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ONE DOLLAR



Hayden Halsen stands ready with a rake to help work on a mountain bike trail. Photos by Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Advocates want more local choice in electricity

Legislation could be heard in Salem

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

A legislative effort is forming to allow communities in Oregon to buy their own electricity separate from investor-funded utilities like PacifiCorp.

The Community Renewable Energy Association is an Oregon group focused on increasing green energy sources as a means of economic development in a more competitive energy market. The group is drafting legislation that would allow for community choice aggregation, a concept where local governments can choose where to buy and generate electricity for customers within their region.

"We believe in the ability for communities to determine what's the best power supply portfolio to best serve their communities," said Brian Skeahan, director of the energy association and a former public utility district manager in Washington state.

Under community choice aggregation, aggregators pay exit fees to utilities to make up for the loss of customers. Existing utilities continue to deliver power, maintain the electrical grid and provide billing and other services.

Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Ohio, Illinois, California and most recently Virginia have so far passed community choice legislation to lower power rates and expand their renewable energy portfolio.

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TIRES ON THE MOUNTAIN

Mountain bike trails coming to Clatsop County

By JACK HEFFERNAN
The Daily Astorian

Add mountain biking to the list of recreational possibilities in Clatsop County.

Last week, the North Coast Trail Alliance began clearing out future riding areas on Lewis & Clark Timberlands north of Klootch Creek County Park. Riders and Greenwood Resources, which manages the timberlands, have agreed to 6 miles of downhill, single-track trail to start, with a goal of expanding to 40 miles over the next few years.

"That's our goal here, is to make it a destination of mountain bike trails," said Chris Quackenbush, the alliance's vice president. "We're already set up for tourism out here. This network of trails would just bring more people to the area."

The alliance is a chapter of the International Mountain Biking Association. Since its founding, the group has reached out to public and private landowners seeking a place to ride.

"There's so much land out here and no one has tried to work with us. We just ran into a bunch of dead ends," Quackenbush said.

David Dougherty, a forester for the timberlands just off U.S. Highway 26, was driving his truck out



Morgan Soller clears brush from the mountain bike trail.

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Knappa students struggle on state tests

Astoria, Warrenton and Seaside score better

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

Knappa students struggled mightily on last year's state aptitude tests in English language arts, math and science compared to their peers in Clatsop County and across the state.

Students begin taking the Smarter Balanced assessment each spring in third grade through high school. The assessment is meant to track whether students are on track academically for college or workforce training. A score of three or four in each subject indicates a student is on track.

Fewer than 35 percent of Knappa students were on track in English language arts, compared to nearly 55 percent statewide and at least half in the Astoria, Warrenton-Hammond and Seaside school

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Local brings a life of fitness to Cannon Beach

A weight loss journey for former athlete

By BRENNA VISSER
The Daily Astorian

CANNON BEACH — Lara Foster likes to help people move their bodies better.

It's a passion that began for the Cannon Beach local as a three-sport athlete at Seaside High School, and now has led to opening her own personal training studio.

But where it really began to blossom was about five years



after graduation, when she was working as a sports reporter for the Seaside Signal.

After high school, Foster attended the University of Utah, where she abandoned her life of athletics and focused on her mass communications degree. But between the stress of college and the lack of structure sports once provided her, she began to cope by picking up some unhealthy eating

habits, she said.

"I think it was kind of like a 'big fish in a small pond' situation," Foster said. "I was good at sports. But the University of Utah had 30,000 students. I looked at the softball team, and everyone was the best of the best. I felt discouraged."

By the time she started covering the same sports she once played, Foster weighed about 300 pounds.

"I felt awful," she said. "It just felt embarrassing."

That experience redirected Foster back into a life of fitness. In 2007, she lost more

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Lara Foster, a former Seaside athlete, opened her own personal training studio this month. Brenna Visser/The Daily Astorian

