

BEAVERS REACH FINAL FOUR

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LADY FISHERMEN WIN FOURTH STRAIGHT

SPORTS • 7A



A rehab team at the Oregon Coast Aquarium in Newport examines Thunder, an olive ridley sea turtle who washed ashore in Gearhart in December.

Thunder, Lightning go to SeaWorld

Happy ending for endangered sea turtles

By LYRA FONTAINE and R.J. MARX
The Daily Astorian

SEASIDE — It's been a rough year for sea turtles, especially for the endangered olive ridleys. But for two turtles rescued after winter storms, a happy ending is in sight.

After treatment at the Oregon Coast Aquarium, Thunder and Lightning are headed to SeaWorld in San Diego. They will be escorted by the U.S. Coast Guard and a rehabilitation team Wednesday.

Thunder and Lightning were found comatose, hypothermic and malnourished following two large storms that hit the Oregon Coast in December.

Lightning was found in Pacific City and Thunder washed ashore in Gearhart.

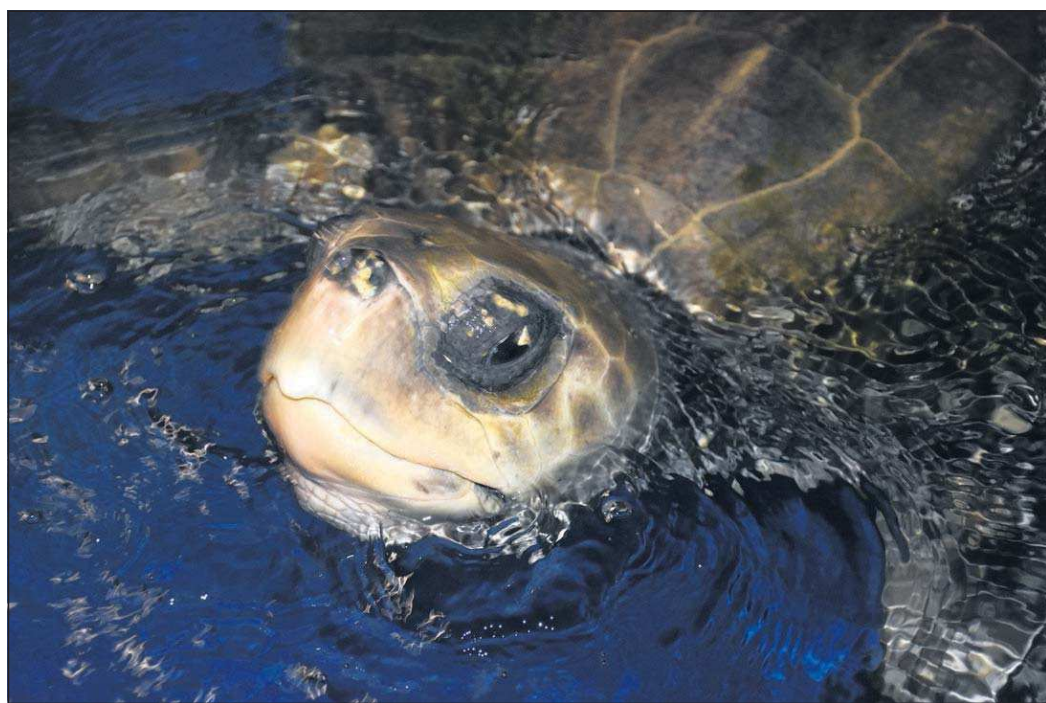
"We had a series of strong winter storms and they can strand for a number of reasons," Lance Beck of the Oregon Coast Aquarium said Monday. "But typically when we see them, they're hypothermic."

As turtles become hypothermic, their metabolism slows and they go into a state where they're alive but would almost appear dead if found, Beck said. "That's why it's critical that they get into care as soon as possible."

Beck said it's a slow process of raising the animal's temperature no more than 1 to 2 degrees per day.

