

THE HOUSING CRUNCH

A PERVASIVE PROBLEM WITH NO EASY SOLUTIONS

Lack of housing could limit economic growth in county

By ERICK BENGEL
The Daily Astorian

Clatsop County has a housing crunch that touches all income levels, from low-wage workers to six-figure executives, from renters just starting out to would-be homeowners looking to plant roots.

The shortage has no easy solutions, in part because it arose from a perfect storm of trends.

Production of new homes and apartments stagnated during the Great Recession. As industry recovered and job creation picked up, consumers had more money to spend on housing. But pent-up demand ran headlong into static supply.

The result is a low vacancy rate and few properties on the market.

“We need more housing units. There’s no question about that at this point,” said Kent Easom, who serves on the Astoria Planning Commission and owns Easom Property Management. “It is an odd situation, because we went for many, many years with a higher vacancy rate and taking longer to rent things. And then, in the last two years, something exploded.”

See HOUSING CRUNCH, Page 4A

“WE NEED MORE HOUSING UNITS. THERE’S NO QUESTION ABOUT THAT AT THIS POINT.”

Kent Easom, owner of Easom Property Management who also serves on the Astoria Planning Commission

ABOUT THIS SERIES

The housing crunch is everywhere in Clatsop County and impacts all walks of life.

This week, The Daily Astorian will examine the housing crunch through the eyes of elected officials, economic experts, real-estate professionals, developers, homeowners and renters.

The series will explore the forces driving the issue, along with what is — and is not — possible for the North Coast to achieve. And, the coverage does not end this week, as the Astorian tracks the challenges and solutions going forward.

Coming Tuesday

- Astoria’s response to housing has lacked urgency

- Emerald Heights is one of few affordable options

Wednesday

- Warrenton open to housing growth

Thursday

- Shortage in Seaside divides homeowners, labor force

- In Gearhart, vacation rentals and lack of infrastructure

- Cannon Beach prioritizes workforce housing

Friday:

- County sees barriers to housing solutions

Read the series and track the issue in the future at DailyAstorian.com/da/housing-crunch



Photos by Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

Joyce Senior, a Warrenton resident and employee at Oregon State University extension program, had some initial difficulty finding a rental in the area moving from the east coast. She is photographed here outside her place in Warrenton.

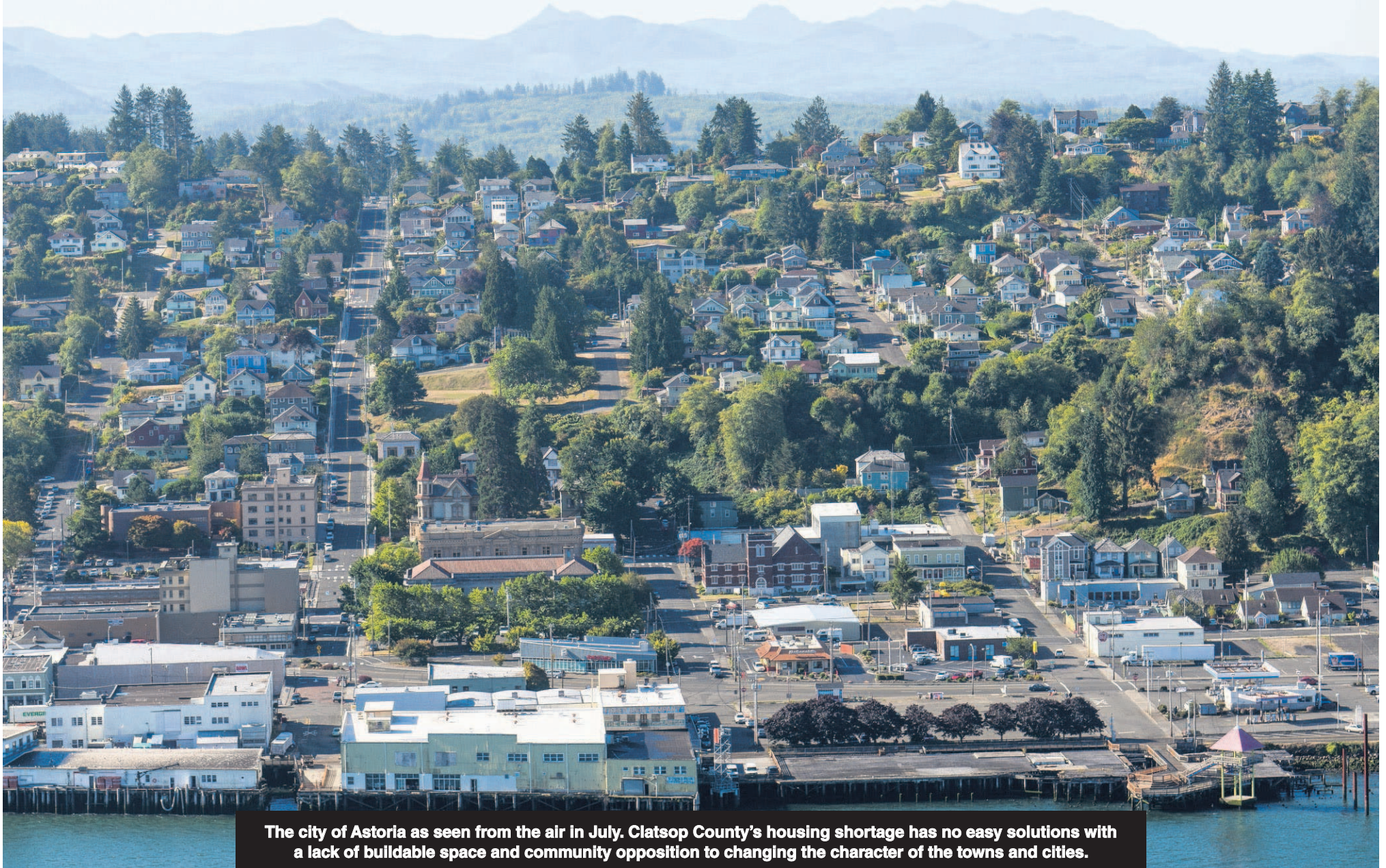
Extension agent feels lucky to get a spot, knows others cannot

