



## 'BEHIND THE BAR'

UNIONTOWN TAVERN OWNER LEFT BEHIND A VAST TROVE OF ART  
WEEKEND BREAK • PAGE 1C



## Pacific Seafood expands with crab processing

Warrenton plant being rebuilt after fire

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ  
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — When Pacific Coast Seafood reopens its plant in Warrenton, crab will be on the roster of seafood it processes.

The Warrenton Planning Commission on Thursday night approved, with conditions, a request to modify a previously approved site design for the facility. Representatives of the seafood company said the additional 15,000 square feet of floor space requested would be dedicated to crab processing, a move that will provide steady employment throughout the year, they said. An estimated 106 jobs will be created or maintained by the plant. Whiting and rockfish

will also be processed there, as in the past.

With the Planning Commission's approval in hand, Pacific Seafood representatives say crab processing could begin at the end of the year, in time for the commercial Dungeness season that traditionally opens in December.

Planning Commissioner Vince Williams approved of the company's decision to add crab processing, calling it a "good business plan."

Pacific Seafood will need to comply with 26 conditions of approval outlined by city staff, most dealing with utilities and fire safety and access.

The company has been operating in a limited capacity out of the Del Mar Seafoods sardine processing plant at Tongue Point in Astoria following the destruction of their Warrenton plant in a fire in 2013, but promised to

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## Legal battle drives extraordinary salmon research

Millions spent to help fish

By CASSANDRA PROFITA  
Oregon Public Broadcasting

On a research boat on the Columbia River, Laurie Weitkamp with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration grabs two buckets filled with water and about a dozen young salmon and steelhead.

"Ooh, we got some steelies!" she says.

By stretching a net across the river below Bonneville Dam, researchers are inter-

cepting the fish swimming toward the ocean to see what they've been eating.

What they really want to know is whether the fish are eating bugs that came from marshes restored for their benefit. That's key to proving habitat restoration is helping the fish grow and survive.

Federal agencies have spent millions of dollars restoring salmon habitat on the Lower Columbia River as part of a massive effort to save salmon from the impacts of hydroelectric dams.

In the Columbia Basin, 13 species of threatened and endangered salmon

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## CHANGING HANDS

Dollar General looks at Mill Pond, while NAPA Auto Parts eyes former Astoria Ford

By EDWARD STRATTON  
The Daily Astorian

Changes are afoot at two of Astoria's most visible pieces of vacant land.

A new Dollar General is being proposed for the Mill Pond neighborhood. The owner of NAPA Auto Parts in Mill Pond, meanwhile, is preparing to buy the former Astoria Ford site off Youngs Bay to build a new store.

Barry Hess owns 18 NAPA branches regionally, including in Astoria, Warrenton, Seaside and Long Beach, Washington. He said he is buying the former Astoria Ford property from owner Ruth Birdwell and hopes to move into the new store by January.

Demolition crews are tearing down the former auto dealership, which went vacant late last year after Dane Gouge opened the new Astoria Ford at the North Coast Retail Center in Warrenton. Birdwell, the widow of late Pacific Northwest car salesman Ray Birdwell, took control of the property after he died in 2013. She could not be reached for comment about the potential sale.

The site includes more than 3.5 acres of buildable land and



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Dollar General is looking at developing a new store in the Mill Pond neighborhood of Astoria.

about 40 acres of submerged land jutting into Youngs Bay. The zoning is general commercial, which allows anything from parking lots and restaurants to hotels and apartments. The parcels had been listed at \$3.5 million.

Hess said he is looking to buy the entire property, which includes four lots. "We think the Astoria Ford piece is going to be more visible," he said, adding his location in Mill Pond can be chal-

lenging for customers to navigate through Astoria to reach. "We're hoping with a new location that we're more efficient as far as operations are concerned."

Hess said the new location will carry about twice the inventory of the existing Astoria store. He declined to comment on any effect of the new location on the future of his NAPA branch on

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The former Astoria Ford site off Youngs Bay could get new life as NAPA Auto Parts.



Photos by Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

BEFORE: Riki Irie prepares to have her head shaved on Thursday at Salon Boheme in Astoria. Irie agreed to shave her head as part of a fundraising goal for a local cancer patient. AFTER: Irie reacts as she sees her shaved head for the first time as supporters look on around her.

## Locks of love

Spa owner shaves her head to raise money for young cancer patient

By KAELIA NEAL  
The Daily Astorian

"It feels like Velcro!" Riki Irie laughed as she rubbed her hands through her buzzed hair Thursday at Salon Boheme.

In June, Irie made a promise to shave her head to help raise money for Daxton Olson, a Seaside baby with an inoperable brain tumor.

Olson, who is 8 months old, has a tumor classified as astrocytoma. He began a chemotherapy plan in February.

Irie, who owns the Malama Day Spa, started

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