

A culture of safety in a dangerous fishing industry

Hard and risky way to earn a living on water

By KRISTIAN FODEN-VENCIL
Oregon Public Broadcasting

Life in Oregon's fishing and crabbing industries is hard and risky; crabbing, in particular, is among the most dangerous jobs in the nation.

So the Coast Guard is working with skippers like Kelly Barnett to increase safety and awareness.

Barnett captains the "Good Intentions," which is docked in Garibaldi. He's spent his whole life in the fishing industry, mainly buying and selling fish on the shore.

But last year, he decided he wanted to catch his own product. So he bought a boat and decided he ought to attend the Coast Guard's survival training.

"I want to be safer on the line," he said. "I want to know everything I can."

The Coast Guard tells commercial captains to run drills once a month to make sure their crews are well-versed in how to abandon ship, fight onboard fires and quickly don bright red survival suits.

As part of the class, instructors taught Barnett what to do if he hit another fishing vessel in the fog.

Then they made him respond to a mock accident: You've just collided with another boat. Respond.

"There's a man in the water! Somebody get an eye on him! Mayday! Mayday! Mayday!" he barked on the radio.

Barnett was standing at the controls of his boat as Coast Guard Auxiliary Officer Ron Hilburger, pretending to be on



Fixing a hole in a boat isn't easy. Students are taught to get a kit or use bits of wood and rubber they may have lying around.

the other end of the radio, peppered him with questions.

"What's the status of your vessel?"

"We have sustained damage ourselves. We are probably taking on water. I say, 'We're taking on water,'" Barnett shouted. "We've had a collision. We're at the entrance to the Tillamook Bay Bar. We have him on board; we need medical attention."

At the back of the boat, deckhands simulated the accident by dragging Coast Guard instructor Dan Cary off the dock and onto the boat.

Once the drill ends, Cary asked how they think it went.

"So, how was that pulling me over the side? Harder than

'I grew up at a time when I didn't wear a bicycle helmet. The seat belt in the car was my mom's hand keeping me from hitting the windshield.'

Coast Guard Officer Mike Rudolph

you thought, right?" he said. "Imagine trying to reach down into the water?"

The Coast Guard requires commercial fishing boats to run drills for 10 different subjects once a month. By taking a Coast Guard class, fisher-

men such as Barnett can fulfill requirements for four different subjects, including what to do when someone falls overboard and how to use an onboard distress signal.

The importance of such drills is stressed over the

18-hour course. Students also learn how to repair a hole in the boat with bits of wood and rubber that are lying around most vessels. They're taught to have a safe space on board for flammable materials.

Barnett has been in the fishing industry since he was a child tagging along behind his father. He says he's still learning things about safety.

For example: "To get into the survival suit, you have to do something with your shoes. Your footwear does not slide in very easily, you either have to take them off or put plastic bags over them, or you're going to struggle a lot to get into that survival suit," he said.

Coast Guard Officer Mike

Rudolph was the one who explained that putting plastic bags over shoes will help people slide into their survival suits in less than a minute. That can be life-saving information because a boat can sink in just two minutes.

Rudolph's regular job involves examining fishing vessels for the Coast Guard to make sure they're seaworthy. He says that 15 years ago, safety training was lacking along the Pacific coast. Fishermen had to drive up to Seattle to take Coast Guard classes.

But Rudolph says the culture along the coast is changing.

"I grew up at a time when I didn't wear a bicycle helmet. The seat belt in the car was my mom's hand keeping me from hitting the windshield," he said. "... I see it in a lot of the younger crew members coming on board. These are guys who grew up wearing bicycle helmets."

A mile away, the notorious Tillamook Bay Bar rumbles. In 2003, 11 people died when the chartered fishing boat Taki-Too rolled over on the way out. Most fishermen have their own story to tell about the dangers of working the waters off Oregon.

Barnett remembers a storm that appeared suddenly when he was tuna fishing with his father.

"We were taking water over the top of the boat. And as I'm laying in the bunk, the boat rolls over to the side, there's no air between the window, the water and me," he said.

He survived, but the memory makes him very aware of the need to stay trained on basic safety.

The Coast Guard is offering another four survival classes between now and the first week of December — in Coos Bay, Newport and Astoria.

Permit filed to demolish the never-used Wapato Jail in Portland

Schnitzer bought the property

By ERICKA CRUZ GUEVARRA
Oregon Public Broadcasting

The Wapato Jail won't become a homeless shelter after all.

In fact, Wapato Jail won't even be the Wapato Jail for much longer.

