

Elk: Trail cameras will track response

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detering elk long term, the system could be a better, more attractive option for residents and elk-plagued businesses elsewhere in the county, Biederbeck said.

The tops of the fences hit at about belly-button height right now. For an elk, that's nothing. They'll jump a fence that short with their eyes closed and their front hooves tied behind their backs.

But the trick here is to be able to clear two fences at once.

Biederbeck has adjusted the fences since the first installation, trying to find what he calls the "magical configuration" of height and spacing — the point where an otherwise capable elk eyes the barrier and decides, "I can't negotiate that."

After some trial and error, Biederbeck thinks he's close to the sweet spot.

"So far they seem to be avoiding it all together," he said. Trail cameras set on either side of the fencing will track how elk respond.

It's possible that as the fences become more familiar to the elk, they might decide to take a chance at leaping it. And maybe they'll make it over. Biederbeck is prepared to tinker some more: raising the height, adjusting the gap. The state is only several months deep into the experiment. The fences first went up in March. Biederbeck hopes to continue the experiment for at least a year.

Elsewhere in the world of Clatsop County elk herds, rangers at Lewis and Clark National Historical Park completed training on how to dart them. The training was preparation for an effort to fix collars on elk to better understand



Photos by Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Wildlife biologists hope the double-fence design will deter elk from trying to cross.



Lines of barbed wire run down the middle of the two fences.

how the animals move through and use the park.

Though rangers won't undertake the darting themselves, they needed to understand how it works and the proper procedures, said Chris Clatterback, the park's chief of

resource management.

In Warrenton, Mayor Henry Balensifer helped organize an informational meeting with Biederbeck and the Fish and Wildlife Department in April to answer residents' questions and to reiterate ways

to coexist with elk.

In Gearhart, city officials have considered tapping into a state program intended to control urban deer populations to reduce a growing elk herd. The large herd, which travels freely through town, has become a public safety issue and a nuisance for many residents. Alerts go out during calving and rut seasons.

Back in Jewell, three young elk bounded through wildlife refuge-protected fields in the direction of the double fence prototype Wednesday morning. They came to a clumsy, teenage halt when they realized people were on the side of the highway watching them. Their ears swiveled. They took halting steps forward and then stuttered back, toggling between curiosity and uncertainty before giving up on the whole thing and continuing to run.

Fire season approaches in Clatsop County

The Daily Astorian

Fire season and a burn ban in Clatsop County will begin next week.

The season will begin Tuesday at 1 a.m., the state Department of Forestry announced. The season is declared annually on both public and private lands when the department finds that fire hazards exist.

Open debris burning will not be allowed, and burn per-

mits must be obtained from the state or through local fire departments depending on the location of properties. Rural property owners may only use metal barrels with heavy mesh screens and holes no larger than 1/4 inch. Water supplies and hand tools must be on site.

More information about fire season requirements can be found by calling 503-325-7215. Permits can be requested by calling 503-325-5451.

Fishermen rescued near Willapa Bay

The Daily Astorian

Three fishermen stranded on rocks near Willapa Bay were rescued Wednesday.

A Pacific County sheriff's deputy initially responded to the scene but could not reach the rocks, prompting dispatch-

ers to call the Coast Guard.

An MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter aircrew from Air Station Astoria responded to the area about 7 p.m. and safely hoisted the individuals. They were then taken to the beach just after 8 p.m. and reported no injuries.

Airport engineering lawsuit settled

The Daily Astorian

The case between an engineering firm for the Port of Astoria and a company it hired to pave a runway at the Astoria Regional Airport has been settled.

Engineering firm Harper Houf Peterson Righellis claimed it provided \$129,067 worth of services to Corpac Construction but was only paid \$58,403. Corpac claimed parts of the engineering

firm's contract were ambiguous, that the company overbilled and that it did not perform parts of the contract properly.

A judge had previously denied the engineering firm's attempts at partial judgment before trial, agreeing with Corpac there were factual issues. Darien Louiselle, an attorney for Corpac, said the parties later agreed to disagree before reaching a confidential settlement to end the case.

Separations: 'We're a nation of immigrants'

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"Certainly we have to keep families together, that's the most important thing," Buehler said, noting his grandparents fled Germany and came to Oregon after World War I. "We're a nation of immigrants. Lots of families have come to this country seeking freedom and opportunity and we have to allow that to happen."

But he also echoed some Republicans on the national stage when he said "we're a nation of laws" and it's time to "come up with a secure plan for our borders."

If elected, Buehler said, he would use the position of governor to put political pressure on the federal government and refrain from offering support, such as sending the state's National Guard to the border

for policies he opposed.

Buehler calls himself an independent-minded Republican who isn't afraid to criticize federal policies. But he stopped short of denouncing the president. "When I see wrongdoing, I'll call it out and this is one of those situations where it's not good policy for our country or our state," he said.

Any immigration fix, Bue-

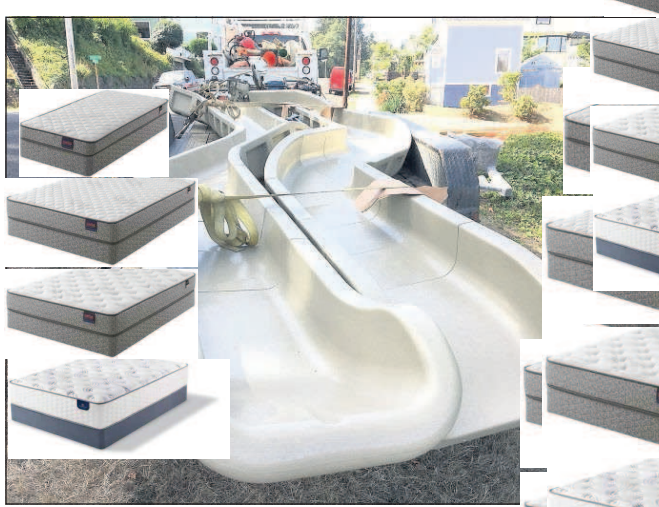
hler said, needs to be developed with an "open mind and caring heart."

Slide to open at McClure Park

The Daily Astorian

Longer slides come to those who wait.

The McClure Park slide, originally intended to be 30 feet long, is now 45 feet long and will open to the sliding public at a dedication ceremony Monday. The ceremony begins at 6 p.m. and will involve a show for the community and children.



A new slide arrives at McClure Park.

project," McElroy said.

McClure Park, less than an acre in size, includes an open grassy area, a swing set and picnic tables and a backstop, as well as views of the Columbia River and downtown.

Angela Cosby, director of the Parks and Recreation Department, said efforts to improve the park were a com-

munity project for years.

"It all started group of community members with a visioning neighborhood children with a creative place to play," she said, "and now we're opening an amazing slide that represents the wishes and spirit of the community."

Astoria continues search for fire chief

The Daily Astorian

Astoria is still hunting for a fire chief.

The job was reposted Thursday.

City Manager Brett Estes had hoped to fill the fire chief position and the still-vacant community development director position earlier this year. But now postings for both positions have gone out for second rounds.

Estes said it has been hard to find a candidate for the fire

chief position with all the qualifications required in a unique version of the job. The desired candidate must have a wide range of skills, experience and education.

Former Fire Chief James Ames, in addition to his duties as a department chief, will be interim fire chief for a year but stayed on as the interim fire chief to help ease the transition. He is still advis-

ing the fire department.



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