

Break-ins: Keep cars locked, parked in well-lit areas

Continued from Page 1A

"And they're leaving some very valuable items inside of those vehicles," said Hoover, who is investigating the case with Deputy Nate Baldwin.

Possessions reported stolen include firearms, binoculars, electronic equipment, Christmas presents and hundreds of dollars in cash.

Interestingly, the thieves

in the Svensen-Knappa area took big-ticket items, whereas those in rural Warrenton took only money and left expensive objects behind. "It could have been a lot, lot worse than it was," Hoover said.

Property protection

Law enforcement agencies urge people to keep their cars locked, parked in well-

lit areas and the alarms activated. Anyone planning to leave a car overnight, or to be away from it for a significant period of time, is encouraged to remove all valuable items. Homeowners with security cameras may want to keep one trained on their vehicles, the Sheriff's Office said.

"It's little things that can keep people from being victims," Hoover said.

In addition, vacationers can ask the Sheriff's Office to conduct extra patrols of their home and property.

Lastly, the Sheriff's Office recommends that people update their list of high-value items with make, model and serial number.

"This will assist investigating deputies and officers enter your stolen items into our database if you are unfor-

tunate to become a victim of a theft or burglary," the release said. "This also will assist investigators in positively identifying stolen property, when recovered, and attach these items with suspects."

Hoover said the investigation is ongoing, but added that he and Baldwin have promising leads in the Svensen-Knappa cases. The Sheriff's Office was able to

recover some, though not all, of the fishing rods and return them to the Svensen man.

City residents with information on possible suspects, or with questions regarding property protection, are asked to contact their city police department. County residents can contact the Sheriff's Office at 503-325-8635 and ask for Hoover or Baldwin.



Damian Mulinix/For EO Media Group

Crab fishermen head back to land after packing up the fishing vessel Noyo Dawn in anticipation of the opening of commercial crab season. A 25 cent price difference has halted the season's start up and down the coast.

Strike: 'It'll definitely put a pinch on supply'

Continued from Page 1A

officials tested for domoic acid to ensure crabs were safe to eat.

Just before Christmas, Pacific Choice Seafood in Eureka, California, dropped the price to \$2.75 a pound to local fishermen, said Ken Bates, vice president of the Humboldt Fishermen's Marketing Association. Dungeness prices could go lower in following seasons if that lower price holds, he worried.

"When Pacific Group decided in Humboldt County to reduce the price, they figured that this place would fold," Bates said. "It didn't. Fishermen didn't go fishing for that price."

Pacific Choice Seafood and Oregon-based Pacific Seafood, which owns Pacific Choice, did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Corbin said other processors have joined in offering \$2.75 a pound. The 25-cent price difference could mean about \$7,000 to \$10,000 a boat for smaller operations, Bates said.

Strikes have happened before as Dungeness crab



AP Photo/Eric Risberg

Crab pots sit on a processing pier and the back of a boat at Fisherman's Wharf.

fishermen and seafood processors haggle over the opening price of the sweet crustacean. It remains unclear what impact it will have on supply.

Tribal fleets in Washington state continue to crab, and crabbing is happening in Puget Sound as well. So there is some crab on the market.

"There's going to be some fresh crab in Washington state, but not big volumes like what you'll see when the whole coast opens up," Corbin said.

Bill Currie, a crab fisherman based out of Westport, Washington, said he's watching to see what others do when the crabbing season north of Long Beach kicks off. Fish-

ermen will be allowed to set gear today ahead of a Saturday start.

"If everybody stays, I'll stay. I'm not going to be going out," Currie said.

He said a \$2.75 per pound price seems reasonable, though \$3 would be better.

Mike Shirley, who buys crab wholesale from fishermen at facilities in Oregon and Washington, said "until this dispute is resolved, we're standing united with the whole process and not buying any kind of crab."

"This doesn't just affect one side, it affects everybody," said Shirley, who co-owns Garibaldi Landing

Fishermen and Ilwaco Landing Fishermen, which offers commercial seafood offloading, processing and other services. About 20 employees are at home as a result, he said.

