



Photos by Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Coast Guard personnel perform routine maintenance on one of their helicopters last week in a hangar at Air Station Astoria.

## Maintenance never stops for Coast Guard helicopters

Aging aircraft must last until 2035

By EDWARD STRATTON  
The Daily Astorian

**W**ARRENTON — On the main hangar floor at Air Station Astoria last week, two Sikorsky MH-60T Jayhawk helicopters sat in varying stages of disassembly.

Coast Guard avionics and mechanical technicians at the air station disassembled, checked and put the helicopters back together. They repaired one after an avionics malfunction and conducted scheduled maintenance on another.

The air station's three MH-60Ts are part of a fleet delivered to the Coast Guard in the early to mid-1990s, upgraded to a new model in the 2000s and originally meant to fly 10,000 hours. Each of the aircraft in Astoria have logged more than 13,000 hours of flight.

And with a directive to keep flying them through at least 2035, maintenance never stops.

### A continual cycle

An estimated 24.4 hours of maintenance goes into each aircraft for every hour in flight. The maintenance starts with inspections before, during and after daily operations. Another list of required checks must be performed after 200 hours in the air.

Zach Painter, an avionics electrical technician, is one of about 50 maintenance personnel at the air station, split between avionics and aviation maintenance. The Coast Guard syncs periods of maintenance based on calendar days and flight hours to create a schedule of upkeep. Many of the components inside a helicopter have their own lifespans.



Coast Guard personnel lift a part into place during maintenance work.



A Coast Guard technician makes repairs to a helicopter.

pan. No. 6002, one of three Jayhawks at the air station, has more than 14,000 flight hours. Since last week, the helicopter has been grounded during a scheduled maintenance period after reaching its latest increment of 200 flight hours.

Each flight-hour maintenance period builds in intensity to an 800-hour dis-

sembly, said Chief Warrant Officer John Mitchell, the maintenance officer at the air station.

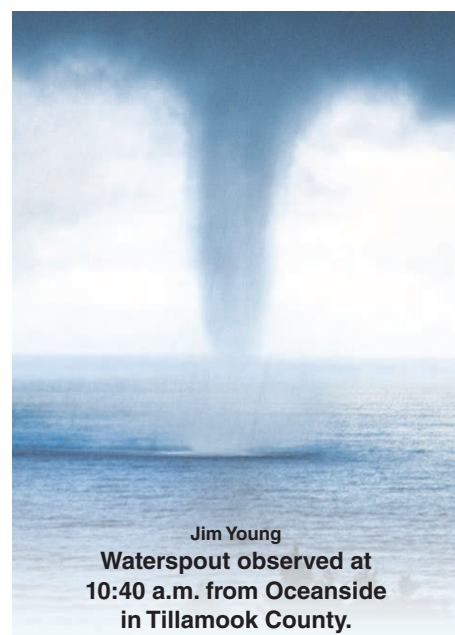
"The whole head gets disassembled," he said of the 800-hour period. "We inspect everything on it. The blades come off. And then (we) put it all back together and we basically reset, so we start another 200-hour cycle again."

A main issue is corrosion, with Coast Guard helicopters operating in harsh environments and close contact to saltwater. Technicians actively monitor for corrosion, replacing worn parts of the frame, spreading sealants to prevent water in between parts and putting dehumidifiers in the aircraft overnight.

### 'A freshly built helicopter'

The yellow helicopter Air Station

See **HELICOPTERS**, Page 4A



Jim Young  
Waterspout observed at 10:40 a.m. from Oceanside in Tillamook County.

## Tornado warning rattles coast

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ  
The Daily Astorian

A tornado warning for portions of Clatsop County and Washington state's Pacific County came to nothing Monday afternoon, but residents did report seeing water spouts in some areas and there could be another round of thunder and lightning on Wednesday.

The rare warning rattled nerves and was a reminder of the tornado that touched down in Manzanita last October, causing significant damage.

See **WARNING**, Page 4A

## A Band-Aid approach to Seaside's old schools

Plugging holes until new campus in 2020

By R.J. MARX  
The Daily Astorian

SEASIDE — Gearhart Elementary School, Broadway Middle School and Seaside High School were built with an expected lifespan of 45 to 50 years. Each school has been used well beyond that span.

A new school campus is not expected to open until fall 2020. Until then, schools deemed old and at risk in a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and tsunami continue to house students.

A fact sheet by proponents of the successful \$99.7 million bond measure for the new campus last year described the three schools as in a state of deterioration, including crumbling concrete that is

See **SEASIDE SCHOOLS**, Page 4A

## Drumheller was a hospitality industry leader

Key figure in Cannon Beach tourism growth

By R.J. MARX  
and BRENN A VISSER  
The Daily Astorian

CANNON BEACH — Tom Drumheller, chief executive officer of Escape Lodging and co-owner of Tom's Fish & Chips, died Sunday morning at his home after a short illness. He was 64.

Drumheller, a former chairman of the city's Tourism and Arts Commission, played a key role in the region's hospitality industry and beyond, serving on the board of directors of Travel

Portland and most recently as founder of the 62,773-square-foot Columbia Point Hotel in Richland, Washington.

"I've known Tom for 30 years, and we've been business partners since 1999," Patrick Nofield, the president of Escape Lodging, said. "There's nobody like him. It's a huge void — not just for those who loved him, but for our community, and the people of eastern Washington where he grew up."

According to Nofield, Drumheller was diagnosed with metastasized colon cancer in August. "When they were in the hospital they found cancer was all over his body," Nofield said. "It was totally unexpected."

Nofield said Drumheller did not want to spend his last days in the hospital, so he returned to home hospice

in Cannon Beach.

He had friends and family members come from all over the Northwest, Nofield said. "For the last week of his life it was like one continuous party. Tom was greeting everyone, engaging people, meeting with employees, sharing stories, sharing humor."

### A career in hospitality

John Thomas Drumheller, known as "Tom," was born and raised in Walla Walla, Washington, on Aug. 15, 1953. Drumheller's family worked in the hardware business for generations.

Growing up, he watched how his father used humor and respect to develop strong relationships with customers.

See **DRUMHELLER**, Page 4A



Submitted Photo  
Tom Drumheller, a key figure in Cannon Beach tourism, died on Sunday.