

# THE DAILY ASTORIAN

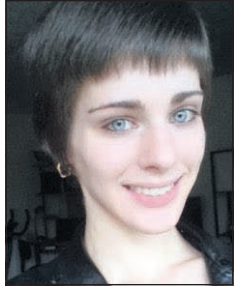
144TH YEAR, NO. 165

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ONE DOLLAR

## In Elsie: A young woman's life ends darkly

**Brianna Judge, 23, disappeared in Elsie after going for a walk on Jan. 10.**  
Submitted Photo



### Brianna Judge remembered as 'shy, sweet person'

By **JACK HEFFERNAN**  
*The Daily Astorian*

Brianna Judge always loved long nature strolls. Distraught one night after a fight with her boyfriend, she chose to sift through her thoughts

by leaving the warmth of her Elsie apartment and entering the frigid, dark night.

But after going out at about 9 p.m. on Jan. 10, the young woman disappeared. Residents located a pair of boots that Judge had worn

that night during a search two weeks later on Oregon Highway 103 bridge near Tweedle Road. Other searches, though, turned up nothing. Her body was finally located Saturday in the Nehalem River near Riverbend Road in rural Clatsop County.

### The unknown

How Judge ended up in the river is not known for sure.

An autopsy conducted Tuesday determined that Judge died from drowning, said Sgt. Jason Hoover of the Clatsop County Sheriff's Office. State and county medical

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## OFF TRACK

### City, trolley face tough decisions over premier attraction

By **EDWARD STRATTON**  
*The Daily Astorian*

Last year, the Astoria Riverfront Trolley took 65,000 passengers on rides up and down the city's waterfront at \$1 a trip. A small core of 40 certified trolley conductors took Old 300 on 900 and 1,000 runs between spring and fall.

But the city and the volunteer association running one of Astoria's premier attractions face some tough decisions with escalating maintenance costs and a chronic shortage of younger conductors.

Last July, an inspection of the 4.7 miles of tracks owned by the city between the trolley barn and Tongue Point by OBEC Consulting Engineers revealed the need for \$319,000 in immediate repairs before Old 300 could start operating in March, and more than \$270,000 in annual track and trestle maintenance moving forward.

When it became clear the immediate repairs couldn't be completed in time for trolley season, the city hired OBEC to find critical areas of repair that could be done in the interim. Assistant City Engineer Nathan Crater said the supplemental report found only one critical weak link in the trestle between Eighth and Ninth streets, which he said the city has scheduled for repair later this month. After the repairs, the trolley gets a green light to start recertifying conductors/motormen.

City Manager Brett Estes said the city is still trying to exact an estimate on further repairs needed this year to inform what future maintenance could cost. Crater said further trolley repairs will be bid next month, with figures coming back in April. Those costs, he and Estes said, could end up being higher than previous estimates. Estes, a board member with the Astoria Riverfront Trolley Association, said that after the city better understands the costs of maintenance, he will approach the volunteer group running Old 300 about trying to share the burden.

### Is \$1 enough?

The association raises most of its revenue from the \$1 fares that have become an expectation among riders since the trolley started running in the late 1990s, unaffected by inflation or any other cost increases. Amanda

See **TROLLEY**, Page 7A



The Daily Astorian/File Photo

Escalating maintenance costs for the tracks and trestles Old 300 travels over have the city of Astoria asking the volunteer Astoria Riverfront Trolley Association for some support.



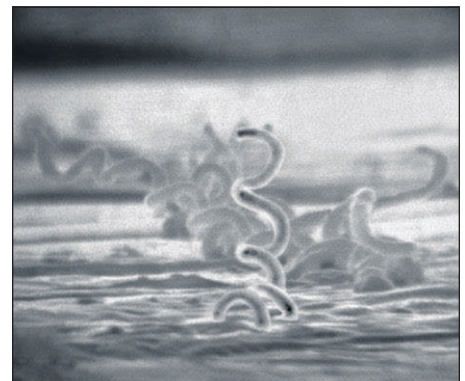
Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

Maintenance Coordinator Frank Kemplooks underneath the trolley while making repairs.

**'It takes 28 people a week to run this thing.'**

**Russ Thompson**

volunteer coordinator and motorman/conductor, speaking of operating the Astoria Riverfront Trolley in peak season



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Syphilis is a sexually transmitted infection caused by the bacterium *Treponema pallidum* subspecies *pallidum*.

## Syphilis outbreak in county

Eight cases were reported last year

By **JACK HEFFERNAN**  
*The Daily Astorian*

Public health officials have declared a syphilis outbreak in Clatsop County.

Eight cases of syphilis were reported in the county in 2016, compared to three cases in 2015 and two in 2014. There were only two total reported cases in the county from 2007 to 2013.

Although Clatsop County represents less than 1 percent of Oregon's population, it produced almost 1.4 percent of syphilis cases in the state in 2016. Oregon as a whole produced 2.4 percent of cases in the United States despite holding 1.3 percent of the country's population.

### More men

The risk of contracting the infection has been considerably higher for men, who have accounted for 14 of the 15 cases in the county since 2007. Of the male cases, all but one have resulted from men having sex with other men.

Other cases involve people who use methamphetamine, Clatsop County Public Health Director Michael McNickle said.

Officials from the Department of Public Health met Monday with the Oregon Health Authority's communicable disease team, who agreed that syphilis cases in the county had reached outbreak levels.

See **SYPHILIS**, Page 7A



**Michael McNickle**

## Oregonians could see bottle deposit windfall under bill

Bill refunds dime, even if nickel was paid

By **CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE**  
*Capital Bureau*

SALEM — Under a bill proposed in the House, Oregonians who redeem bottle and cans could get an unexpected windfall when the deposit jumps from 5 cents to a dime April 1.

The House Committee on Energy and Environment voted unanimously Wednesday to advance a bill that



would, starting April 1, refund 10 cents on all containers covered by Oregon's bottle bill — even if purchasers paid only

the 5-cent deposit.

Oregon has had a 5-cent deposit on certain beverage containers since 1972, first introduced to deal with the state's litter problem.

Retailers pay distributors the deposit when they purchase beverages; that deposit is passed to customers at the cash register. Customers in turn then can return bottles and cans for a full deposit refund.

### Return rates

In 2011, the Legislature passed a law requiring the deposit increase to 10 cents should the rate of return dip

See **BILL**, Page 7A



Oregon Liquor Control Commission

Bottle deposits in Oregon will double to 10 cents on April 1. Under a bill proposed in the Legislature, even cans for which only a 5-cent deposit was paid can be redeemed for the full 10 cents until Sept. 1, 2018.



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