

GREAT COASTAL GALE OF 2007

SPECIAL SECTION REFLECTS ON DESTRUCTIVE STORM THAT SLAMMED THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST 10 YEARS AGO • **INSIDE**

THE DAILY ASTORIAN

145TH YEAR, NO. 110

WEEKEND EDITION // FRIDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2017

ONE DOLLAR

'One headache down'

Warrenton Marina crew demolishes boat that sank at the dock



Photos by Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Ken Ramsdell watches as the Western Skies is demolished.

By **KATIE FRANKOWICZ**
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — Western Skies, the 70-year-old fishing boat that sank in the Warrenton Marina this summer, has gone to the big boat slip in the clouds.

No one at the demolition mourned its passing.

"It's a relief," Harbormaster Jane Sweet said as she watched excavators pull the 43-foot-long, wooden-hulled boat to pieces Thursday afternoon. "One headache down."

The once-seaworthy commercial fishing boat has been a lot of things over the decades, but in recent years it has mostly been a bottomless pit, gobbling up the marina's time and resources.

Without an active owner around, marina staff have had to babysit the aging hulk, rushing down to check on it after storms, spending hours clearing away trash the previous owner left behind. No one has been paying moorage fees, so the boat also represents a loss of potential revenue.

When the boat sank at its slip in July, it leaked more than 1,000 gallons of diesel fuel into the water. The resulting cleanup and testing occupied Sweet and her staff for weeks afterwards.

See **BOAT**, Page 6A



ABOVE: Workers finish rigging the Western Skies to be removed from the Warrenton Marina. **BELOW:** An additional excavator was brought in to help remove the derelict vessel.



Task force to confront homelessness

Astoria panel picks up on past work

By **KATIE FRANKOWICZ**
The Daily Astorian

A newly formed task force hopes to pick up where a similar group left off investigating issues around homelessness in Astoria.

A meeting Thursday morning was intended to lay the groundwork for how the task force defines homelessness, as well as outline some of the concerns and issues specific to Astoria but also the broader North Coast region.

"(Homelessness) is an issue that affects every city in the United States," said Mayor Arline LaMear, who helped lead the meeting with Interim Police Chief Geoff Spalding. "It's not just an Oregon problem, it's not just an Astoria problem."

The previous task force, led by former police chief Brad Johnston, identified a strong need for more public restrooms and estab-

lished portable restrooms along the Astoria Riverwalk to keep people from defecating or urinating in public areas, city parks or near businesses.

But it was one of the only concrete action items to come out of their discussions. Other recommendations were more vague; many were outside the city's ability to influence altogether, people said at the time.

"We did a lot of talking, but not a lot of action," LaMear said Thursday.

Still, she and Spalding hope to replicate one big thing that the first task force accomplished — bring together a wide range of people with a variety of perspectives, services, information, backgrounds and skills.

The people who attended Thursday's meeting included representatives from downtown businesses, social and human service groups and agencies, homeless shelter and emergency shelter organizers and volunteers, law enforcement, city government, churches and others.

See **HOMELESS**, Page 6A

Hammond fisherman indicted on sex charges

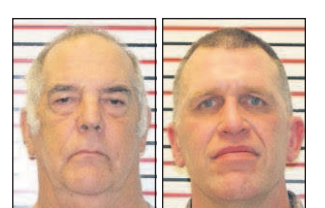
Astoria man allegedly also involved

By **JACK HEFFERNAN**
The Daily Astorian

A well-known Hammond fisherman and an Astoria man have been indicted for sex crimes against a young woman two years ago.

Dennis Lee Sturgell Sr., 65, of Hammond, and James Herbert Cunningham, 46, of Astoria, were indicted by a grand jury last week. Sturgell was arrested and released on \$500,000 bail, while Cunningham is serving prison time for a previous case.

The indictments allege that in August 2015, Sturgell



Dennis Sturgell Sr. **James Cunningham**

and Cunningham coordinated to commit several sex crimes against the woman while she was incapacitated. Both men were charged with 13 counts that include sexual abuse and sodomy. Cunningham's charges include two counts of first-degree rape and two counts of first-degree attempted sexual abuse, while Sturgell's counts include two charges

See **CHARGES**, Page 6A

Bringing emergency preparedness home

Cannon Beach conducts neighborhood safety seminars

By **BRENNA VISSER**
The Daily Astorian

CANNON BEACH — After years of conversation, Cannon Beach's Emergency Management Consultant Stacy Burr has seen preparedness burnout.

"People tend to get tired of going to big preparedness events, and either the same people attend those events or people just don't attend the events," she said. "You don't get a lot of new outreach."

At larger events, she found, residents were more hesitant to ask questions and engage with the training. To combat this issue, Burr and Cannon Beach Police Chief Jason Schermerhorn started to hold individual preparedness meetings in each of the city's 12



Brenna Visser/The Daily Astorian

Emergency Management Consultant Stacy Burr and Police Chief Jason Schermerhorn talk about safety precautions at the neighborhood meeting at Breakers Point.

See **PREPAREDNESS**, Page 6A

SEAGULL BOYS SET TO DEFEND THE CROWN
Seaside High School winter sports previews • Page 7A

