

Warrenton Grade School track bubbles up, closes down

By EDWARD STRATTON

The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — Water and construction damage has closed the track at Warrenton Grade School to competitions, leaving the Warrenton-Hammond School District to find another venue for outdoor events.

Superintendent Mark Jeffery said the track, last refinished in the early 2000s, has had longstanding issues with water intrusion whenever a ditch on the east side of campus floods. The water fills into the space between the rubber surface and asphalt, causing bubbles around the track, along with potholes. About 30 yards of the western portion of the track surface had become detached from the asphalt. The problem got worse during the installation of several new modular classrooms over the summer.

“Moving those trucks in across that part of the track that was detached anyway finished it off pretty well,” Jeffery said.

Replacing the track would require going down to the



Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

Parts of the track at Warrenton Grade School have detached from the underlying asphalt because of water intrusion during floods.

base and building it back up. A similar project cost Neah-Kah-Nie School District around \$500,000, Jeffery said.

“Short of a bond, that’s not going to happen,” he said.

The track will be available for practices, but the district will have to reschedule

any home meets, Jeffery said. The district also needs to finish landscaping around the track to prevent the wash off of sand and dirt.

Washington state House votes to ban Atlantic salmon farms in wake of accidental release

By JOHN RYAN KUOW

OLYMPIA, Wash. — The Washington state House has voted to phase out farming of non-native fish in state waters, drawing the end of Atlantic salmon farming in Puget Sound one step closer.

The move comes one week after a similar vote by the state Senate.

Both bills let existing salmon farms keep operating only until their current leases run out, in the next four to seven years.

The House vote also comes six months after a poorly maintained fish farm collapsed near Anacortes, letting an estimated 250,000 Atlantic salmon escape into Puget Sound.

Republicans, including state



Rep. David Taylor of Moxee, called the move an overreaction to a single accident.

“You have an accident on a farm, we don’t try to eliminate that industry,” Taylor said. “But in this case, we are.”

But Rep. J.T. Wilcox, R-Yelm, said he would vote in favor of the phase-out, even if it meant some jobs would be lost. Wilcox said the risk to runs of native salmon was too great.

“My sympathies are with

the people that depend on these fish runs who are unwilling to take the risk, and I don’t blame them,” Wilcox said, “and also on the people that this vote is going to harm.”

He said he’d never felt worse after a vote.

Wilcox called on Washingtonians to take all threats to native salmon more seriously.

Canadian company Cooke Aquaculture raises Atlantic salmon on three continents. It employs about 80 people in Washington state.

If the House and Senate can hash out the minor differences between their two bills, either by approving the other chamber’s bill or agreeing on some compromise between them, Gov. Jay Inslee is expected to sign a ban on Atlantic salmon farms into law.

Oregon reports increase in deaths related to meth use

Associated Press

SALEM — Deaths connected to the use of methamphetamine have reached higher rates than previously recorded in Oregon, surpassing the death rates from heroin and nearly matching the rates from opioids, according to state figures.

The state recorded 141 meth-related deaths in 2016, rising from the 51 overdose deaths from meth recorded in 2012, according to numbers from the Oregon Health Authority.

During the same time frame, heroin-related deaths decreased from 124 to 107. Pharmaceutical and synthetic opioid overdoses dropped from 174 to 149, the Statesman Journal reported.

Numbers from the Oregon State Medical Examiner show 232 meth-related deaths in 2016 and 93 in 2012. It also recorded 124 heroin-related deaths in 2016 and 147 in 2012.

The discrepancy between the figures from the state agencies can be attributed to the interpretation of what consti-

tutes a meth-related death. The health authority collected its data from death certificates.

As meth-related deaths have increased, so too has the number of convictions for meth possession. The Oregon Criminal Justice Commission recorded a steady rise in convictions from 2008 to 2016, according to its sentencing data.

The state had more than 2,000 meth possession convictions in 2008, according to the commission. By 2015, that number soared to 3,665 convictions. The next year saw a slight decrease, dropping to 3,612 convictions.

Law enforcement agencies are looking to curb drug use by emphasizing treatment options like through drug courts.

Salem Police Lt. Dave Okada said agencies are working together to address the issue, but it’s going to take considerable combined effort to make a dent in the problem.

