



Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

Dawn Stetzel searches for materials for her upcoming art exhibition at the Astoria Transfer Station. More photos online at DailyAstorian.com

Trash: 'One person's trash is another person's treasure'

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Picking permission

As the saying goes, one person's trash is another's treasure. For Barrow and Stetzel, free trash-picking rights came at a premium. Since July, the artists receive unfettered access to the transfer station, along with a monthly stipend and studio space.

"As a sculptor and a builder, material cost is the biggest part," Barrow said.

Many of Barrow's works are for private clients. But instead of focusing on what his clients want, he said, the residency with Recology has allowed him to go where his finds at the transfer station take him. He has been based in Astoria for more than a year, saying the small-town life is better for his art.

Stetzel came to the Oregon Coast as an artist in residency for the Sitka Center for Art and Ecology in Otis. She made her way north as the first artist in residence hosted by the Sou'wester Lodge in Seaview, Washington.

"For me, this is not a new way of making," Stetzel said. "This is the way I've always made ... or the process of my making. I usually look at what people throw away."

"Coming to a place where I have permission to dig in the trash, it's just glorious."

Big City Art

Recology, which started in San Francisco, held its first artist in residency program there in

1990. Similar programs are in Portland, Seattle and other large cities.

Fred Stemmler, general manager for Recology Western Oregon, said he was admiring the chalk art at Fort George Brewery one day. He got in touch with artist and Astoria Visual Arts board member Darren Orange over a beer and hatched the plan for Astoria's artist in residency program.

"The idea behind the program is to promote the arts, but also to kind of highlight that one person's trash is another person's treasure," Stemmler said.

Astoria Visual Arts helped find the artists and the space for their exhibit underneath Imogen Gallery. Recology provided the source material and studio space.

Creations from the pile

After picking through the transfer station, Barrow and Stetzel load their finds in a red pickup truck and drive it back to their studio, a paint booth in Recology's maintenance depot at the Astoria Regional Airport. The room is littered with various tools — most of which they found at the transfer station — and their creations for the art exhibit.

Stetzel has laid out a fire-escape ladder made from the arms of dumped canvas camping chairs. Broom, rake and other handles provide the steps. On the wall hangs a life jacket made of canvas chairs and found foam. "In beach communities,

I see so many of these thrown away," Stetzel said of her fabric.

In her previous residencies, Stetzel scavenged to make a houseboat, ski cart, life raft and other reclaimed artwork, focusing on mobility, survival and a connection to her surroundings. Visualizing her exhibit next month, Stetzel said she plans on wearing a survival suit made from tent fabric while riding on a raft made from coolers.

Outside, Barrow wielded a 40-pound maul made from a plastic bottle skin filled with concrete. Farther away stood a tower of more than 1 ton worth of stacked pier supports he will carve into an exhibit on the uses of wood.

Spinning on a boat bearing nailed to a work bench was a mandala Barrow made from discarded oak flooring. Plastic cases from a small parts company with purple, green and orange bottoms formed the design of the mandala, centered on a TV projector lens. Emanating from the spinning mandala like rays of the sun will be a collection of golf clubs Barrow found.

Stetzel and Barrow have been surprised by some of the things people throw away, from a working TV projector and a one-wheeled hoverboard to boxed doll sets, other childhood mementos and items that might have come from the recently deceased.

When looking at the things people throw away, Stetzel said, "there's a lot of emotional baggage."



R.J. Marx/The Daily Astorian

Gearhart City Council approved a new short-term rental ordinance Wednesday night.

Gearhart: 'Everyone has had the opportunity to be heard'

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status. Those applying for permits must pay a \$600 fee and show proof they have paid city taxes.

There are about 90 short-term rentals in Gearhart, Sweet said. Ninety-nine additional condos in higher-density zones would not be affected by the new rules.

Registration is open to "anyone who can prove to me they've rented by the time the application period is over," he added.

No new permits will be issued after the 60-day period. Rules include parking requirements and occupancy limits, among other conditions.

Permit ownership may be transferred only by inheritance. "It is the intent that the sale of homes with a rental permit will result in gradual attrition of the

total number of dwellings with a vacation rental permit," the ordinance states.

Alternate proposal

That clause, among others, led some short-term property owners early this week to announce their intention to bring an alternate proposal before Gearhart voters in the form of an election initiative.

While recognizing the need for registration, their plan enables transfer of permits, increases the number of permits issued and calls for changes in parking and occupancy limits for short-term rental properties.

According to City Attorney Peter Watts, an initiative to send the measure to voters would be too late for November's election but could be on the ballot next year.

Residents could also choose

to ask for a referendum to "erase what we did," Watts said, with 30 days to give notice to the city and another 90 days to gather signatures.

In public comment period Wednesday night, some audience members decried the council's vote.

Kathy Schroeder said the council stymied the concerns of short-term property owners "the whole way through."

Gearhart resident Shannon Smith, in opposing the new rules, said the city's priorities were "out of whack."

"We have to listen to our citizens," Smith said. "There seems to be some disregard from that happening."

"Everyone has had the opportunity to be heard," Widop said after the meeting. "I don't go for the 'I didn't have the chance to be heard.'"

Missing: Wet fog, low clouds hindered search

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Within about five minutes, responders from the South Pacific County Technical Rescue (surf rescue), local fire departments, Medix ambulance and the U.S. Coast Guard were in route. A dispatcher said police were with the missing woman's boyfriend at the scene. The other responders arrived at about 10:40 p.m. At about the same time, a responder asked a dispatcher to notify emergency responders that they should send more trucks to the beach, if possible.

"We need all the spotters we can get," the man said.

Around 10:45 p.m., a rescuer asked the Coast Guard to dispatch a search helicopter. Responders then switched to communicating on a tactical channel, and only brief snippets of conversation could be heard on the common public safety scanner channel for the remainder of the search effort.

At 10:50 p.m., a rescuer, relaying information to the Coast Guard through dispatch, said the woman had already been in the water for a minimum of 25 minutes. The Coast Guard helicopter arrived at about 11 p.m. and swept back and forth over the water in widening circles for the remainder of the search effort. As the evening wore on, the helicopter began venturing further north and south, a possible indication that responders were shifting from rescue to recovery.

Radio communications between the various parties hinted at the challenges of conducting a search at night, when reduced visibility and cooler temperatures increase the risks for both the victim and the rescuers. The incident started roughly two hours before low high tide. At the time, the air and water temperature were both between about 55 and 60



Damian Mulinix/For EO Media Group

A Coast Guard helicopter circles over the shoreline near the Sid Snyder approach early Thursday morning during the search for a woman who disappeared in the surf earlier in the night.

degrees. According to various internet sources, a healthy person who is in 50 to 60-degree water typically reaches the point of exhaustion or unconsciousness in one to two hours, but can sometimes survive for as long as six hours. Historically, most of the Peninsula's dozens of drowning victims have succumbed to the water in far less than six hours.

When a Chinook Observer reporter and photojournalist arrived at the beach at roughly 11:45 p.m., about eight vehicles from local agencies were on the beach. Several volunteer firefighters from the Long Beach Fire Department were

cruising the beach, while a Coast Guard vessel used powerful lights to search in the water near shore, and "spotters" onshore searched for any hint of the woman. Around midnight, rescuers began firing a flare gun every few minutes to cast a brighter, bigger pool of light over the water. A low cloud cover turned into a wet fog, further hindering the search effort.

With little chance of finding the woman amid worsening conditions, rescuers suspended the search at about 12:40 a.m., and a convoy of emergency vehicles left the beach.

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