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ONE DOLLAR

Broadband provider eyes Astoria expansion

NoaNet is active in Washington state

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

A Washington-based nonprofit broadband provider is planning to extend a fiber-optic line through Astoria and Warrenton.

NoaNet — the Northwest Open Access Network — has easement applications with the Department of State Lands and the National Park Service to run fiber-optic cable along existing communications lines crossing under the Old Youngs Bay Bridge and over the Lewis and Clark River.

NoaNet was formed in 2000 by public utility districts in Washington state wanting to expand wholesale broadband in underserved rural communities. The network has fiber-optic lines throughout Washington, including Pacific County.

The broadband provider leases cable in Clatsop County from CenturyLink but is looking to expand its fiber-optic network into Oregon and increase reliability, said Chris Walker, the telecommunications director.

NoaNet's new cables would mostly utilize PacifiCorp utility poles and an underwater conduit along the Old Youngs Bay Bridge.

Walker said a customer opportunity led NoaNet to expand its fiber-optic network in Clatsop County but declined to name them.

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Rape kit backlog shrinks by 78 percent

New audit tracks improvement

By PARIS ACHEN
Capital Bureau

SALEM — “Melissa’s Law,” passed in 2016, has spurred Oregon State Police to make strides in processing a backlog of nearly 5,000 untested sexual assault kits, some of which dated back as far as 1983, according to a state audit released Wednesday.

The backlog had shrunk by nearly 78 percent to about 1,100 untested kits by the end of 2017.

The progress resulted from legislative funding for new staff and equipment at the state forensic lab, more efficient technologies for DNA processing and a change in the way the agency prioritizes testing of evidence, auditors wrote.

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LUCK AND CIRCUMSTANCE

Cannon Beach nurse reflects on a lifetime of care

By BRENNA VISSER
The Daily Astorian



ABOVE: Margo Lalich waits for a team of community health workers to arrive at the end of their day from doing household visits at a refugee camp in Bangladesh. BELOW: Lalich, a public health nurse who lives in Cannon Beach, has cared for people in refugee camps.

CANNON BEACH — At first glance, serving people in Clatsop County versus those in a refugee camp on the other side of the world seem to have little crossover.

But Margo Lalich, a long-time nurse and public health worker based in Cannon Beach, has spent much of her time doing both. Her most recent trip to serve Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh illuminated that common ground.

“(Working at a refugee camp) sounds heroic and romantic, but it’s not that complicated when you recognize the humanity in one another. In some ways, we all come from the same place: suffering,” she said. “When I look at a child in a shelter, or I see people who lost children in the migration, or lost a child to diphtheria, I see myself as a mother and I see my children. Those families go into shelters of tarps and bamboo sticks and they make it their home.”

“When we put aside the politics, and the religion, you’re just helping mothers, fathers and children.”

Last fall, Lalich spent a month at the Nayapara and Kutupalong refugee camps through Medical Team International. The nonprofit helps recruit and train local health care workers on proper sanitation, preventing the spread of disease and supporting safe home births.

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Margo Lalich | longtime nurse and public health worker based in Cannon Beach who recently served Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh

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On Bond Street, progress is finally in motion



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Astoria could reopen Bond Street to two-way traffic.

City hopes to open street to two-way traffic

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
The Daily Astorian

Astoria is going to poke a bear.

Folk wisdom says bears don’t like to be poked. But when the bear in question is a landslide that has been moving since the 1800s and closed Bond Street to one lane of westbound traffic in 2007, the city will take its chances.

Record-breaking rainfall derailed plans to build a retaining wall and reopen Bond Street to two-way traffic near Uniontown last year. Now, the city is back on track to begin work in the late summer or early fall, a potential break for

drivers searching for an east-west alternative through town.

“Anytime you do anything with a landslide, you’re poking the bear as they say,” Public Works Director Jeff Harrington said at a City Council work session Wednesday morning, adding, “You want to time it and do it at the right time.”

When the bear is hibernating, perhaps. The Bond Street slide doesn’t eat, sleep or have existential thoughts about its role in the world, but it is constantly on the move. It creeps about an eighth to a quarter of an inch each year, movement that comes to nearly a complete standstill during the driest times.

“There is risk involved with this,” Harrington told city councilors, “but

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