"I hope we get this settled, and everybody can get back to work," Corbin said. "It will definitely put a pinch on supply eventually, but we hope it doesn't go on forever here. It's getting to be a matter of principle at this point."

Museum: Auto shop owner plans to stay open 'at least another couple of years'

Continued from Page 1A

As part of the deal, the museum will lease North Coast Auto's building to the company for up to two years.

"I'm 76 right now," Renaud said, adding that he and his wife, Mariena, were looking to retire. On Monday, Renaud said, he informed his employees.

"They still have work," he said. "We'll still have the place open, and it will be for at least another couple of years."

Depot commons

Johnson said the museum is contracting with an architect to design what will be known as the depot commons, a park-like setting based around the Barbey Maritime Center.

North Coast Auto will be razed and replaced by a small pond — a minimum of 20 feet in diameter and 18 inches deep — for sailing model boats. Johnson said the conversion creates more opportunities for the museum's science, technology, engineering, arts and mathemat-

ics educational programs. The museum already has students coming to the Barbey Maritime Center to build robots, testing them in a backyard pool.

"They are perfect teaching tools," Johnson said of model boats. "They are relatively inexpensive and come in a wide variety of styles."

Although gated off, he said, the pond will be open at times to the public for sailing their own boats.

Opening the view

The museum acquired the Barbey Maritime Center, then a run-down train depot, in 1986 from the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad. The building was used as a wood shop to build a gillnet fishing boat displayed in the museum's main exhibit hall.

In 2010, the museum began a \$2.5 million restoration of the train depot, which is somewhat hidden to drivers coming from the east into Astoria.

"It opens up the view entirely," Johnson said of razing North Coast Auto. "It will be protected forever."

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Hotel: 'We have a lot of work in front of us'

Continued from Page 1A

eliminating four second-floor rooms. The second floor — the main level — will now be dedicated to parking and some office space, Simmons said.

"We eliminated the oceanfront second floor," Simmons said after the meeting. "It takes away our oceanfront, which is costly, but overall will give us enough rooms to make it feasible."

The building will have sloped roofs and dormer windows, with an 80-foot tower, an architectural feature already allowed as an exception to the building height under city ordinance.

Neighboring buildings are close to or exceed the requested building height, according to Vonada.

Because of an 8-foot grade difference between the east and west sides of the building, an additional variance was needed to allow the increase to 60 feet for the roof height at the west building wing, an addition of 15 feet over the 45 feet allowed by current zoning.

According to Vonada's project narrative, the building will "fill the gap" that currently exists between the Worldmark

and adjacent hotels and condominiums to the south.

The Inn at the Prom, described as "generally in poor condition and in need of replacement," will be demolished.

Vonada described the neighboring Beach Drive lot as an "eyesore for tourists who can readily view it from the Prom walkway and guest rooms in the taller neighboring building. It is the goal of this development to combine both parcels and develop a hotel that fits the context of its location in an aesthetically pleasing manner."

Without a height variance, the proposed development would have been reduced by two stories — approximately 20 units — and "render the project infeasible."

"As you can see our goal was to go back to the drawing board, figure out a way to do this with some of our neighbors," Simmons said.

Neighbors object

Neighbors Susan and Dan Calef, whose home at 25 Avenue A is adjacent to the proposed structure, said they fear the new hotel will block their views and sunlight.

"We have some concerns

about the size of the structure coming up around us," Dan Calef said. "We are concerned that our house will be completely dwarfed by this."

Calef said he feared the home would be "completely in the shade."

"Any sun we get really helps the house dry out a lot," he added.

Susan Calef said she was distressed by extra traffic and a loss of privacy from the new hotel.

The family's concerns were not enough to sway planning commissioners.

"I, as all of the voting members of this body when this came to us, last time voted in favor of it," Commissioner Richard Ridout said. "Now it is much more palatable to most people having objections and I would certainly vote for it. I have no problem with the height. It looks right, it fits right."

Commissioners Bill Carpenter, Chris Hoth, Ray Romine and Steve Wright added their votes in unanimously granting the height variance.

"We have a lot of work in front of us," Simmons said after the meeting.

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