it is produced, she said.

More restaurants are offering local food on their menus, and community-supported agriculture programs — which allow consumers to invest in a farm and receive a weekly box of fresh produce during harvest season — have cropped up nationwide.

"Oregon, in many ways, has really become a food hub," said Michael Morrissey, executive director of Oregon State University's Food Innovation Center in Portland, who introduced Retzlaff.

What's for dinner

Since shopping at farmers markets often costs more than shopping at superstore chains, buying local is often perceived as an elitist activity for people who can afford it, Retzlaff admitted. However, farmers markets are increasingly accepting Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits.

Computer technology has also changed the farming game since county planners wrote the bleakly worded comprehensive plan. The Internet allows farmers to connect with buyers and sellers — and would-be farmers with the resources to get started — in a way scarcely conceivable in 1980.

In addition, the Great Coastal Gale of 2007, which cut off several parts of Oregon from outside food sources for several days in December of that year, served as a wake-up call for many in the community, evincing the need for more locally sourced food.

Retzlaff reminded the audience that the Lower Colum-

bia-Pacific region produced local food long before it was called "local food."

"It's a very favorable climate for growing a lot of things," she said.

Long before Europeans settled the area — before long-haul trucking, big refrigeration and mega supermarkets — Native American populations enjoyed abundant seafood and game, berries and roots for centuries.

"If people were going to eat food here, they had to produce it here," she said. "People back then just didn't think of it as trendy or hip or anything like that. It was just what was for dinner."

Sharks: One shark or several may be attacking these animals

Continued from Page 1A

The Northern Oregon/Southern Washington Marine Mammal Stranding Network responded to two adult harbor seals, one adult Steller sea lion and a 7-foot striped dolphin that were all believed to be close to shore after being attacked.

Following a necropsy, Oregon's Seaside Aquarium, which coordinates with the stranding network to pick up animals from area beaches, said that in each instance the animals appeared to have died as a result of attacks by a large shark, either a great white shark or a broadnose sevengill shark. White sharks can reach up to 21 feet in length and weigh up to 4,800 pounds; broadnose sevengill sharks are significantly smaller, usually less than 10 feet long, and sometimes themselves are the prey of white sharks.

Given recent attacks on the marine mammals and during an ongoing large diatom bloom, which may make the local ocean water murky, ocean swimming is not recommended.

'The predators will follow'

While sharks are fairly common in local waters, it is unusual to see so many adult marine mammals bitten and on the shore in such a short timespan, Seaside Aquarium's Tiffany Boothe said.

"There's only one shark that would do that: a great white," said Jim Burke, director of animal husbandry at the Oregon Coast Aquarium in Newport.

While other sharks go for smaller prey, particularly young marine mammals, great whites stalk larger sea creatures. They are considered "ambush animals" because of the way they attack from beneath their prey, he said.

Burke noted sharks are seen or encountered throughout the year, especially in late summer or fall fishing season. The marine mammals follow the fish, and the sharks follow them.

"The marine mammal populations are extremely healthy right now," he said. "The predators will follow."

Sharks can go months without eating, Burke added, so one shark or several may be attacking these animals.

Sevengill sharks near Willapa Bay

Though rarely seen by humans, great white and sevengill sharks are no strangers to this area.

In 2005 and 2006, state and federal scientists tagged 32 broadnose sevengill sharks (16 males and 16 females) in the Washington's Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor estuaries, fitting them with acoustic transmitters.

Over three consecutive years, the scientists studied the movements of these sharks. The study, published in 2012 in the Journal of Fish Biology, showed the sharks "exhibited a distinctly seasonal pattern of estuary use, inhabiting the estuaries during the summer months and moving to the open coast during the winter."

From October 2005 through September 2007, researchers

detected tagged fish from Puget Sound to Mission Beach at San Diego. Most of these pings occurring during the autumn and winter, though the sharks didn't linger.

Previously, the scientists said they'd had only the most basic knowledge of these sharks' movement patterns, making it difficult to manage policies around them, as well as difficult to understand their role in coastal and estuarine food webs.

"The work presented here reveals that (broadnose sevengill sharks) move over the continental shelf off Washington and Oregon during the winter," the study stated. Those years of study also revealed an annual spring migration from coastal habitats into estuaries. The sharks spent long periods of time in these estuaries during the summer and, individually, based on size and sex, seemed to be loyal to specific spots in the estuary.

Great whites in our area

According to information provided by NOAA, great white sharks are distributed sparsely along the coast. While shark attacks on humans have been recorded primarily close to shore, from San Miguel Island in southern California to farther north, in spots off Cannon Beach.

Shark researchers used to think great whites spent most of their lives in coastal waters but more recent research shows the opposite: Great whites are ambitious travelers who can travel across great distances — though

WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND A STRANDED MARINE MAMMAL

Reporting marine mammal strandings promptly is the best way you can help stranded animals. Even dead animals provide a valuable opportunity for wildlife professionals to study marine mammals. The Marine Stranding Network asks the public call the Oregon State Police Tipline at 800-452-7888 or the Oregon State University Stranding cell phone at 541-270-6830.

According to the network, marine mammals are protected by federal law. It is illegal for unauthorized people to disturb, handle or feed them.

If you do see a stranded marine mammal, take a digital photo, but take safety first. These are wild animals and they can bite. Many carry diseases that can be transmitted to humans or pets.

- Keep people and dogs away.

- Observe and report identification such as color, size and vocalization; condition, alive, dead, injured or entangled; tags, if any; and location, making note of landmarks and beach accessibility.

- Seals are tagged on hind flipper, sea lions on foreflipper.

