

## Smithart: Nearly \$120,000 in room taxes are owed to city

Continued from Page 1A

Smithart and his company, Hospitality Masters LLC, owed the city nearly \$120,000 in room taxes. He agreed to retire the debt by paying the city \$150 a week from June through September and \$100 a week from October through May. According to court records, Smithart had made 11 of 17 payments through the end of September.

The City Council authorized Henningsgaard to obtain the judgment this month after learning that Smithart had not responded

to the city's outreach.

Smithart could not immediately be reached for comment.

The Port of Astoria, meanwhile, has filed a breach of contract lawsuit against Smithart seeking more than \$400,000 in back rent and other payments.

Smithart and a business partner were awarded a five-year lease by the Port in 2012 to operate the former Red Lion Inn at the West End Mooring Basin. But Smithart fell behind on payments and was forced out last year after a lengthy battle with the Port.



AP Photo

Customers walk outside of a Wal-Mart store in San Jose, Calif. Wal-Mart has picked up its building permits for a new Supercenter in Warrenton and has started groundwork.

## Wal-Mart: Retailer acquiesced on proposed designs to meet citizen group's objections

Continued from Page 1A

Clatsop Residents Against Wal-Mart, a group formed in 2010 to oppose the retailer, appealed the Planning Commission's approval to the state's Land Use Board of Appeals. The group took issue with the location of a truck dock facing Highway 101, a screening wall that members alleged didn't meet city code, too few bike racks and the lack of a wetlands permit.

The Board of Appeals sided with the group, and remanded Wal-Mart's application back to the city. The Warrenton City Commission later approved Wal-Mart's application, after the retailer

acquiesced on its designs to meet the citizen group's objections.

The group sued the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in U.S. District Court over the wetlands fill permit the agency granted Wal-Mart. The group claimed the Corps improperly permitted Wal-Mart to fill the wetlands for the new store without adequately assessing environmental impacts and available alternatives. A judge dismissed the case in August.

In September, the group appealed the dismissal to 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. The group's briefs in the case are due Jan. 3. The Corps' response is due Jan. 30.

## Election: 'Good possibility' Lampi will run again if votes don't go his way

Continued from Page 1A

Lampi said the latest update is "no shocker to me."

"The way I look at it, basically, nothing in my life has been a gimme, or easy, so I didn't expect it to

change now," he said with a chuckle. "I say that kind of tongue-in-cheek."

"I always had to work for it," he said.

Knowing that the results still aren't final, he said, "I guess I'll just keep the faith

# Oregon winegrape producers optimistic about 2016 harvest

By ERIC MORTENSON  
EO Media Group

SALEM — Oregon's vineyard and winery operators are by nature an optimistic, glass-half-full bunch, and their assessment of the 2016 harvest is no exception.

The Oregon Wine Board's annual harvest report said the fruit produced throughout the state was marked by "wonderful concentration and complexity with characteristic natural acidity" despite numerous quirks in the growing season.

An unusually warm spring produced a grape bud break two to four weeks earlier than normal, and a following hot spell condensed the flowering period and caused a smaller fruit set for most producers, wine board Communications Manager Michelle Kaufmann wrote.

Average conditions prevailed during the summer, causing smaller berry size but "a higher concentration of flavors," according to the Nov. 8 report.

The 2016 vintage produced "practically immaculate fruit" with few disease or pest problems, according to the report. Yields statewide were a mix of higher and lower than average. Crop production was down slightly in the Willamette Valley but up in South-



Sean Ellis/EO Media Group

Winemaker Martin Fujishin sorts sangiovese wine grapes last week at Koenig Winery near Caldwell, Idaho. Idaho growers say wine grape yields are up dramatically compared with last year and slightly above normal when compared with most years.

ern Oregon and Eastern Oregon, Kaufmann said.

The harvest report includes accounts from growers and winemakers throughout the state's regions. In Eastern Oregon, viticulturist Jason Magnaghi of Figgins Family Wines described the vintage as one of the most interesting in his 16 years.

Bud break and bloom were

two weeks early, he reported, but harvest played out at a "nice slow pace" that allowed workers to pick fruit at "perfect ripeness."

"All indications point to a really exceptional vintage," he concluded.

In the Willamette Valley, Cristom Vineyards owner Tom Gerrie said his 2016 harvest was smaller than the previous

two years but close to his historical average of 2 tons per acre. Variable weather during flowering resulted in small berries and clusters that "lead to depth, intensity and concentration in the young wines," he wrote for the wine board report.

The 2016 vintage "may be headed toward greatness," he said.

## In job growth, blue states outpaced red states

By CHRISTOPHER S. RUGABER  
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON — States that voted for Hillary Clinton in last week's presidential election reported stronger job growth in the previous year than states that supported Donald Trump, according to data released by the Labor Department today.

Large cities in states where voters were more likely to support Trump also lagged in job growth, a separate analysis by Jed Kolko, chief economist at Indeed, a job search website, also found. The figures add credence to the idea that economic concerns contributed to Trump's unexpected victory.

Eleven U.S. states reported healthy job gains in October, and the unemployment rate fell in seven, the Labor Department said Friday. Thirty-four states reported little change in employment from the previous month.

The healthiest gains in the past year were in so-called "blue" states: Job growth was 3.5 percent in Washington state, the biggest gain nationwide. Oregon reported the next largest gain, at 3.3 percent. Other healthy increases were in Colorado, California and Nevada.

There were exceptions to the trend: Florida, which supported Trump, saw hiring rise 3.1 percent in the 12 months ending in October, the third-highest total.

But the smallest increases were in so-called "red" states that voted for the Republican candidate. Job growth was just 0.7 percent in Pennsylva-

nia, 0.9 percent in Ohio and 1 percent in Wisconsin — three Midwestern states that handed 48 electoral votes to Trump.

And two states lost jobs in the past year: Wyoming and North Dakota, which have been hit by falling oil and coal prices. They both voted for Trump.

Overall, the differences weren't huge: Job growth in blue states was 1.7 percent in the 12 months ending in October, compared with 1.5 percent in red states, according to Kolko's calculations.

But there are similarities in the city data. Six of the ten metro areas with the slowest job growth were in Pennsyl-

vania, Ohio and Wisconsin. Allentown and Scranton, both in Pennsylvania, lost the most jobs of any city nationwide.

Nationwide, the economy picked up in the fall even amid the contentious presidential election. Americans ramped up their shopping and applications for unemployment aid fell to a four-decade low, a sign layoffs are scarce.

That's prompted steady hiring, though it has fallen from last year's pace. Employers added 161,000 jobs nationwide in October, enough to reduce the unemployment rate over time. The rate slipped to 4.9 percent from 5 percent in September.

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