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ONE DOLLAR

Customers line up for new Walmart in Warrenton

A long-awaited grand opening

By HANNAH SIEVERT
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — Kim Lichner was one of the first to arrive Wednesday morning at Walmart for the grand opening.

She had driven past the new store the night before to see if anyone was waiting

in line, but it was empty. So she showed up again at 4 a.m. to make sure she was one of the first customers through the doors.

Lichner, of Astoria, wasn't the only one excited. The national retailer opened to a line of dozens of customers at 8 a.m.

"This is probably the largest opening of a store we've ever had in the community," Mayor Henry Balensifer said. "It shows the community wants it."

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Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Walmart employees cut the ribbon Wednesday to celebrate the opening of the new store in Warrenton.

FIGHTING OFF INVADERS



Photos by Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

TOP: Policeman's helmet is considered a threat to native plant species in the region. ABOVE: Jeff Roehm removes an invasive plant species known as policeman's helmet from an area near the Circle Creek Conservation Center.

The Daily Astorian

Volunteers gathered Wednesday morning to help pull the invasive weed species known as policeman's helmet from the banks of Circle Creek south of Seaside.

The North Coast Land Conservancy organizes these events in an effort to eradicate the weed, which chokes out native plant species and spreads seeds through moving water. The resilient weed was first found in the Necanicum River watershed in Clatsop County around six years ago.

The land conservancy is on the second year of their eradication efforts. Two years ago, the organization received an \$86,000 grant from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board to fight the spread of the plant.



Volunteers make their way through thick brush to remove an invasive plant species near the Circle Creek Conservation Center south of Seaside.

Astoria tackles final stretch of riverfront plan

Urban Core will cover downtown

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
The Daily Astorian

Astoria is tackling the last piece of a plan that helps shape land use policy along the Columbia River.

With proposals for buildings and businesses in the works, some city councilors have been anxious to see the Riverfront Vision Plan completed. Outlined in 2009, it provides a blueprint for development and operates under core principles that include promoting

river views and public access while preserving a working waterfront.

The City Council has already adopted standards for three sections: Bridge Vista in Uniontown, Civic Greenway east of downtown to Pier 39, and Neighborhood Greenway in Alderbrook.

The fourth section — the Urban Core — is a dense mix of commercial, residential and over-water structures that stretches from Second Street to 16th Street downtown. It is where former city planner Rosemary Johnson, now a consultant for the city, says there is potential for new development.

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Environmental, fishing groups sue Oregon over coho salmon

Allege threat from logging

By GILLIAN FLACCUS
Associated Press

PORTLAND — A coalition of environmental and fishing groups filed a federal lawsuit Wednesday against Oregon, alleging logging in the state's two largest forests is threatening the survival of coho salmon that breed in streams flowing through the coastal region.

The lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court in Eugene challenges the state's logging policies in the Clatsop State Forest and the Tillamook State Forest.

It alleges the Oregon Department of Forestry is in violation of the U.S. Endangered Species Act because of the logging, and is illegally engaging in activities that result in the death of a threatened species.

The agency has not followed through on implementing a species management plan required under federal law that would help preserve salmon habitats despite logging and mitigate damage, court papers allege.

Ken Armstrong, a spokesman for the Oregon Department of Forestry, said his department could not comment on pending litigation.

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North Coast hospitality industry left with job vacancies

Businesses cite lack of housing as a key factor

By BRENNIA VISSER
The Daily Astorian

With the height of tourism season approaching, many in the restaurant and lodging industry will face throngs of visitors with incomplete crews.

The worker shortage on the North Coast is a consistent but growing problem. With Clatsop County's unemployment rate hovering around 4 percent, employers across all

sectors are struggling to find workers.

Perhaps where it is most noticeable, however, is at cafes and hotels. Job vacancies in leisure and hospitality have increased by 232 percent across northwestern Oregon, from 416 jobs in 2016 to more than 1,000 in 2017, according to a survey by the Oregon Employment Department.

More than half of the open positions in 2017 were full time, and more than 60 percent were permanent jobs. Average wages grew from 2016 to 2017 by more than 11 percent in hospitality to \$12.35 an hour — over \$2 more than Oregon's standard minimum wage.



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Employees at Tsunami Sandwich Co. in Seaside handle a rush of customers.

"What we're seeing is almost no one is offering minimum wage anymore," Shawna Sykes, a state workforce ana-

lyst, said. "We're seeing many more businesses offer sign-on bonuses and benefits."

So why are there so many help wanted signs in the windows?

Lack of affordable housing is by far the most commonly cited reason for the worker shortage.

"I probably have one to five businesses a week talk to me about this," said Brian Owen, executive director of the Seaside Chamber of Commerce. "We're a tourist town with a base of service workers. But without a decent place to live, they will move on where they

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