- If you find a live cetacean, provide supportive care, protect animal from harsh wind or sun. Dig trenches for pectoral flippers and rinse any sand out of eyes. Keep the area quiet, and make sure the animal is not too hot or too cold. Keep live cetaceans cool and moist by covering them with wet towels (if available) or gently pouring water on them. But be very careful not to cover or pour water down the blowhole (on top of the head).

- Report strandings of all live cetaceans.

why and often where are still unanswered questions. A study published by marine scientists based out of California institutions in the early 2000s showed that great white sharks travel across vast stretches of open ocean.

But human encounters with sharks — especially large species like great whites — are rare. "Jaws" is still only a movie, a fantastic story built around an imagined "what if." And while at least one NOAA division studies great whites off the California coast, there is little research on the species' movements farther north off Oregon and Washington.

Still, there are definitely seasons when there is more activity below the waves.

As fall salmon runs sweep

toward the Lower Columbia River, sea lions bark loudly again in the Port of Astoria's east mooring basin, diving after fish near the Astoria Bridge, and sharks roam the near ocean water.

Over the years, there have been scattered reports of large sharks (likely great white sharks) chomping on the ends of surfboards or showing a slice of iconic fin above the waves in Oregon and Washington. In Oregon, where more of the reports originate, few of these cases have resulted in serious injuries or death. But they have made people re-evaluate when and where and if they still want to dip into the ocean.

Boothe said their main goal was to increase public aware-

ness of a shark threat. She advises those who surf in the area to avoid doing so at dawn or dusk when there's poor lighting, or during a large diatom bloom which may make the local ocean water murky. In those conditions, sharks may mistake a person in a wet suit for an animal.

Burke also suggested avoiding popular fishing spots and areas where large marine animals haulout.

"I don't think people should be paranoid," he said. "What we're seeing is a healthy response to a healthy marine population. It's the sign of a healthy system."

Dani Palmer and Katherine Lacaze of EO Media Group contributed to this report.

Posse: 'The intent of the trust money was to enhance the posse, which no longer exists'

Continued from Page 1A

they could go form their own group."

Some posse members have since formed the Clatsop County Mounted Posse.

However, the former posse claims Bergin did not have the authority to disband the group since none of the members voted. Still, the posse disbanded.

"We didn't realize it at the time, but he didn't have a right to disband the posse," Lynne Leland, captain of the posse, said. "He had the right to remove individual members, but not the whole thing."

DOJ investigation

After being disbanded, Leland filed a complaint with the state Department of Justice claiming Bergin emptied the posse's bank account into a county trust fund and kept various belongings of the posse such as the prison costume, balloons and dump cart used to clean up after the horses. Other items included saddle blankets, GPS units and financial records.

In its findings released earlier this year, the DOJ wrote, "Our investigation found that the Sheriff of Clatsop County improperly deposited \$2,551.75 from the organization's corporate bank account into the Clatsop County Trust Account."

As a result, the Sheriff's Office returned the money to the posse and is in the process of returning all of the items, which have mostly been stored at the Knappa Substation.

Another result from DOJ's involvement was to clarify the

POSSE PROPERTY

Earlier this year, the Oregon Department of Justice sent the Clatsop County Sheriff's Office a list of items it needed to returned to the former Sheriff's Office Posse.

- Approximately 28 saddle blankets English and Western, black wool trimmed in gold
- 20 parking flags
- Eight to 12 reflective fetlock bands
- Two scrapbooks
- All photos and photo CDs
- All VHS tapes, DVDs, CDs and training videos
- Cashbox
- Prison costume with plastic ball and chain
- Mylar balloons
- Two Garmin Dakota GPS units
- One digital voice recorder
- 10 to 12 Midland FRS radios with all related equipment: Charges, headsets, batteries, etc.
- One to three stirrup flag boots
- Large practice flags
- Blue Rubbermaid container with kitchen/picnic supplies
- Box with table paper
- Posse flag in flag box
- Black grill/griddle located in the Svensen Shops pole barn
- Rubbermaid cart located at County Shops in Astoria
- Plastic shelving unit
- All corporation papers in the Posse files, checkbooks and financial records
- 2012 financial records and checkbook located at the Sheriff's Office

posse's status as a separate legal entity.

"With leadership and control of the nonprofit posse now being legally established and unchallenged, Sheriff Bergin is willing to turn over those items to officers of the organization and have them removed from county property," DOJ concluded.

Trust fund

The separate trust fund Bergin put money into is a county account set up for the posse. It is made up of donations the posse earned while helping the sheriff's office at community events.

The posse and the sheriff's office have agreed to distribute the remaining \$7,614.53 in the trust fund to four local

organizations. The Wishing Tree, the Knappa Food Bank and Clatsop Community Action will each receive \$2,000, with the remaining money going to Friends of the Fair.

The Board of Commissioners approved the distribution of funds at its regular meeting last week.

Throughout the dispute, Bergin said, he has never fought with the posse and is fine with however they want to use their earned money. Bergin said any problems were resolved more than two years ago when the group was disbanded.

"The intent of the trust money was to enhance the posse, which no longer exists," he said. "It was not for individuals in a riding club."





Elisa Long, Medical Assistant
CMH Women's Center
8 years at CMH

Our people make
The Planetree Difference

People-Centered, Quality Driven, Service Focused

Elisa is one of the caregivers at CMH who exemplifies our Promise of Excellence:

- Respect
- Integrity
- Compassion
- Leadership
- Safety
- Teamwork

Caregivers like Elisa make your community hospital one to be proud of.

2111 Exchange St., Astoria, Oregon • 503-325-4321
www.columbiamemorial.org • A Planetree-Designated Hospital

"I really try to put myself into my patients' shoes and see from their perspective... I try to leave everyday knowing that I did my best to make a difference in at least one patient's life."

— Elisa Long, Medical Assistant