

# THE DAILY ASTORIAN

145TH YEAR, NO. 25

WEEKEND EDITION // FRIDAY, AUGUST 4, 2017

ONE DOLLAR



## ASTORIA REGATTA AND COAST RIVER BUSINESS JOURNAL

INSIDE TODAY



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian  
Police Chief Brad Johnston talks during an interview with The Daily Astorian last year.

## Astoria to use chief search to assess police department

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ  
The Daily Astorian

Astoria could take six months to find a new police chief after the sudden retirement of Brad Johnston.

An interim chief will likely be named within

the next few weeks, but the city will take some time to determine what qualities it is looking for in a new leader. City Manager Brett Estes said Johnston's retirement gives the city an opportunity to evaluate the needs of the police department, which has struggled with staff shortages and rising demands for service.

Estes said he requested an independent assessment of the police department several months ago. He has been debriefed on some initial findings, but has not received a final report.

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## Collapsing culverts mar roadways



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Mark Buffington, left, and Felix Martinez, right, both with the Oregon Department of Transportation, look out over a site near Warrenton where work on a culvert was recently completed. According to information from ODOT, 30 percent of culverts in northwest Oregon under their jurisdiction are in poor or failing condition.

## State says 30 percent of tunnels are failing under highways

By JACK HEFFERNAN  
The Daily Astorian

They lie underneath roads, unseen to the naked eye and disregarded by those who drive above. But when culverts fail, they can cause an abundance of issues for drivers on state highways.

The state Department of Transportation estimates that 30 percent of culverts under highways in northwest Oregon are in poor or failing condition, and efforts to replace them before they fail have accelerated in recent years.

Culverts, ranging from a few inches to tens of square feet, allow water to flow

from one side to the other through a road, trail, or any other obstructive passageway. State highways in Clatsop County feature 826 of them.

By comparison, the roughly 2,000 culverts on county and city roads have

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## City nixes Dollar General design

Developers say they will try again for site

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ  
The Daily Astorian

The Astoria Design Review Committee denied a permit Thursday night for a Dollar General retail store, but the developers say they are still interested in a location near Mill Pond.

"It definitely alters our desired schedule," said Mike Stults of Cross Development, "but it doesn't discourage us from this project and from this particular site."

Stults said they will likely resubmit their application.

The developers hope to build a new, 9,100-square-foot building on a triangular lot located near City Lumber Co. and NAPA Auto Parts off Marine Drive on the east side of Astoria.

City Planner Nancy Ferber said the developers missed more than 10 requirements outlined by city development code and further detailed by two overlay zones that affect the property. At the start of the meeting Thursday night, Ferber still had recommendations and questions about how Cross Development could address a range of issues, including the building type, windows, wall treatments, roofing materials, signage, awnings, height requirements and sensitivity to the location as an entrance to Astoria. In her staff report, she recommended denying the application.

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## Synthetic drugs present more of a threat

Pink was the cause of death in an April case

By JACK HEFFERNAN  
The Daily Astorian

Clatsop County Medical Examiner JoAnn Giuliani's jaw just about dropped on her desk.

One night in July, she looked through an internet database that features results of potential overdose death examinations conducted by the state medical examiner's office. She searched for one particularly curious death

that occurred in late April. A young man was found dead on his friend's couch, but Giuliani was unable to determine which of the multiple drugs he consumed was the primary cause of his demise.

The results from the database were clear. He died after swallowing a pill form of the synthetic opiate U-47700, commonly referred to as Pink or pinky. Giuliani was not expecting the result, but a moment she had feared had arrived: the first recorded overdose death from someone in Clatsop County from the synthetic drug.

She compares the arrival

of this wave of synthetics to public health crises such as meningitis.

"I'm scared. I really am, because nobody has seen anything like this before, really," Giuliani said.

The medical examiner also believes at least two other recent overdoses may be linked to fentanyl or its derivatives, though those tests are not complete. These substances are more lethal than Pink and 100 times more powerful than morphine. They also can spread more easily, even through open sores in someone's hand.

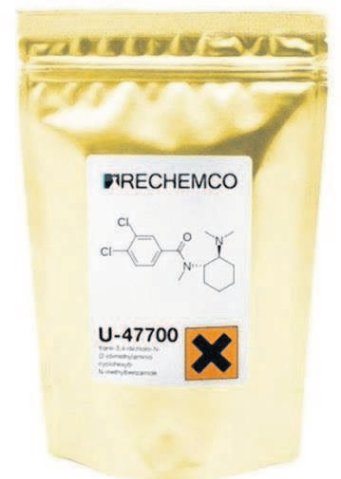
"I've been having some weird overdoses lately that

make no sense to me," Giuliani said. "Something else is going on."

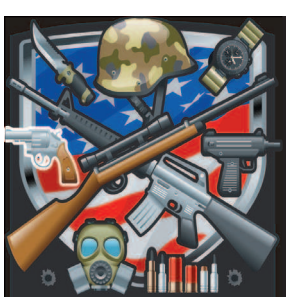
### Alternative to morphine

Pink, currently manufactured in China, was originally developed by a U.S. pharmaceutical company in 1976. Intended to serve as an alternative to morphine, it never received approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Instead, Chinese laboratories learned the recipe, manufactured the drug and began sending it to an unregulated U.S. market.

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U-47700, known as Pink or pinky.



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