



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian
The annual re-enactment at Fort Stevens will not be held this year.

Ordering a retreat

Civil War re-enactment will relocate from Fort Stevens after 27 years

By JACK HEFFERNAN
The Daily Astorian

With suspicions they are no longer welcome after 27 years, organizers of an annual Civil War re-enactment at Fort Stevens State Park — the largest of

its kind in the Pacific Northwest — will relocate.

After years of waiving fees, the park planned to impose day and camping fees for each of the roughly 800 re-enactors as part of a special use permit, organizers say. They claim the park took five months

to respond to their permit application when the process typically takes weeks.

“We also felt that the state parks no longer want us here,” said Earl Bishop, the group’s chairman.

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Port supports Cannery Pier on oil spill cleanup

City, county could follow

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

The Port of Astoria Commission passed a resolution Tuesday to work cooperatively in the cleanup of a costly oil spill at the Cannery Pier Hotel.

A dilapidated pier next to the hotel collapsed last month and damaged a tank underneath filled with Bunker C oil used to fire the boilers of a former cannery.

The Coast Guard and contractors deployed containment booms around the property, removed the tank and about 2,200 gallons of oil, placed peat moss to help clean surrounding seawalls and cleaned boats soiled in the Port’s West Mooring

Basin just west of the hotel.

The hotel and the adjacent pier are owned by local developer Robert Jacob, who bought the property from the Port in 1999 to develop the boutique hotel on the site of the former Union Fishermen’s Cooperative Packing Co. Hotel staff have said they did not know about the tank, which has been under the pier since at least 1921, according to the Coast Guard.

The Port had purchased the property from Peter Pan Seafoods in 1984.

The cleanup costs for the spill are now close to \$1 million, said Jim Knight, the Port’s executive director.

While it’s obvious the tank was on the property of the hotel, it will take time for the Coast Guard to determine who is responsible and what is owed, he said.

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SNOW BLAST

Icy conditions close schools, public events



Katie Frankowicz/The Daily Astorian

Snow made driving difficult near Clatsop Community College in Astoria.

Homeless shelter could open in July

Beds and outreach in Uniontown

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
The Daily Astorian

A new shelter and re-entry program for the homeless in Clatsop County could open in Uniontown as early as July.

Helping Hands, which runs similar facilities across four counties in Oregon from its base in Seaside, will not need to go through a conditional-use process with Astoria, Raven Brown, the nonprofit’s development director, announced Tuesday.

The city determined Helping Hands is taking the for-

mer Finnish boarding house on Marine Drive next door to Motel 6 back to its initial use, with the same number of units and parking spaces.

“That’s going to get us up and running a lot faster,” Brown told a city homeless solutions task force at the group’s third meeting Tuesday afternoon.

Helping Hands has a purchase agreement with Northwest Oregon Housing Authority, which owned the property. The sale was contingent on the nonprofit obtaining any necessary permits from the city to operate and on placing the four occupants of the building into housing.

Helping Hands has given the occupants up to 90 days to find new housing. All of

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By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
The Daily Astorian

With the exception of Jewell, schools were closed throughout Clatsop County this morning as icy conditions set in after a snow day that wouldn’t quite start or stop.

A number of Astoria city services were also closed, including Lil’ Sprouts and Port of Play. The Astoria Aquatic Center and the Astoria Recreation Center opened later than usual at 9 a.m. The Kids Zone at the recreation center was closed. The Astoria Column gift shop also had a delayed start, opening from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

A special Astoria School Board meeting to tour schools tonight has been postponed until March 7. A community facility engagement event at Astoria Middle School planned for Thursday has been postponed until March 8.

A meeting with federal veterans officials at Clatsop Post 12 American Legion that had been set for Thursday has been canceled.

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Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Pedestrians cross a slush-covered Commercial Street in Astoria as snow falls.



R.J. Marx/The Daily Astorian

U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley greets attendees at a town hall Tuesday in Seaside

Guns a hot topic at Merkley town hall

More than 100 people gathered in Seaside

By JACK HEFFERNAN
The Daily Astorian

SEASIDE — U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley listed gun-control ideas, including bans on assault rifles and large magazines, and asked people at a town hall in Seaside on Tuesday to raise their hands for each one they supported.

Nearly all of the more than 100 people packed in the Bob Chisholm Community Center expressed their support for each measure.

“It was a forest of arms up, and

only a couple of people opposed to those measures, and that’s a little bit of feedback,” the Oregon Democrat said after the meeting.

The town hall touched on topics from health care, the environment, immigration and tax policy to presidential politics, the Russia investigation and corporate influence on elections.

Guns were the most oft-mentioned topic, though. Gun control has again become a focal point of national discussion following a shooting at a Florida high school last week that left 17 people dead.

President Donald Trump, who campaigned as a defender of the Second Amendment, has come out in support of expanded background checks and has ordered

U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions to explore a ban on bump stocks, which make it easier to fire rounds more quickly. Bump stocks were used on guns in a mass shooting in Las Vegas in October.

While recognizing that some gun-control measures have bipartisan backing, Merkley — a supporter of such reforms — remained skeptical about whether any legislation could be passed.

“Well, I’m not yet optimistic even with the president’s statements because the Republican leadership has to decide to bring it up. I’m not sure that they will be willing to do so,” the senator said. “It’s essentially paralyzed by

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