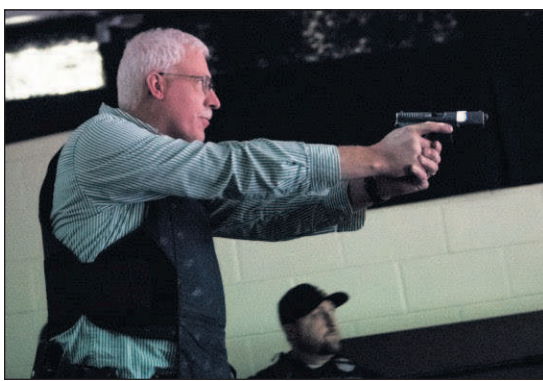


Fighting bias: Astoria Police try new training



Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian
Warrenton Police Officer Jim Pierce participates in a training simulation with other officers Wednesday at the Astoria Police Department.

Department is first to use tool

By ERICK BENDEL
The Daily Astorian

Police officers are liable to face any number of adversaries, and the ones they should never underestimate are subconscious biases that can affect how they approach certain people.

This week, Astoria Police became the first department to use a new officer training tool that focuses on recognizing, and

'If you start out with bias, that bias will affect your performance.'

Astoria Police Chief Brad Johnston

rooting out, "implicit biases" — the beliefs and assumptions that people form about others based on race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexuality, class, weight, disability and other features that lend themselves to stereotypes.

Most people allow biases to influence their behavior, often

without realizing it. And, in law enforcement, implicit biases can shape officers' decisions and interactions, including whether to use lethal force.

"If you start out with bias, that bias will affect your performance," Police Chief Brad Johnston said.

Johnston invited two Washington State University researchers, Lois James and Stephen James, to run the Counter Bias Training Simulation in the department's conference room Tuesday and Wednesday. Most of Astoria's officers, and some from the Warrenton Police Department, took part.

Scenes from the beat

One by one, the cops — armed with a Glock 22 pistol retooled for the exercise — stood

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Point of snow return



Photos by Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

A woman crosses 14th Street as snow falls in downtown Astoria on Thursday. More photos online at www.dailyastorian.com

Snow blankets the coast then gives way to rain

The Daily Astorian

A wintry mix of snow, ice and rain showered fear and excitement in much of the Northwest, a region that typically lives under a cloud of mist and drizzle. Heavy, swirling snow fell downtown, making for slick driving.

Forecasters expected a couple inches of snow to stick to the ground, followed by freezing rain. The forecast called for just rain eventually this morning.

All area school districts canceled classes before the first flurries fell. Jewell School was still closed today.

There were no reports of significant power outages locally and area police departments report no weather-related events.



Lead testing, abandoned tanks delay Armory deal

Nonprofit, lender want to ensure safety

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

The Friends of the Astoria Armory and lender Craft3 have held off closing on a \$500,000 building purchase and improvement loan to ensure the community center is environmentally safe.

A story in The Oregonian this week documented lead contamination at other armories statewide, and two abandoned oil tanks were recently discovered on the site.

"Our goal is to ensure that the Armory provides a safe, healthy environment for all users, and we are being proactive in ensuring that is the case," Bruce Jones, the chairman of the Armory's board of directors, said in an email.

Jones said that after The Oregonian article, he met with Craft3, and everyone decided the building should be tested for lead to ensure the community's safety. Craft3 is contracting with a company to do the testing.

74-year-old building

Craft3, a community lender, acquired the Armory from the Columbia River Maritime Museum more than two years ago and rents it to the Friends as the group tries to develop the building into a successful events center.

Walt Postlewait, chief lending officer with Craft3, said there appears to be little threat of widespread contamination in the 74-year-old building.

"There is limited evidence that a firing range even existed in the Astoria Armory — and if one did, it hasn't been used in at least 50 years," he said in an email. "That said, we are prepared to work with (the Friends) to find out and take the steps necessary to make sure we transfer an asset that is safe for the community to use."

Postlewait said there is no mass forced-air circulation from the basement to the main gym, but that Craft3 and the Friends want to be prudent about the building's safety.

The Friends are seeking a \$500,000 loan through Craft3 to purchase the Armory and make major improvements. The building used to hold events with around 3,000 people in its heyday but has been limited to 750 in capacity by various infrastructure issues, which the nonprofit and volunteer groups have been fixing over time. The Friends have

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You've got mail — maybe

Astoria residents wait for mailboxes after September break-in

By ERICK BENDEL
The Daily Astorian

Residents near Irving Avenue and 22nd Street are still waiting for new mailboxes, almost three months after the existing boxes were broken into.

In September, the cluster box consisting of 12 lock boxes, and a separate box for larger packages, was reported vandalized and forced open.

"It looks like they took a pry tool and pried the doors," Astoria Deputy Police Chief Eric Halverson said.

No mail was reported stolen. Since then, the

residents have been picking up their mail at the Astoria Post Office.

Sarah Green, the post office supervisor, said the new collections box has arrived, but the post office is waiting for the hardware to assemble it. She said she doesn't know when the box will be installed.

Astoria Postmaster Chris Carpenter said he's hoping the replacement project will be finished soon "because it's been so long. The poor patrons ... I mean, at least they've been patient."

A private mailbox near the dead end of Irving Avenue was also discovered with a broken lock and reported the same day.

"It looks like whoever did this was on a path," Halverson said.

Residents on Irving Avenue and 22nd Street have been waiting for new mailboxes after a break-in.

Erick Bengel/The Daily Astorian