“We can’t arrest our way out of this,” Okada said. “It’s a societal issue, and what we really need to do is continue with education and prevention efforts.”

Booze ban at Sauvie Island

Associated Press

PORTLAND — The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife has proposed a summertime ban on booze at the Sauvie Island Wildlife Area.

The Oregonian reported that the department said on Thursday it has documented an increase in alcohol-related problems at the wildlife area’s beaches over the past several years. The department says 17 people were arrested for drunken driving in 2017

while leaving Sauvie Island beaches.

The department said that for the last five years, nearly 500,000 people annually visit Sauvie Island beaches from May through September. It said a booze ban during summer months would “significantly reduce alcohol-related problems” and will allow the department to alleviate additional law enforcement and medical personnel that have had to increase patrols due to alcohol-related incidents.

Report mixed on Trump tax plan

Associated Press

SALEM — A report from Oregon’s state economists warned the federal tax overhaul could cost the state more than \$200 million in revenue in the short term, amid an overall bright outlook for state

businesses and workers.

The report, released today by the Office of Economic Analysis, predicted that state tax revenues revenue would drop, then eventually begin to rise after changes made in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act signed late last year.

Presidents Day office closures

The Daily Astorian

In observance of Presidents Day on Monday, all federal, state and city offices and services, including Astoria, Warrenton, Gearhart, Seaside and Cannon Beach city halls, are closed. All U.S. post offices are closed, and there is no mail delivery.

Astoria, Jewell, Warrenton/Hammond, Seaside (including Cannon Beach and Gearhart schools) and Ocean Beach School District schools and Clatsop Community College are closed. The Knappa School District is closed Friday and Monday.

The Astoria Library, Seaside Library, Warrenton Library and all Timberland libraries in Washington state, including Ilwaco, Ocean Park and Naselle, are closed.

The Port of Astoria offices and services are closed.

Garbage collection through Recology Western Oregon (covering Astoria, Seaside, Gearhart and Cannon Beach),

city of Warrenton garbage collection, and Peninsula Sanitation (covering the Long Beach, Washington, Peninsula) are not affected by the holiday. Recology Western Oregon’s transfer station and Peninsula Sanitation’s transfer station are open.

The Sunset Pool in Seaside is open. The Astoria Aquatic Center is open.

The Oregon Film Museum and Flavel House are open from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., and the Carriage House is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Uppertown Firefighters’ Museum and the Clatsop County Heritage Museum are closed. Capt. Gray’s Port of Play and Lil’ Sprouts are open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Fort Clatsop is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Columbia River Maritime Museum is open from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Seaside Museum is open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Sunset Empire Transportation (“The Bus”) is running.

The Daily Astorian offices are open, and the newspaper printed and delivered as usual.

Cleanup day planned at Fort Stevens State Park

The Daily Astorian

A local conservationist hopes people will spend Presidents Day hauling harmful plastics out of a place he calls “the mega sink.”

The Seaside-based nonprofit Sea Turtles Forever and the associated Blue Wave organization are leading a cleanup effort at Fort Stevens State Park’s Lot C on Monday. The area, bordered by the South Jetty on one side and the Columbia River on the other, is dense with plastics, said Marc W. Ward of Sea Turtles Forever.

Ward has led microplastic removal efforts throughout Clatsop County using a filtration system of his own design and has zeroed in on Fort Stevens’ Lot C for several years.

Last year, he and his 57 volunteers hauled out 450

pounds of plastic — most of it just tiny chips of plastic — in three hours.

“This is just to start off the year right and help that site,” he said.

Each year the cleanup crew finds piles of microplastics, toothbrushes, shoes: “Everything you could ever imagine that’s made out of plastic, we pull out of that site.”

Ward estimates there are 5,000 grams, or 10 pounds,

of plastic per square meter, significantly more than what he has found at Cannon Beach, another plastic-plagued area. There, Ward is used to seeing an average of 100 to 250 grams of plastic per square meter.

Work on Monday begins at 9 a.m. and continues for as long as people are willing to stay. Lot C is located past Battery Russell and Lots A and B on Jetty Road.

Ward estimates there are 5,000 grams, or 10 pounds,

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