

Hike: The first pay bump starts in July

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minimum wage,” Brown said. “Over the past few weeks, I’ve done a lot of talking about how important it is for hard-working Oregonians to get a much needed raise in order to keep up with the rising cost of housing, rent, food and other necessities.”

Dembrow and Rep. Paul Holvey, D-Eugene, crafted the plan, contained in Senate Bill 1532, after a year’s worth of research, meetings with stakeholders, public hearings and negotiations.

The plan hikes wages over a period of six years. The amount differs in each of three regions and is set according to a county’s population, median income and cost of living. The minimum wage will reach \$14.75 in the Portland area, \$12.50 in rural and coastal counties with struggling economies and \$13.50 in the rest of the state by 2022.

The first pay bump starts in July, from \$9.25 to \$9.75 statewide.

President Barack Obama commended the Oregon Legislature and Brown Wednesday for approving the plan and called on Congress to follow suit. He said more than half of states now have wages higher than the federal minimum.

“Since I first called on



Anna Reed/Statesman-Journal

Sen. Michael Dembrow celebrates before Gov. Kate Brown signs Senate Bill 1532, increasing Oregon’s minimum wage according to a tiered system, at the state Capitol in Salem on Wednesday.

Congress to increase the federal minimum wage in 2013, 18 states and the District of Columbia have acted on their own,” Obama said in a statement. “These efforts will boost the paychecks of hardworking Americans and help support millions of workers trying to make ends meet.”

Brown said the plan would help the state avoid “a number of potentially problematic ballot measures.”

It is still unclear whether all of the initiative campaigns are dead.

The Raise the Wage coalition announced Monday that it has suspended signature gathering to place a measure on the

ballot to raise wages to \$13.50 statewide during a three-year period. That measure also would have lifted a ban on cities and counties setting higher wages. Chief sponsors said early in the campaign that the union-backed initiative was intended to spur the Legislature to action.

“While this proposal diverges from our initial plan for raising the wage, it is overwhelmingly a win for Oregon workers — in large part because it gives a raise to over 100,000 minimum-wage workers this July,” said Andrea Miller, executive director of Causa Oregon. “Most notably, this bill contains no carve-

outs or exceptions for different classes of workers, like farmworkers or restaurant workers, or for people just starting out in their career.”

The \$15 Now campaign is still an unknown.

“We are still in discussions with our partners of which there are many,” said chief petitioner Jamie Partridge of Portland. They are figuring out how to go forward. We are trying to determine our capacity to go to the ballot and wage a winning campaign.”

The plan approved by the Legislature is “too low, too slow and too little, too late,” Partridge said. “It’s not enough to bring people out of poverty.”

Anthony K. Smith, Oregon state director for the National Federation of Independent Business called on the governor to publicly oppose the \$15 Now campaign.

“It’s bad enough that this unfortunate law will prompt small-business owners to halt hiring, start cutting back hours for workers, start eliminating overtime, or even make layoffs, but her silence on the ballot initiative only adds to the anxiety Oregon’s entrepreneurs are already experiencing,” Smith said in a statement.

The Capital Bureau is a collaboration between EO Media Group and Pamplin Media Group.



Submitted Photo

Mike Meno, a longtime healthcare provider on the Long Beach (Wash.) Peninsula who established the medical clinic in Klipsan and served on the Ilwaco City Council, has suffered multiple strokes and is being treated in Astoria.

Meno: ‘He’s a wonderful man with a very, very big heart’

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He gave so much

Steve Bellinger, Ocean Beach Hospital physician assistant and captain/paramedic with Pacific County Fire District 1, brought Mike Meno’s plight to the attention of the Chinook Observer in an e-mail recently. He wrote, “Mike has sacrificed a portion of his life and much of his finances to our community.”

He explained that Meno encouraged Bellinger to go back to school, after they first met in the late 1980s. Bellinger recalled, “I did return to college and ultimately attended the University of Washington and became a physician assistant just like Mike. I now have provided medical services to our community for almost 19 years.”

Through Meno’s dedicated tutelage, Bellinger said, “I feel I am one of the many indirect impacts Mike had on our community. I bring up my involvement not to highlight my deeds, but to highlight the vision and the impact that Mike’s visions had on our community and its individuals. As you know, Mike also during his time as a medical practitioner on the peninsula built North Beach Clinic, now know as the Family Health Center. Again, he had a vision and this was to provide healthcare services to the residents of the north end, which are predominantly senior citizens.”

Bellinger said Meno “served and sacrificed” in his contributions to this community. He encourages community members to give back through the GoFundMe page.

With this stroke, Meno lost the use of his left arm and leg.

Her wish is for Meno to be able to stay at this care center as long as it takes for him to recover enough to return home. But their insurance company is likely not going to pay for that to happen, she said, “They’re already requesting that I get a hold of the state services, so they can look into our financial situation to see if we qualify for Medicaid.”

