



LOCAL ATHLETES READY TO ‘JAMBOREE’

SPORTS • 7A

Warrenton aims to tackle affordable housing scarcity

Residential development will be allowed in commercial zones

By ERICK BENGEL
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — To help remedy the regional shortage of affordable housing, Warrenton may start amending the city code to provide more flexibility in development.

The City Commission approved a motion Tuesday to send a letter to the Planning Commission supporting strategies to create more housing options within city limits.

One strategy could involve allowing multiple-family development within the general commercial zone

— an area normally reserved for businesses — provided the applicant obtains a conditional use permit. This would soften a 2008 code change that eliminated residential units of all types in that zone.

Warrenton, one of several cities on the North Coast facing an afford-

able housing crunch, is trying to increase housing inventory, which could drive down prices.

Skip Urling, the community development director, said he recommended the conditional use route, in part, because the criteria is designed to work with the surroundings, enabling projects that fit the neighborhood while blocking those that do not.

“There are appeals opportunities if somebody is aggrieved,” Urling said, “whether it’s the applicant who doesn’t get (the permit), or neighbors who think it’s going to be disruptive to their commercial activities.”

Mayor Mark Kujala acknowledged that some planners may

See HOUSING, Page 10A

Keeping eyes, ears on the water



Photo courtesy of U.S. Coast Guard

Operations specialist and Petty Officer 1st Class Darlene Harrison, left, and Lt. j.g. Issac Yates confer inside the command center of U.S. Coast Guard Sector Columbia River Friday. The command center oversees Coast Guard operations throughout Oregon and Washington, from the Pacific Ocean up the Columbia River to Lewiston, Idaho.

U.S. Coast Guard watches the river to keep us safe

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — Friday was slow inside the command center of U.S. Coast Guard Sector Columbia River, a secure office perched above the helicopter hangars at Air Station Astoria. Reports came in of logs floating down the river. A boater beached on the Willamette River in Oregon City.

Shortly before 2 p.m., the search and rescue alarm went off, notifying the air station to ready helicopters for launch. A report had come across of a person adrift in the Pacific Ocean off of Ocean Park, Washington, in an inner tube. The report was followed several minutes later by another of a disabled boat with two people onboard floating into the mouth of Grays Harbor.

See COAST GUARD, Page 10A



Photo courtesy of U.S. Coast Guard

Operations specialists like Petty Officer 3rd Class Brendan Luedtke send out broadcasts warning mariners of weather conditions, passing ships and obstructions in the Columbia River.

Arctic seal makes historic Surfside stop

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
For EO Media Group

SURFSIDE, Wash. — A rare visitor to the Washington coast left behind strange tracks, but little else.

Any large marine mammal on the beach will attract attention if people happen to be around to see it, but the seal that hauled out near Surfside last week was particularly striking. It looked nothing like the harbor seals typically spotted on the Long Beach Peninsula. White markings looped around the back of its head and around its fins, standing out boldly against a dark gray or black base coat.

A person out walking along the beach that morning was the only witness to its visit, snapping some photos as the seal flopped across the wet



EO Media Group/Submitted Photo

A species from the high Arctic, a ribbon seal, was photographed last week on the beach near Surfside, Wash.

sand and disappeared into the surf.

Willapa National Wildlife Refuge biologist Will Ritchie was also on the beach that morning.

“A couple of minutes sooner and I probably would have seen it, too,”

he said. Instead he saw the pictures the person took, and the prints in the sand, marking the strange seal’s journey back to the ocean.

Ritchie was driving a different vehicle than usual, and all of his wildlife identification guides were back in his work truck. It was obvious he was looking at pictures of some kind of seal, he said, but he didn’t know what kind. The wildlife guides, all for species found in the North Pacific, wouldn’t have been much help anyway as it turned out.

Creature of the north

Ritchie did a quick internet search and found pictures of ribbon seals lounging on ice — seals that, with those same distinctive swooping

See SEAL, Page 10A

New lines outline tsunami safe zones

Finding the way to safety from Haystack Rock

By LYRA FONTAINE
The Daily Astorian

CANNON BEACH — “Follow me” are two words Jeneé Pearce-Mushen encourages residents to tell people in the event of a major Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake. But to help lead others to safety, one needs to first understand where to go when the ground starts to shake.

A walk on Saturday from beach-access stairs near Haystack Rock to the assembly area, organized by Haystack Rock Awareness Program, presented an opportunity to practice. The walk was part of the program’s summer potluck. Groups took about 10 minutes or less to reach the assembly area. The goal is to reach an assembly area within 15 to 20 minutes of an earthquake.

According to the tsunami evacuation pedestrian map, the best route from the stairs by Haystack Rock is to take Viewpoint Terrace and Arbor Lane to the Midtown South assembly area on Arbor Lane and South Spruce Street.

The area by the rock is considered the Midtown South area. Cannon Beach is divided into 10 areas, from the north end to south Tolovana. Each area has its own evacuation route map, which can be found on the city’s website.

For more opportunities to practice, residents and visitors can join monthly evacuation practice walks to designated assembly areas throughout the city. Led by Pearce-Mushen, the walks were originally organized by former City Councilor Nancy Giasson to educate participants and test routes.

Participants meet at Cannon Beach City Hall at noon every fourth Monday of the month. Upcoming walks are on Sept. 26, to the assembly area from the presidential streets in midtown; and Oct. 24, to the assembly area from midtown south.

After each tsunami walk, emergency preparedness committee member Les Wierson and Pearce-Mushen provide a report for the city. Wierson’s recommendations after the walk Saturday included painting one of the beach access stairs blue, adding another route sign and better marking at the assembly area.

New blue lines, signs installed

The Cannon Beach emergency preparedness committee and the city have marked blue lines on pavement at two areas: the intersection of Ecola Park Road and North Hemlock Street, and South Hemlock Street by the “S” curve.

See SAFE ZONES, Page 10A



Lyra Fontaine/The Daily Astorian

Blue lines, accompanied by “Leaving tsunami hazard zones” signs, have been marked on Ecola Park Road at North Hemlock Street (pictured), as well as on South Hemlock Street.