



R.J. Marx/The Daily Astorian  
Neacoxie Barn in Gearhart has avoided foreclosure.

## Going ... Going ... Delayed!

By R.J. MARX  
The Daily Astorian

GEARHART — The owner of Neacoxie Barn continues to envision a future for the property, even while fending off foreclosure proceedings for the second time in six months.

The barn has been used for weddings, family reunions and other commercial events despite repeated warning from the city.

"The February auction is canceled, and a refinance is in process," Shannon Smith, the barn's owner, said of the recent turn.

The property was scheduled to be sold at auction at Clatsop County Courthouse in early October, a date postponed to Monday and delayed again this week. A Seattle law firm handling the sale said the auction could be rescheduled in 30 or 60 days.

The former livery stable used for special events remains shuttered after Gearhart officials sought and won an injunction to prohibit commercial use until health and safety conditions are met.

Meanwhile, in Janaury, Circuit Court Judge Cindee Matyas issued a judgment ordering a permanent injunction on the barn until Smith obtains a valid certificate of occupancy.

Smith has said she plans to bring the building up to code.

"I look forward to receiving Gearhart's positive support for a sustaining use for the preservation of our most original historic structure — especially as the city begins to discuss ideas for a community celebration of our 100th birthday," Smith said. "It is my hope that the Gearhart Park Hotel Livery Stable will again serve as a treasured gathering place for our community. It would be most fitting to celebrate such a significant milestone at Gearhart's first commercial site and earliest historic structure."

# Brothers sue Archdiocese of Portland for \$6 million over alleged sex abuse

Late priest in Seaside named in allegations

KATU

PORTLAND — Two brothers, who are now adults, have announced they're suing the Archdiocese of Portland for childhood sex abuse.

The plaintiffs allege they were abused as children while living in St. Paul by Father James Harris, who served as a Catholic priest in the St. Paul Parish in Silverton during the mid- to late 1960s. One of the brothers also alleges he was abused by Father Maurice Grammond in Seaside.

According to the lawsuit, the two brothers knew Harris from church and school while they were growing up. Their stepfather was diagnosed with leukemia, which is when the lawsuit claims Harris began spending more time



Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

**Father Maurice Grammond, considered one of Oregon's most notorious pedophile priests, once served at Our Lady of Victory Catholic Church in Seaside.**

with the brothers, taking them on many overnight trips.

"The priest kind of befriended us when my stepfather was dying," one plaintiff, referred to as O.M., told KATU by phone. "He started taking us on trips to the coast and that eventually led to him taking me alone."

During one of those trips to Seaside, one of the brothers was allegedly molested by Grammond, who was accused of sexually abusing boys back to 1957.

"He would take each one of us at a different time alone and in the middle of the night," O.M. said of Harris. "(He

started playing with me and making me play with him."

O.M., 59, now lives in Washington state. His older brother lives in Marion County.

"I'll admit I've been a pretty angry guy my whole life," he said. "It's really affected every aspect of it."

Gilion Dumas, the brothers' attorney, has represented more than 20 cases against the Catholic Church.

"The facts could be shattering," Dumas said. "You know, this is the way that we get these institutions to change."

Dumas says victims of sex abuse sometimes take years, if not decades, to come forward.

"The legal system does only allow them to sue for money," she said. "They can't sue to get their childhood back."

According to court documents, the brothers are asking for jury trials and want \$3 million each in damages.

"I was raised Catholic," O.M. said. "I've lost all reli-

gion that I've had ... God didn't put them there, he put himself there."

Harris, who is now deceased, faced at least four other sex abuse claims, all settled by the Archdiocese since 2006.

Grammond died in 2002. He has been subject to more than 40 sex abuse claims, and is considered one of Oregon's most notorious pedophile priests.

Dumas believes there are more victims who haven't come forward.

In a prepared statement, the Archdiocese of Portland told KATU News:

"These most recent allegations and court filings have just been delivered to us today. We are currently looking into them, as we do with every legal matter associated with the Archdiocese. And as with previous allegations, we take these very seriously and will cooperate in whatever ways are required by law."

## Legislation would raise Oregon's smoking age to 21

By PARIS ACHEN  
Capital Bureau

SALEM — A state lawmaker who also is a family physician plans to reintroduce legislation this week that would raise the legal smoking age from 18 to 21.

The proposal by state Sen. Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, D-Beaverton, is intended to limit teenagers access to tobacco.

"As a family physician, I always think it's better to prevent disease than to cure it, and one of the best things we can do in Oregon to prevent disease is to stop people from using tobacco and other dangerous products that contain nicotine and other harmful substances," said Steiner Hayward, who has lost family members to smoking-related illnesses.

"I've seen the effects as a physician and as a family member all too well," she added. "Oregon deserves a better future than this."

"The cost in lives and

lost productivity and children's wellness is inestimable," Steiner Hayward said. "This bill is personal, too. I lost my father, my father-in-law and one of my beloved aunts to smoking-related illnesses. I've seen the effects as a physician and as a family member all too well. Oregon deserves a better future than this."

Recent research, including some from the U.S. Surgeon General's Office, shows that brains under age 26 are more susceptible to addiction.

"If you don't start smoking by age 21, you are less likely ever to start," said Noe Baker, a spokeswoman for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, one of 20 organizations campaigning for the law change.

The legislation would impose first-time civil penalties of \$50 for clerks and \$500 for managers who sell to minors. People of legal age who give tobacco to minors would likely face simi-

lar penalties as store clerks, Steiner Hayward said.

"We made a conscious decision not have criminal penalties because we know that tobacco companies tend to target low-income communities who can least afford it," Steiner Hayward said. "We know many of the clerks working in stores are working hard to support their families or making extra money while getting an education, and we didn't want to unduly punish them, and we didn't want to give them criminal records."

In 2015, Hawaii became the first state in the nation to raise the smoking age to 21. California followed suit last year. An additional 210 cities and counties, including New York City and Boston, have similar laws. No

cities or counties in Oregon have raised the smoking age, but Lane County is currently considering such a proposal.

"It is sort of picking up at county levels, and we are hoping to bring it statewide," Baker said.

At the current smoking rate, 68,000 Oregon kids alive today will eventually die from tobacco-related disease, Friend said, quoting statistics from Tobacco Free Kids.

Oregonian households pay an estimated \$780 a year for the medical care of smokers, Steiner Hayward added.

Oregon also loses an estimated \$3 billion in lost productivity and health care costs per year from smoking-related disease, according to figures from Tobacco Free Kids.

Steiner Hayward said she thinks this year's legislation has better prospects than a former iteration proposed in 2015.

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