Cannon Beach: If directors are recalled, remaining board member or members would appoint new directors

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Clyde said the recall drive had a “chilling effect” on public awareness of the events prior to the termination.

Cannon Beach resident Susan Neuwirth, who initiated the recall, called the challenges “for the best.”

“Hopefully, it will settle this issue once and for all, either way,” Neuwirth said Wednesday. “If the town-folk want to reinstall them, then so be it. If they would like a fresh start after many years of the same guard, then so be it. At least there has been a lot of healthy conversation regarding the importance of sitting on any board and the decisions they make. I believe this is particularly true when it involves life and property.”

The special election is scheduled for April 5. If

directors are recalled, the remaining board member or members would appoint new directors.

There are several residents who have expressed interest in serving, Neuwirth said.

“But since they weren’t certain of the outcome, nobody has officially thrown their hat in the ring,” Neuwirth said.

Neuwirth said she would be proud to serve “if people would like me to.”

“I’ll wait and see what kind of comments are made by the public and Fire Department,” Neuwirth added. “I do know this: The volunteers are very appreciative that all of this has come to light and the town has stood behind them. They will definitely have a much stronger voice in their department in the future.”

Lyra Fontaine contributed to this report.

Students: Wreck is protected by state, federal and international law

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“It’s an experience for sure,” said Darby Cullen, a mechanical engineering major recruited to build the robot. “We’ve explored space, and we haven’t explored underwater to any remarkable degree.”

Cullen, along with fellow engineering student and Jewell School graduate Jonathan Kaminski, are novices to robot-building but largely in charge of assembling the submersible. Helping them and Larsen, who specializes in the software and wiring, are Brenton Davis and Ashley Fish, lead members of Warrenton High School’s underwater robotics team, and Sam Daire, another college student who has been a part of the robotics teams at the college and Seaside High School.

Larsen said the team hopes to have the submersible ready this summer for their first mission: exploring the wreckage of the *Silvia de Grasse*, a packet ship carrying lumber that sank in the Columbia River near Pier 39 in 1849.

“They know where it is,” Larsen said. “We’re just going and inspecting it.”

After that comes the challenge of taking the submersible into more open waters. Larsen said team members have signed nondisclosure agreements, searching for some shipwrecks that have yet to be found.

The Beeswax shipwreck

The archaeological society met in Astoria in February and voted to adopt the Beeswax Wreck Project as their own. Scott Williams, archaeologist with the Washington State Department of Transportation, is the principal investigator with the project, which began in 2004.

“Lewis and Clark, the fur traders in the area, the Indians brought them beeswax to trade,” Williams told the annual meeting of the society in the Barbey Maritime Center. “Especially the fur traders know that there are no honeybees. There’s no native honeybees anywhere in the New World. So they asked the natives where they got this beeswax, and they told them there was a shipwreck.”

Williams said he is 99.9 percent sure the source of beeswax washing up over the years on Nehalem Spit near Manzanita is the *Santo Cristo de Burgos*, a Spanish galleon that started back from Manila, Philippines, in 1693 loaded with beeswax



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Georges Oates Larsen tinkers with pieces of the OpenROV in the physics lab of Clatsop Community College on Wednesday.



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Darby Cullen and Jonathan Kaminski show what the finished OpenROV will look like. They plan to have the underwater exploration robot done by the summer.

and other commodities destined for Mexico.

“Only the Spanish carry large cargoes of beeswax,” Williams said, adding the markings on the beeswax are Spanish.

Based on the dating of porcelain found on the beach, he said, the shipwreck off of Manzanita most likely occurred between 1680 and 1700, and is likely spread out after being shifted by a large tsunami that hit the Oregon Coast in 1700.

“This is not a salvage or a treasure hunt,” Williams said.

The wreck is protected by state, federal and international law, he said, with the Spanish government likely having first dibs on any wreckage.

Robotic assistance

Over the past decade, the



Submitted Photo

Beachcombers have long found marked blocks of beeswax, like this piece found in 1915, that the investigators with the Beeswax Wreck Project believe are from the *Santo Cristo de Burgos*, a Spanish galleon coming back with commodities from Manila, Philippines, when it sank in the late 17th century.

Beeswax Wreck Project has probably spent 20 days total in the field, Williams said,

owing to the divers, boats, good weather and water conditions needed to put together a field study.

For the archaeological society, the submersible will allow more dives throughout the year as they try to document shipwrecks. On land, Williams said, the archaeological society needs people to remain vigilant when combing the beach.

“We need people on the beach, if they find stuff, to report it,” Williams said. “Don’t pick it up, put it in your pocket and go. Notify a park ranger. If it’s in danger of being washed away, like something right at the surf line, OK, pick that up and then tell a park ranger.”

For more information about the Maritime Archaeological Society, visit <http://maritimearchaeological.org>