Thunder — the Gearhart turtle — is one of the larger and stronger turtles to come through the Newport aquarium, he said.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Coast Guard will fly Thunder and Lightning back



Oregon Coast Aquarium

Thunder recovers in her rehabilitation pool at the Oregon Coast Aquarium in Newport.

to warmer waters as part of a training mission.

The trip was originally scheduled for earlier this month, but had to be delayed due to aircraft scheduling issues.

The mission to San Diego is being included in Coast Guard drills as an opportunity to train for other emergency situations that could involve not only animals in distress, but also passengers requiring critical care.

After Thunder and Lightning leave Newport, they will complete their rehabilitation at SeaWorld San Diego, preparing for release later this summer.

"Once they're at good enough health, we like to get them back down south where their native waters are," Beck said.

Beck said he anticipated Thunder and Lightning would spend three to four months at SeaWorld before being ready for release into the sea.

Two more turtles, including the renowned "Tucker the Turtle" found in Tolovana and treated at the Seaside Aquarium, are undergoing treatment by the Seattle Aquarium and the Vancouver Aquarium in Canada and will also be transported south in the coming weeks.

At least six other sea turtles succumbed to the elements and stranded on Oregon, Washington, and northern California beaches this winter.

Many sea turtles are considered vulnerable to changing climate and tidal patterns.

This year's El Niño brought many more turtles out of their traditional migration patterns, Laura Todd, Newport field supervisor for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, said in December.

"It's why there's so much effort," Beck said Monday. "Because every one of them can still contribute to the recovery of that species."

Criminal justice returns to class

Program had been victim of budget cuts

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

After several years on hiatus, Clatsop Community College's criminal justice program officially returned Monday with an introductory course — "Criminal Justice 111" — taught by Mary Jackson, a veteran of the corrections profession.

Jackson said she started class with 15 students, nearly equal parts men and women and ages ranging from teens to midlifers. There are several students interested in law enforcement, she said, several in corrections and one in white-collar investigations.

"If you look at the community that we're in, and also Pacific County (Washington), there are quite a few agencies that could benefit from having someone with a criminal justice background," she said.

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Divers recover second body

Removal of plane debris planned today

By ERICK BENGEL
The Daily Astorian

Divers have recovered the body of a 63-year-old Washington state woman who died in a plane crash that also claimed the life of the pilot when their antique aircraft plunged into the Columbia River last week, the Clatsop County Sheriff's Office announced Monday.

Irene Mustain, of Woodland, Washington, wanted to scatter her husband's ashes at the coast on Wednesday with the help of 69-year-old John McKibbin, of Vancouver, Washington.

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Ghostly gathering comes to Seaside this weekend

Organizer claims town is haunted

By EVE MARX
For EO Media Group

SEASIDE — You don't have to be a believer in spooks and spirits to enjoy the Oregon Ghost Conference, coming to the Seaside Civic and Convention Center this weekend.

The event, now in its fifth year, got its start in Oregon City, but grew so large, organizer Rocky Smith, had to secure a bigger venue.

It didn't hurt that Seaside had a rich occult history.

GHOST HUNTERS

The 2016 Oregon Ghost Conference, presented by PartyLite by Tina Ford, is the Northwest's largest paranormal convention. For more information, visit oregonghostconference.com.

Seaside, Smith allowed, is known to be haunted.

"For the past year, I've been researching Seaside," he said. "There are a couple of places people talk about being haunted. I had to weed through the old stories to find out what's accurate. After talking to various business owners and coming back here for research a few times, I've learned some new ghostly stories."

There's a strong connection

between Oregon City and Seaside, through the industrialist and larger-than-life character Ben Holladay, Smith said.

Smith is a local historian and paranormal investigator. In 2006, he combined his love of history and knowledge of the paranormal by founding Northwest Ghost Tours offering paranormal tours in Oregon City and Portland.

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Submitted Photo

Conference Director Rocky Smith.

