

CRABBING BONANZA

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CONGRATS SEASIDE GRADS

PAGES 10A-12A

CASCADIA RISING

Megaquake minded

Disaster exercises reveal strengths and gaps in county preparation

By ERICK BENGEL
The Daily Astorian

Clatsop County isn't as far along in preparing for a Cascadia earthquake and tsunami as Tiffany Brown, the county's emergency manager, would prefer. But that's nothing to be ashamed of, given that the region only realized the full magnitude of the threat within the last decade.

"We've known about it for 20 years or so, but it's really that additional study that has occurred since 2011 that has left us with a greater understanding of how big the threat is, and that's why everybody is really paying attention to: What are we doing, and how ready are we?" she said. "Relative to how long we've understood the enormity of this hazard in our community, we are where I would expect us to be."

Brown took stock of the county's disaster readiness this week during Cascadia Rising, a Tuesday-through-Friday focus on preparing agencies in Oregon and Washington state for the Cascadia Subduction Zone megaquake, a rare but cataclysmic event that could cause a humanitarian crisis in the Pacific Northwest.

See MEGAQUAKE, Page 9A



Photos by Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

Astoria High School students Ben Williams, left, and Halie Korff walk through the halls of John Jacob Astor Elementary School as students congratulate them during a graduation walk Thursday. The graduating class visited multiple schools in the district before walking down Commercial Street to the Liberty Theater.

A walk to remember

Astoria High School seniors march across the city

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

As Astoria High School's Class of 2016 walked into the bottom-floor hallway of John Jacob Astor Elementary School in full purple-and-gold regalia, they were greeted like celebrities by lines of adoring elementary-schoolers on a proverbial red carpet.

The graduating seniors spent Thursday morning snaking their way through Astor, Lewis and Clark Elementary School, Astoria Middle School and through the high school.

Their first audience was dressed up in their dream jobs as police officers, princesses, cowgirls and Air Force pilots — and one as a character from the video game "Mortal Kombat." Graduates kept a brisk pace, spending 15 minutes handing out high-fives and hugs to students, teachers and staff before a final walk down Commercial Street past residents and business owners.

See WALK, Page 12A



ABOVE: The graduating class walks down Commercial Street Thursday.



LEFT: Tru Baca-Valero, kindergartner at John Jacob Astor Elementary School, high-fives Astoria High School students as they walk through the halls of the elementary school.

Different paths lead top students to college

One had a drug problem, the other was a home-schooler

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

Jesse Miller wanted to turn his life around after three years in prison. Alex Autio was getting his first introduction to public education.

Both hit their stride at Clatsop Community College, where they have been awarded the Student of the Year Award, voted on by their peers.

"It's just a big deal for me, considering where I've been in my past," Miller said, still somewhat in disbelief about the award.

Miller, 30, dropped out of Sam Barlow High School in Gresham his junior year, left for Sunriver and spent the next several years working construction. In 2008, after earning his diploma from Clackamas Community College, Miller said he felt as if the world was in his hands.

See STUDENTS, Page 9A

America's beauty hasn't faded. Has its greatness?

The dream is alive, if distant

Part of an occasional series
By JAY REEVES
Associated Press

Americans agree on this much: They are disgusted with politics. They look toward Washington, D.C., and see a broken federal government, a place where politicians seem more interested in self-preservation than We the People. Things don't seem much better in state capitals, and, who knows? Lead-tainted water



may be pouring out of their kitchen faucet next.

Yet Americans say they still believe in America, the experiment in democracy that the founders described as a place where the government should protect the rights of ordinary people to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. There's something at the core of America they long for, even if it's hard to define and seems distant in 2016.

Donald Trump proclaims

See AMERICA, Page 8A



This combination of 2016 photos shows, top row from left, Dana Craig, 15, of River Falls, Wis.; Kimberly Jung, 29, of Chicago and Rodney Kimball, 74, of West Bethel, Maine; Swanson, 22, of Chicago; Craig House, 32, of St. Louis and Mike Poling of Delphos, Ohio; bottom row from left, Amal Kassar, 20, of Colorado; John Moore, 74, of New Orleans and Russ Madson, 45, of Birmingham, Ala. The Associated Press interviewed a wide range of Americans to get a sense of what they think about the nation's greatness in the twilight of President Barack Obama's eight years in office. AP Photo