

Nevada man sentenced for stealing cart of meat from Astoria Safeway

By KYLE SPURR
The Daily Astorian



Ronald Joe Whitehair Jr.

The Nevada man charged with felony theft for stealing a shopping cart full of meat from Safeway in Astoria was sentenced Monday in Clatsop County Circuit Court.

Ronald Joe Whitehair Jr., 54, of Sparks, Nevada, was sentenced to 44 days in jail and one year of probation after he is released. He was also ordered to have no contact with the Astoria Safeway.

Whitehair pleaded no contest to first-degree theft Monday before being sentenced.

Astoria Police arrested

Whitehair in August after a Safeway employee reported a theft in progress. Whitehair allegedly ran out of the grocery store with the shopping cart full of various meats, val-

ued at more than \$1,000.

The shopping cart tipped over in the parking lot as Whitehair was trying to reach his 35-year-old son, Ronald Joe Whitehair III, in their motorhome.

Whitehair abandoned the spilled meat, police said, and hopped into the motorhome outside. His son, from Longview, Washington, drove from the scene.

An Astoria Police officer was able to see the motorhome and pulled it over near 49th Street.

Whitehair was arrested. His son was not arrested at the scene, but was later charged

with first-degree theft. He is scheduled for an arraignment hearing in Circuit Court on Thursday.

Whitehair was in town visiting family and temporarily working with his son driving trucks for BioOregon Protein in Hammond.

According to the District Attorney's Office, Whitehair has an out-of-state criminal history of six felony convictions, including for assault, burglary, criminal trespass and drug possession. The most recent conviction was in 2011.

Whitehair and his son are ordered to pay \$1,077 in restitution to Safeway.

New steakhouse planned

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

Local business owner Charles Holboke has bought the buildings housing his two established businesses on Marine Drive, and said the third, his long-planned Charlie's Chophouse, is ready to go except for a staff.

Holboke recently purchased the property for his Tiki Bar and Charlie's Chowder House. Next door is Charlie's Chophouse, which Holboke has been planning for the last year and a half.

He recently secured a liquor license. He also owns Godfather's Books and Espresso on 11th and Commercial streets.

"I hope it will be like a throwback steakhouse, like ... Ringside (Steakhouse) in Portland, which has been around for 80 years," Holboke said.

Holboke said personal medical issues have set him back on the restaurant. Also challenging, he said, has been finding the right chef and bartender. "Other than that, we're ready to go, pretty much," he said.

Two more pot stores planned for Astoria

City becoming a popular outpost

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

Two more marijuana stores are in the planning stages in Astoria.

Consultant Daryl Bell applied for a conditional use permit to open a retail outlet on the ground floor of the Cannery Loft condominiums near Pier 39. Consultant Ray Zuniga submitted a land use compatibility statement for a marijuana store in the former Head Shed barber shop on the South Slope of Astoria.

Astoria now has five marijuana stores in operation, with another three in planning.

Cannery Lofts

Bell, who has spent the last couple of years building out dispensaries for clients, said he wants to open a dual-space storefront, including a high-end dispensary and art gallery, called West Cannabis and Craft.

"I think mine will be successful in that I'm not relying specifically on cannabis to be the driver," Bell said. "I'm creating a canvas if you

will for local artists to display their work, which allows me to support the local industry."

Bell's application lists Suite 104 of the westernmost building at Cannery Loft as a location. The other commercial spaces include a day spa, medical offices, mental health counseling, mini-storage, computer service and an attorney. On Bell's application for a conditional land use permit was the signature of property owner Ted Forcum, a chiropractor from Portland.

"I have been contacted by a large number of parties interested in opening marijuana dispensaries at the Cannery Loft," Forcum wrote in an email. "Mr. Bell was different in how he described what he wanted in his business establishment ... It was described like wine. You can buy wine at (AM-PM) or (7-Eleven), but if you were interested in quality wine convenience is less of a focus compared to community."

The buildings are zoned for tourist-oriented businesses, requiring Bell to get a conditional use permit. Bell has also submitted a land use compatibility statement for his store, as per the requirements of the Oregon Liquor

Control Commission.

"I like the fact that the complex itself is upper-scale," Bell said. "I'm trying to present an upper-scale type of experience, both in regards to the cannabis and the art gallery I'm trying to implement."

"And what's more, it's kind of removed from the morass that is the cannabis store(s) in the center of the city and on the south side of the city."

Astoria isn't the only place Bell is looking at. He and his brother, Craig Bell, are planning a dispensary on Harbor Drive just east of the Skippan River in Warrenton. The dispensary was established just months before the City Commission voted to restrict marijuana businesses to the east side of U.S. Highway 101.

Daryl Bell said he is also looking at Rockaway Beach, Pacific City, Creswell and Portland. He said Astoria is likely to be the first store to open. His conditional use permit is tentatively scheduled to be heard by the Astoria Planning Commission in late October.

"I'd like to be open by the 15th of November," he said. "I'd like to display to the public through the holidays."

Head Shed

Astoria Retail LLC submitted a land use compatibility statement for a marijuana store in the former Head Shed barbershop at the corner of Seventh Street and Highway 202.

Joan Hartley-Smith, operator of the former barbershop, recently sold the building to Patrick Martin, Michael Ng and Jonathan Hogander, who are associated with other dispensaries in Portland. None of the new property owners or representatives from Astoria Retail responded to requests for comment.

The dispensary would be the first on Astoria's South Slope. The city has five dispensaries spread out along the U.S. Highway 30 corridor, including Nature's Choice Alternative Medicine, Hi Casual Cannabis Dispensary, The Pharmacy and two locations of Sweet Relief Natural Medicine.

Most of the medical marijuana dispensaries are trying to become recreational businesses regulated by the state. By next year, medical dispensaries will no longer be able to sell to recreational customers.

Body believed to be Portland man

The Oregonian



Duane Anderson

PORTLAND — A body recovered along the coast in Tillamook County is believed to be that of a Portland man who's been missing for two days.

Duane Anderson, 86, was last seen Wednesday morning at the Lloyd Athletic Club in Northeast Portland. He never showed up for a planned golf outing that day and was

reported missing that night.

Tillamook County Sheriff's deputies found Anderson's Toyota Prius along the coastline,

prompting the U.S. Coast Guard to launch a search Thursday night, police said. The area is approximately 90 miles west of where he was

last seen.

The body was found Friday near Neahkahnie Mountain, which is north of Manzanita in Oswald West State Park, according to Portland Police Sgt. Pete Simpson. He did not disclose how the man died.

Investigators are still awaiting positive identification but believe it to be Anderson, Simpson said in a news release.

Dismal Nitch closed at times for repairs

The Daily Astorian

Dismal Nitch Rest Area, one of two Lewis and Clark National Historical Park sites in Washington, will be closed for repairs periodically through Nov. 22.

Conway Construction, out of Ridgefield, Washington, is the contractor working on improvements such as new guard walls, guardrails, paved surfaces, sidewalks, picnic tables, interpretive signage, landscaping and area lighting.

The Dismal Nitch site was established in 2004. It was formed to recognize the area where the Lewis and Clark Expedition barely survived after it first landed on the lower Columbia River bank in November 1805.

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