

Crab boats launch as season opens

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
The Daily Astorian

Crab boats and crab pots hit the water early this morning.

According to fishermen, seafood processors and crabbers in Newport agreed to a starting price of around \$2.75 per pound. While fleets up and down the Oregon Coast have left the docks to set their gear, there is no official word yet on what prices they'll likely be receiving, said Hugh Link, executive director of the Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission.

The price reported in Newport is down from the average starting price of \$2.89 that crabbers saw last season, but higher than what processors had initially offered. Price negotiations between processors and crabbers stalled last week, further delaying the start of a season that had already been delayed to allow crabs to fill out with meat. The commercial Dungeness season traditionally starts Dec.



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

The crab season has finally opened.

1 but is sometimes delayed because of price negotiations or when crabs do not have enough meat. In recent years, high levels of the marine toxin domoic acid have also pushed the opening back.

On social media, many fishermen said they were disappointed over the lower price, with some writing that Newport crabbers broke the strike when they could have perhaps held out for more money.

Other people posted prayers or simply wrote, "Good luck" or "Best of luck!" One woman posted photos of boats heading out of Coos Bay, bright lights shining in the dark. "Stay safe," she wrote.

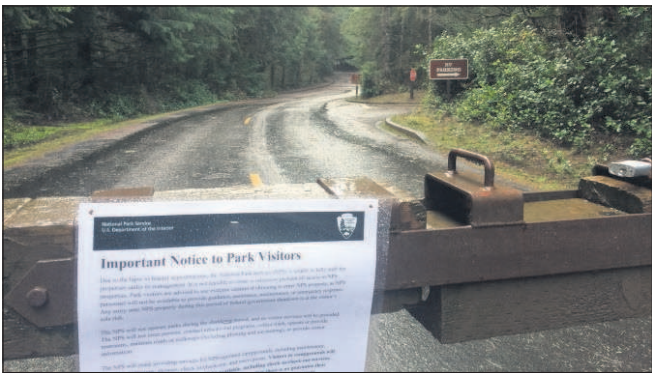
Limited impact on North Coast from shutdown

By BRENNA VISSER
The Daily Astorian

The federal government shutdown had limited impact in Clatsop County.

The government shut down at midnight Friday after Congress and President Donald Trump were unable to agree on a short-term budget deal. During shutdowns, some government employees are placed on temporary unpaid leave. No federal employees receive paychecks until Congress passes a funding bill.

In Clatsop County, essential services like distributing Social Security checks and veteran's benefits, Medicare and Medicaid, the military and the U.S. Postal Service continued. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administra-



Brenna Visser/The Daily Astorian

A sign at Lewis and Clark National Historical Park warns visitors of limited services available during the government shutdown.

tion continued to issue weather warnings.

Local Coast Guard officials did not specify how the shutdown affected internal operations. Essential functions were not impacted, however.

"It won't stop us from launching on a search-and-rescue mission or oil spill or something like that," Petty Officer 1st Class Levi Read said.

The shutdown did affect national parks and museums,

including Lewis and Clark National Historical Park. Jon Burpee, the park's superintendent, was the only employee working as of Saturday. He said about 15 park employees were furloughed. No visitor services, educational programming, maintenance and janitorial work was available.

January is one of the slowest times of the year for the park, Burpee said, so few camping reservations were disrupted. The shutdown canceled "Cocoa and Coho" on Saturday, an event where people plant and help rehabilitate wetlands around the park for salmon habitat, Burpee said.

Trails remained open.

"The goal is to keep as much access as possible while still protecting the sensitive cultural and natural stuff," he said.

Former Seaside Heights custodian charged with child molestation

By JACK HEFFERNAN
The Daily Astorian

SEASIDE — A Seaside man was arrested Thursday for allegedly molesting a child on several occasions.

The allegations are based on several incidents from 2007 to 2011 when the child was between the ages of 5- and 9-years-old. Seaside police arrested Keith Davis, 46, who has been charged with five counts of first-degree sexual abuse and five counts of first-degree sodomy.

Davis is a former custodian at Seaside Heights Elementary School. Police say

they do not believe he was using his position with the school to gain access to the victim in this case.

Davis is being held at the Clatsop County Jail on \$500,000 bail. His arraignment is scheduled for later this month if indicted.

"If anyone does believe any similar incidents did occur based on his employment at the school, they are encouraged to come forward," Deputy District Attorney Dawn Buzzard said.

Those with further information are advised to call Seaside Police Detective Bill Barnes at 503-738-6311.



Keith Davis

Longtime patrons blast Seaside pool renovation

By R.J. MARX
The Daily Astorian

SEASIDE — After a more than two-month closure, swimmers returned to the Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District pool in mid-December to resume classes, meets and swims.

The Broadway pool was repainted and LED lighting was installed. In the men's locker room, new showers were installed, floors were redone and walls were repainted.

But some longtime pool users say the renovations have diminished their experience.

"Swimming is my life," Seaside's Marti Wajc said. "It's important to all the women who swim. Learning to swim saved my life. Being able to swim is essential to me."

Wajc, who has been swimming at the pool for 15 years, complained of

"the filthy conditions" of the women's locker room.

"The shower in particular — you could go in three days later and see the same conditioner and the hair on the wall," she said.

Flooring in the women's shower area is so slippery that swimmers are at risk of falls, she added.

John Huismann, a pool user from Cannon Beach, said he was disappointed with changes in the men's locker room, which he said put public safety at risk.

"We took a nice locker room, everybody liked it, and turned it into something that was god awful," Huismann said at the park district's board meeting Tuesday.

Huismann said public input had been limited during the renovation process and areas that used to be "bright and light" were now dark and dreary.

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