

Trees: Museum will try to save as many of the trees as possible

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Pearson said the museum will do its best to save as many of the trees as possible, but “most likely the trees will have to be cut down.”

Orange cones have been placed near where the earth has cracked and buckled and put the trees at risk. Another stand had toppled toward the river after previous storms.

Locals and visitors who use the Riverwalk are protective of the trail’s characteristics. After Sharon Collyer, of Astoria, posted photos of the distressed trees Tuesday morning on Facebook, the eulogies followed.

“This makes me sad,” one woman wrote.

“Dang,” wrote another.

“Oh my,” a woman chimed.

Collyer, who will miss the shade and views, said the Riverwalk is a highly

manipulated urban design and that river shorelines are dynamic.

“We can plant more trees so that 20 years from now, other people can have shade in the same spot, and perhaps come up with a plan to slow down erosion,” she said in a text message, “understanding that the Columbia River is a mighty force to be reckoned with.”

Angela Cosby, the director of the city’s Parks and Recreation Department, which oversees the Riverwalk, said the maritime museum will ultimately make the call.

“Trees are vital. Especially within developed areas,” Cosby said in a text message. “They give us oxygen, store carbon, provide habitat for wildlife and frequently stabilize soil.

“Unfortunately, in this case the trees are adding to the destabilization and erosion of the riverbank and likely need to be removed.”

Pot ads: Policy puts those who advertise pot through the mail under a legal cloud

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of the federal law that classifies marijuana as an illegal drug and to report the mailers to the U.S. Postal Inspection Service for potential referral to federal law enforcement agencies.

The national policy was outlined Tuesday in a letter from Thomas Marshall, the general counsel and executive vice president of the Postal Service, to U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Oregon, who along with other Oregon lawmakers had sought clarification on behalf of EO Media Group, which publishes the Chinook Observer, The Daily Astorian and other newspapers.

“Based on our review of the pertinent statutory provisions, we have concluded that advertisements for the sale of marijuana are non-mailable,” wrote Marshall, who advised Wyden that it would be up to Congress to change federal law and allow the ads to be “freely distributed through the U.S. mail.”

“We are working as a delegation to quickly find the best option to address this agency’s intransigence,” Wyden said in a statement today with U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley, U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici and U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer. “We want federal authorities to respect decisions made by law-abiding Oregonians and small business owners in the state.

“Unfortunately, the outdated federal approach to marijuana as described in the response from the Postal Service undermines and threatens news publications that choose to accept advertising from legal marijuana businesses in Oregon and other states where voters also have freely decided to legalize marijuana.”

The national policy creates a potential conflict between the emerging marijuana industry in Oregon and other states and the federal government. Oregon, Washington state, Alaska and Colorado have legalized marijuana for recreational use, but the federal government considers marijuana a Schedule I drug similar to heroin and methamphetamine.

The Postal Service maintains that federal law prohib-

its ads for Schedule I drugs and the use of the mail for “the commission of any act or acts constituting a felony.”

“These provisions express Congress’s judgment that the mail should not be used as a means of transmitting advertisements for the sale of marijuana, even if that sale is allowed under state law,” Marshall wrote. “We believe that we have clear statutory authority to regulate the mail in a way that effectuates Congress’s intent in this regard.”

Under the Obama administration, the U.S. Department of Justice has indicated that possession of small amounts of marijuana for recreational use would not be a federal enforcement priority.

Yet the Postal Service’s policy puts newspapers and others that advertise marijuana through the mail under a legal cloud.

Coast Weekend, which is inserted into the Chinook Observer and The Daily Astorian, accepts advertising from marijuana shops in Washington state and medical marijuana dispensaries in Oregon that are temporarily allowed to sell recreational marijuana under state law.

Roughly half of the weekly Chinook Observer newspapers are distributed by mail, while only a small portion of Daily Astorian newspapers are sent by mail.

Matt Winters, the publisher of the Chinook Observer in Long Beach, Washington, said the notification from the Postal Service in November was a surprise because recreational marijuana has been legal in Washington for three years and the publication has been running marijuana ads for months without complaints. Recreational marijuana became legal in Oregon this year.

EO Media Group will have to decide soon whether to continue to publish and mail newspapers with the ads.

“We’re in touch with our legal counsel and we’re looking at our options,” said Steve Forrester, the editor and publisher of The Daily Astorian and the President and CEO of EO Media Group.



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Graduates walk across the yard to the South Jetty High School graduation ceremony.

Graduates: ‘Nobody ever believed he would graduate.’

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student driven to succeed, joking how Franklin used to sneak school books out of the library under his shirt so he could study and earn his high school credits faster. In six months at South Jetty, Franklin earned 12 credits, about half the total required for a diploma. He said he will now try to find a job, study digital arts, work with similarly disadvantaged youths and pursue his rapping career.

After a drawn-out photo shoot and hugs with visiting family, friends, fellow inmates and employees who had worked with him at the prison, Franklin headed toward the exit. He popped a smile like a child on Christmas morning when the door to the outside clicked open, broke into a dance in the parking lot and left a free man for a visit to the beach in Seaside with friends and family.



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Bailey Snedecor-Coretti gives a speech during the South Jetty High School graduation ceremony.

An end in sight

Inside the wood-paneled gym of South Jetty, wearing loaner green graduation gowns, the other graduates visited with family, friends and fellow inmates, not yet free but with an end to their incarceration in sight.

Bailey Snedecor-Coretti, 18, stood with his mother, December, and younger brother, Gary, clutching his diploma and the packet showing his results on the new Smarter Balanced statewide assessment, which he took while locked up. Glinert said Coretti recently found out he earned one of the highest scores on the assessment in the entire state.



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

La’Braye Franklin, right, helps Key Juan Smith with his mortarboard before the South Jetty High School graduation ceremony.

“They said it was harder, but it was easy for me,” Coretti said. “I think it says everyone has a chance to do good.”

Coretti said he will soon head to McLaren Youth Correctional Facility in Woodburn, where he will study barbering and take college courses. Coretti said he wants to design video games with his brother and train to be a nurse.

Coretti said he ended up in prison after running away from home and getting caught drinking alcohol. The North Coast facility specializes in offenders between 14 and 21 convicted of drug, alcohol and parole violations. Prison director James Sapper said about two-thirds of the youths are gang-affiliated.

Andrea Franz, a guard at the prison, said she used to work on death row and SWAT teams in the Arizona State Prison Complex, but said the experience wore on her.

“I stopped working with adults,” she said. “There is way more hope for these guys.”

Students can come to South Jetty with anything from just needing a few credits to graduate to hav-

ing only a few credits over-all. One of the latter was Carlos Perez, 19. He has been locked up 2 1/2 years — two years in Warren-ton — and earned nearly 20 high school credits, his diploma, and a raft of cer-

tifications in first aid, flagging, food handling and even boating.

“I just wanted to learn something new,” Perez said, adding he is no longer focused on school, but rather getting out, going home, getting a job and staying out of trouble.

“Nobody ever believed he would graduate,” his mother, Alicia, said. “This is a good program. I am thankful. I am thankful for so many things.”



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