

Natural gas scare scrambles commute

Eastern entrance to Astoria closed for about 2 1/2 hours

By JACK HEFFERNAN
The Daily Astorian

A natural gas scare closed Lief Erikson Drive near 39th and 45th streets in Astoria Tuesday, backing up traffic for roughly 2 1/2 hours during a soggy evening commute.

Police closed a portion of the road at about 4:45 p.m. By 7:15 p.m., the road was reopened but traffic moved slowly because of the lengthy delay.

A slight pressure change inside a pipeline caused a relief valve to lift, which caused the emission of the gas odor, NW Natural spokeswoman Melissa Moore said.

"This was our system working as it should," Moore said.

The road is the eastern entrance into the city via U.S. Highway 30. Astoria Fire Chief Ted Ames said "it caused a lot of headaches

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Jack Heffernan/The Daily Astorian
A natural gas scare closed the eastern entrance to Astoria Tuesday night.

Task force will look at ministorage

Warrenton examines potential regulations

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — A city task force will tackle the question of where new ministorage businesses can be located and what will be required of them.

At a meeting Tuesday night, the City Commission decided the task force will include members of the planning and city commissions. The group will be asked to discuss what kind of parameters to set around future ministorage development.

New businesses may be required to provide setbacks, sidewalks, landscaping, or even retail space along frontage roads like Harbor Drive. The two commissions will later meet jointly to hear the task force's recommendations.

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Warrenton mobile home park tenants become landlords



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Doug Lyle and Michael Fallert are residents of Warrenton Mobile Home Estates who, along with the majority of other residents, recently banded together to purchase the park.



ABOVE: Warrenton Mobile Home Estates was recently purchased by a majority of the residents who live in the park. BELOW: Elk Meadows Homeowners Cooperative board member Doug Lyle shows where the group got its name.



Nonprofit helps residents purchase property

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — In April, Michael Fallert and the other residents of Warrenton Mobile Home Estates received notice that the owner was looking to sell. The park includes 37 spaces for low-income residents over 55 years old, many on fixed incomes.

"We were facing a pretty stiff rent increase here, especially if another owner bought this," Fallert said, adding he and his wife already had their rent hiked twice since moving to the park in 2013.

"There was a rumor that a mobile home park was for sale, that the residents would be moved out."

Fallert reached out to neighbors and learned the purchase price. One neighbor knew about a program through the housing nonprofit Community And Shelter Assistance Corp. — CASA of Oregon — that could help, he said.

With help from the nonprofit, the residents organized Elk Meadows Homeowners Cooperative and recently bought their park from Warrenton Estates LLC for \$1.7 million.

Helping residents form Elk Meadows and secure financing was Julie Massa, an organizational development specialist. The nonprofit is a local affiliate of Resident Owned Communities USA, a national organization based in New Hampshire helping residents acquire and manage their mobile home parks.

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'BASICALLY WHAT THIS IS ABOUT IS GUARANTEEING AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR PEOPLE.'

Michael Fallert | resident of Warrenton Mobile Home Estates

Take a walk in her park

Astoria diabetes teacher creates indoor path

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

For much of her life, Sunnie Bell has taught about diabetes and the importance of walking as exercise.

After moving to Astoria from Las Cruces, New Mexico, several years ago, Bell found it harder to keep up on her walking.

To keep herself and others moving, Bell is creating the Sunflower Dairy Indoor Walking Park on Duane Street, with hopes of opening by month's end.

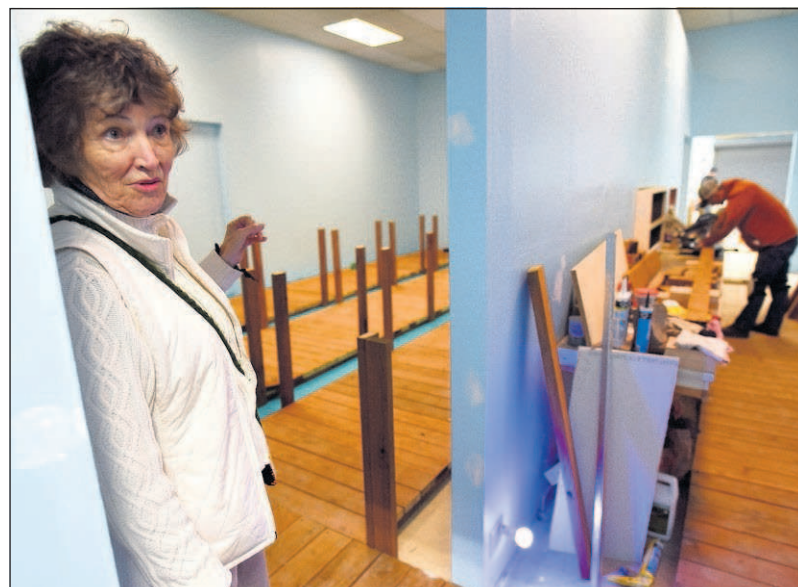
"I've spent my whole life trying to

improve the health of other people," Bell said.

Bell bought the former Sunflower Dairy Co. building, directly west of the former J.C. Penney store, 2 1/2 years ago as a retirement investment. She became landlord to Paramount Drug Co. on Commercial Street and Shear Expressions Salon on Duane Street, along with a garage storage space used by J.C. Penney until the retailer closed earlier this year. The closure left Bell with 2,600 square feet of empty property.

While on a recent trip to Israel, she came up with the idea of the park.

Contractors working in the former storage area are putting the finishing touches on a springy, slightly elevated wooden walking track and hand



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Sunnie Bell has been putting together a Southwestern- and tropical-themed indoor walking park inside the former Sunflower Dairy Co. on Duane Street.

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