

THE DAILY ASTORIAN

144TH YEAR, NO. 260

DailyAstorian.com // THURSDAY, JUNE 29, 2017

ONE DOLLAR

CONSERVATION PATROL

BEAUTIFUL, BUT INVASIVE, PLANT POISED TO TAKE OVER WATERSHED



North Coast Land Conservancy Stewardship Director Melissa Reich pulls policeman's helmet at Circle Creek Habitat Reserve in Seaside. The conservancy got an \$86,000 grant to tackle the invader over the next three years.

By **KATIE FRANKOWICZ**
The Daily Astorian

An ornamental renegade is perfectly poised to take over the Necanicum Watershed in southern Clatsop County

Five years ago, no policeman's helmet — so named because its flowers resemble an old-fashioned British bobby helmet — bloomed along the Necanicum River or its tributary creeks. Then, suddenly, it was everywhere.

Local conservationists are confident they can slow — and even stop — this invasion, but they have had to hit the ground running.

Last year, the North Coast Land Conservancy landed an \$86,000 grant from Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board to aggressively address the invader over the next three years. This year, the battle began. They are now six months into the effort to eradicate the plant.

The battle plan involves a partnership between the land conservancy and the Necanicum Watershed Council; an intern crew dedicated solely to tracking the plant's progress and removing it wherever they find it; a mobile, volunteer scouting party floating the river in kayaks and armed with smartphone apps to map where they see plants; and a host of dogged volunteer weed-pullers.

"I think we definitely needed to have all hands on deck for this one," said Melissa Reich, the land conservancy's stewardship director.

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Niecierpek Gruzolowaty/Submitted Photo

Policeman's helmet in bloom. These pretty plants chokes out native species.

STEWARDSHIP DAY

The North Coast Land Conservancy is holding a stewardship day July 8 to pull policeman's helmet in the watershed and at the Circle Creek Habitat Reserve. For more information, call the land conservancy at 503-738-9126 or the Necanicum Watershed Council at 503-717-1458, or visit nclctrust.org/pull-pile-stomp

To find out about native plant alternatives, local landscapers that specialize in native plant landscapes or to find nurseries that stock native plants, e-mail Melyssa Graeper at necanicumwatershed@gmail.com

Legislators strike deal on transit package

Details will not be released until later

By **PARIS ACHEN**
Capital Bureau

SALEM — State lawmakers have reached an agreement on sticking points of a multi-million dollar transportation package, Gov. Kate Brown said Wednesday.

MORE INSIDE

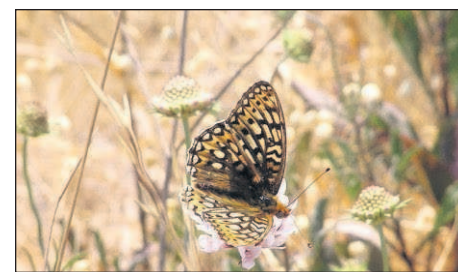
The details of the proposal will be released later this week, the governor said.

Legislators have less than two weeks to finish and vote on the package. The plan includes new taxes and fees and increases in other taxes and fees to fund maintenance and improvements to roads, bridges, transit and sidewalks.

County roads: Clatsop County starts \$500,000 paving project this summer.

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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Oregon silverspot butterfly

Silverspot butterflies get two new spots to grow

Nestucca Bay, Saddle Mountain on the map

By **KATIE FRANKOWICZ**
The Daily Astorian

To release an Oregon silverspot butterfly caterpillar, biologist Anne Walker takes it out of a little Tupperware container and sets it gently on its preferred food, the spade-shaped leaves of the early blue violet.

It's not as precarious as it sounds. "They're very adapted to their environment," said Walker, a biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and a silverspot expert. "They hide."

She's seen released caterpillars dive down and seemingly disappear in moments. Somewhere down there, she knows, they are starting to munch on the first of the roughly 200 violet leaves they will each need to eat to survive to adulthood.

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Astoria YMCA is a Diamond in the Rough

State grant will help restore building facade

By **KATIE FRANKOWICZ**
The Daily Astorian

The former Astoria YMCA in the city's downtown historic district is getting a makeover.

Building owner and local entrepreneur Noel Weber announced he has received a \$20,000 grant from the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office's Diamonds in the Rough program.

The grant will help fund

work to restore or reproduce several architectural elements on the 103-year-old building's facade including installation of an iron railing above the 12th Street entrance; restoring the original second-story window rough openings, as well as installing new windows; and molding, casting and installing reproductions of lintel details.

The grant accelerates the remodeling process, Weber said. Without it, the work would have likely been put off for another year. "It really helps out a tremendous amount," he said.

Weber is a designer and fabricator from Boise, Idaho. He

came to Astoria to be closer to his sister and her family. He hadn't planned to buy the YMCA, but walking around the building it seemed like a fun project, he said. "It seemed right."

Varied history

The building's 14,000-square-feet have been many things over the years. As a YMCA, it was a place for Astorians to gather and interact. In recent decades, it has served as a private school and art studio. Now, it houses the Astoria Design Studio, run primarily by



Clatsop County Historical Society

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The YMCA building 1934.



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