A demolition permit is in place for the never-opened Multnomah County jail, which was sold to private developer Jordan Schnitzer in April.

A demolition building permit application through the city of Portland's Bureau of Development Services was signed by the property owner on Nov. 1, according to documents.

A final permit for a commercial inspection, in addition to an erosion and site control inspection is underway as of Nov. 2. Documents show applicants valued the cost of all equipment, materials, labor overhead and profit for the work at \$1 million.

The permitting process to demolish the building — which has been referred to as an albatross that has strained county resources since it was completed in 2004 — began less than a week before Portland voters would decide



Wapato Jail, which Multnomah County just sold, has never been used for incarceration.

between two city councilors who disagreed vehemently on what to do with the jail.

Voters ultimately chose Jo Ann Hardesty, who has been critical of calls for the jail to be converted into a homeless

shelter.

"I thought this was a city of compassionate people, empathetic people, people who believed we can do better than jail cells for people who are houseless," Hardesty

said in a speech at her election night party soon after her win Tuesday.

On the campaign trail, Hardesty's opponent, Multnomah County Commissioner Loretta Smith, said she wanted to turn the jail into a triage center for residential drug and alcohol rehabilitation, mental health support and job training programs.

Schnitzer, who backed Smith in her campaign for City Council, told Willamette Week in September that he'd demolish the building if funding to use the jail as a homeless shelter didn't materialize by Oct. 1.

The money never came.

Schnitzer faced mounting pressure from leaders, including Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler and state Rep. Knute Buehler, to consider more pitches on what to do with the jail.

Schnitzer pays \$50,000 a month to maintain the empty jail — a price he told The Oregonian he wasn't keen on paying forever.

Group calls for halt to orca boat tours

By PHUONG LE
Associated Press

SEATTLE — A Washington state task force on critically endangered Northwest orcas wants to temporarily suspend whale-watching boat tours focused on those whales, one of three dozen recommendations to save a population that is at its lowest in over 30 years.

The group advising Gov. Jay Inslee voted Tuesday to recommend a three- to five-year moratorium on viewing southern resident killer whales by all boats in Puget Sound.

Disturbances and noise from boats can interfere with the whale's ability to find food or communicate, and supporters said it would protect the whales. Critics said it doesn't address the larger issue of dwindling food supply and it would be devastat-

ing for the industry.

The proposed moratorium would not apply to boats viewing other whales in the region, including gray or transient whales.

The endangered orcas struggle from pollution, boat noise and lack of Chinook salmon, which have been declining because of dams, habitat loss and overfishing.

The task force plans to forward its recommendations to the governor next week. He'll consider the ideas as he proposes a budget and potential legislation that will also go before the Legislature.

Among the more contentious ideas, the task force is recommending that the state set up a stakeholder process to address issues related to the possible breaching or removal of the four Snake River dams in eastern Washington.

WANTED

Alder and Maple Saw Logs & Standing Timber

Northwest Hardwoods • Longview, WA

Contact: John Anderson • 360-269-2500

CLATSOP POST 12

99th Veterans Day
Weekend
Celebration

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10TH

★ BRUNCH ★
10AM-Noon or gone

12:30PM

☆ Veterans Day Program ☆
Presentation of Colors & All Service Flags
"National Anthem" Chris Lyn Taylor
Program, Displays, Memorabilia, Photo Display and Guest Speakers
"Tapped Out Tappers" • POW/MIA Ceremony
"God Bless America" Chris Lynn Taylor

2:30PM - U.S. Marine Corp Birthday - Cake

★ 4-6PM - Prime Rib Dinner \$10 each ★
with all the trimmings

On Sale Starting October 26th at Clatsop Post 12

Music by: Theory of Relativity (TOR)

★ 6-10PM ★
FREE To All Veterans & Their Families
Donations Gladly Accepted!!!!

ASTORIA AMERICAN LEGION
Clatsop Post 12
1132 Exchange Street • 503-325-5771

Clatsop Post 12

Baked
Potato Bar

Friday
Nov. 9TH
4 pm until gone

\$6.00

6PM
"Karaoke Dave"

ASTORIA
AMERICAN LEGION
Clatsop Post 12
1132 Exchange Street
503-5771

Harvest & Holiday
Craft Bazaar

Friday, Nov. 9
Saturday, Nov. 10
10am-2pm

- Artwork and Artisan Wares
- Vintage Treasures
- Baked Goods
- Delicious Soups

Come Share With Your Friends!

Grace Episcopal Church
1545 Franklin Avenue • Astoria