Clatsop County needs balance between newbies and locals

Preparing to move across the country from Clemson, South Carolina, to Clatsop County, Joyce Senior Googled and perused all the usual rental sites — Apartments.com, ApartmentFinder.com, Zillow.com — looking from Seaside to Hammond.

She would find a place she liked, then it would be gone in a week. Senior came close to putting a deposit down on a more economical apartment complex in Hammond, she said, before new co-workers came to her aid.

See SENIOR, Page 5A



The city of Astoria as seen from the air in July. Clatsop County’s housing shortage has no easy solutions with a lack of buildable space and community opposition to changing the character of the towns and cities.

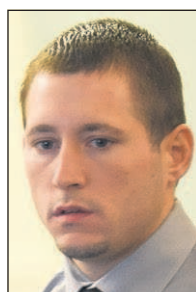
Prosecution rests case against accused killer Randy Roden

Defense case to begin today

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

The prosecution rested its case against accused killer Randy Roden Friday after calling Dr. Carole Jenny, a pediatrician and child abuse expert, to support the argument that abuse caused the death of 2-year-old Evangelina Wing nearly two years ago.

The toddler was found unresponsive by her mother, Dorothy Wing, and Wing’s live-in boyfriend, Roden Dec. 20, 2014. After a call to 911, the girl was pronounced



Randy Roden

dead. Her two brothers, 2 and 7 years old at the time, were taken into protective custody.

An autopsy found Evangelina Wing had died of battered child syndrome and blunt force trauma to the head. Her two brothers, 2 and 7 years old at the time, were found badly abused, taken into custody and placed with foster and eventually adoptive parents in California.

Prosecutors have called the case of the worst instances of child abuse in Clatsop County’s history. They charged Roden with aggravated murder, for which he

See RODEN, Page 9A

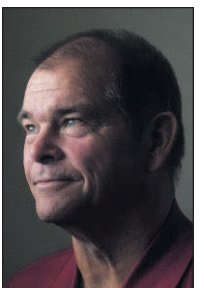
State trooper Dyer hangs up his uniform

Aspiring officers should know realities of the job

By ERICK BENGEL
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — In 32 years with the Oregon State Police, Tom Dyer, who retired this month, has seen things few people will ever see — and, he said, no one should have to see.

A Warrenton city commissioner running unopposed for his second term, Dyer served with the state agency in Beaverton for about six years, followed by more than 25 at the Astoria Area Command, which now operates in Warrenton. He spent his entire career as a patrol officer.



Tom Dyer

See DYER, Page 5A

