

Gearhart clamps down on RV parking

Proposed state legislation could impact proposal

By R.J. MARX
The Daily Astorian

GEARHART — According to city code, recreational vehicles and trailers can park on Gearhart streets but their owners can't sleep in them.

But police had trouble enforcing that rule. A local judge rejected a violation after explaining that "appearance of use" — in this case, sleeping — has no bearing. The violator can simply say he isn't sleeping or eating in the RV under current rules, Police Chief Jeff Bowman said in March.

A bill at the state Legislature, which has support from the American Civil Liberties Union and advocates for the homeless, would make enforcement impossible, he said at Wednesday's City Council meeting. "The approach I was doing is kind of going down in defeat," Bowman said.

Instead, Bowman offered an alternate plan to regulate RVs and trailers by using the city's parking rules.



R.J. Marx/The Daily Astorian
Police Chief Jeff Bowman seeks limits on the storage of RVs on public streets.

The proposed ordinance states no RVs or trailers may be parked or stored on blocks, stands, leveling supports or utility hook-ups attached. Pops or portable generators may not be running.

Parking on city streets remains limited to 48 hours.

"This new ordinance has nothing to do with sleeping, because if it did, we'd probably be in violation of state law," he said. "It's not a sleeping or eating issue, it's a storage issue."

The City Council approved an amendment to another RV-related ordinance, allowing

property owners to obtain a permit twice a year for occupancy up to 96 hours.

RVs cannot be parked in the public right of way and the permit may be revoked by the police chief or enforcement officer.

Mayor Matt Brown and city councilors unanimously endorsed the amendment.

Cruise season opens with Ruby Princess

The Daily Astorian

The Ruby Princess pulled up to the Port of Astoria's Pier 1 Wednesday, bringing with it about 3,000 passengers.

The arrival opened a cruise season expected to bring more than 40,000 visitors to the North Coast on 22 ships.

May brings five more cruise ships, including the Island Princess on Monday, Regatta on May 12, Seven Seas Mariner on May 15, Norwegian Sun on May 17 and Celebrity Infinity on May 23.

The Crystal Serenity will arrive June 15, and the Seven Seas Navigator will make two stops in Astoria on July 7 and 18.

September brings nine ships, including the Seven Seas Mariner on Sept. 7, Explorer of the Seas on Sept. 16, Regatta on Sept. 18, Celebrity Infinity on Sept. 19, Explorer of the Seas on Sept. 23, Coral Princess on Sept. 24, Emerald Princess on Sept. 26, Oosterdam on Sept. 27 and Explorer of the Seas on Sept. 30.

The season ends in October with four ships, including the Nieuw Amsterdam on Oct. 1, Ruby Princess on Oct. 2, Norwegian Sun on Oct. 3 and Star Princess on Oct. 21.



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Visitors to the area who came by way of the Ruby Princess make their way through the Port of Astoria on Wednesday.



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Many visitors to the area on Wednesday disembarked from the first cruise ship to visit this season and boarded the Astoria Riverfront Trolley near the Port of Astoria.

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