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Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Key Juan Smith, left, and La'Braye Franklin, right, smile as they listen during the South Jetty High School graduation ceremony Wednesday.

Behind bars, graduates take big step forward

Future in sight after inmates earn high school diplomas

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — For 18-year-old La'Braye Franklin, graduation came with the greatest gift of all: freedom.

Franklin was one of five students who graduated Wednesday from South Jetty High School, run by the Warrenton-Hammond School District inside the North Coast Youth Correctional Facility.

"Each of these five gentlemen has climbed a very high mountain," South Jetty Principal Richard Glinert said of the troubled youth who come to the prison in need of guidance and an education.

While providing drug and alcohol treatment, the youth authority partners with the school district in a credit recovery program to help students earn their diplomas, in hopes of catching them early and keeping them away from a life of



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

La'Braye Franklin reacts as he opens the door to the outside during his release from the North Coast Youth Correctional Facility Wednesday. Franklin also received his high school diploma Wednesday after completing his credit requirements at the South Jetty High School inside the facility. Franklin plans to help with outreach to disadvantaged youths and focus on making music.

crime. Since the 2010-11 school year, about 90 inmates have earned their diplomas. They each leave with a diploma from Warrenton and a dictionary.

During his address to graduates, Glinert said they also get opportunity to start off with a new identity as a high school graduate. "Use this opportunity

like no other, and sail off into a sunset of your choice."

Franklin, a gang-affiliated teenager from Portland who violated parole, said he came to the prison a boy looking to get his GED. But Glinert said he saw a

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'Each of these five gentlemen has climbed a very high mountain.'

Richard Glinert

South Jetty principal, speaking of the troubled youth who come to the prison in need of guidance and an education.

Postal Service draws line on pot ads

National policy triggered by ads in Chinook Observer

By DERRICK DePLEDGE
The Daily Astorian

The U.S. Postal Service has issued a national policy declaring it illegal to mail newspapers with marijuana advertising but instructing local postmasters to continue to accept the mail.

The guidance, issued after the Postal Service in Portland raised questions in late November about marijuana ads in the Coast Weekend section of the Chinook Observer, places the legal burdens on newspapers to decide whether to reject the mailings.

Local postmasters are not authorized to determine whether the mailers are illegal or to reject the mail. The policy instructs postmasters to advise newspapers



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Jars of marijuana sit in a display case at Sweet Relief in Astoria in October. The U.S. Postal Service has ruled that newspapers with marijuana ads are unlawful to mail, but has instructed local postmasters to continue to accept the mail.

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Sue the feds over sea lions

Port of Astoria commissioner wants to file against NOAA

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

Port of Astoria Commissioner Bill Hunsinger said the agency should do something — potentially litigation — against the federal government regarding California sea lions in the Columbia River.

"Somebody has to be first, and I think it's time for the Port of Astoria to be first at something," Hunsinger said, after adding sea lions to the agenda of Tuesday's Port Commission meeting.

Hunsinger, a commercial fisherman, said the agency needs to do something before the smelt start running early next year. The small, oily eulachons are a popular diet for male California sea lions migrating by the thousands north between breeding seasons, along with endangered salmon runs and anything else seasonal and abundant.

The pinnipeds have been showing up in the Columbia in increasing numbers, including more than 2,300 counted in March at the Port's East End Mooring Basin. The Port has said the sea lions, which can weigh up to 1,000 pounds, are causing

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Submitted Photo

Storms caused erosion that place the trees at risk.

Trees on Riverwalk to fall after storms

Stand of locust trees offers shade, scenic views

By DERRICK DePLEDGE
The Daily Astorian

A small stand of locust trees on the Astoria Riverwalk will likely have to come down because of storm damage.

The trees, just east of the Columbia River Maritime Museum near the Barbey Maritime Center, offer shade during the spring and summer and picturesque views of the river and an old pile field.

"The last storm, we had a swell come from the east, which was at the very high tide and it washed up above the rocks and behind it — washed away the soil under it — so we have some erosion," said Dave Pearson, the maritime museum's deputy director.

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