

## Warrenton approves homestay lodging rules

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ  
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — It is now legal in Warrenton for people to rent rooms in their homes to visitors.

The City Commission held the first reading of an ordinance Tuesday that outlines a new homestay lodging program. The program includes a permit application process and safety regulations people must comply with if they want to offer short-term rentals to visitors.

The safety regulations will go into effect Jan. 22, and people who are already offering this type of short-term rental will be given a grace period to make sure what they offer meets the new requirements.

The ordinance allows people to rent up to five bedrooms in their primary residence.

Other cities in Oregon have struggled to collect lodg-

ing taxes from rentals or have seen the rentals — especially of entire houses — impact long-term housing stock and prices. In Astoria, the short-term rental of entire homes is illegal, but code enforcers still see advertisements on popular websites like Airbnb.

Astoria adopted a homestay lodging license in December in an effort to curb illegal rentals and provide a clear process for people who want to rent out rooms legally.

Warrenton has not seen issues related to Airbnb-type rentals yet, Mayor Henry Balensifer has said.

The safety regulations passed Tuesday are a proactive step.

The city is still working on regulations around vacation rentals, where an entire housing unit is rented on a short-term basis, Balensifer noted after the meeting.

## Jewell School Board chooses superintendent

By EDWARD STRATTON  
The Daily Astorian

Stephen Phillips has been chosen as the new superintendent of Jewell School District beginning next year.

The Jewell School Board voted unanimously during a special meeting Monday to hire Phillips. He had been brought in this school year as an executive administrator as part of an audition to replace Superintendent Alice Hunsaker, who is retiring at the end of the year along with Principal Terrence Smyth, her significant other.

"I think the board felt that Mr. Phillips was a good fit for Jewell School," said Bryan Swearingen, the school



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board's chairman.

After six months on the job, Phillips was reviewed by most of the staff and many high school students, with overwhelmingly positive feedback, Swearingen said.

Phillips came to Jewell from Beaverton School District, where he was

deputy superintendent until resigning last year after reposting an anti-immigrant tweet. He was recruited to Beaverton from the Malheur Education Service District, where he was superintendent for four years and director of secondary education for four years prior.

He also spent five years as a middle school vice principal and two as a math teacher in Nyssa near the Oregon-Idaho border. His first teaching job was in the Burnt River School District, which he said served about 100 students during his time there.

Jewell School is mostly funded by timber tax revenue and averages about 150 students K-12.

Hunsaker was hired in 2013 out of the Lake

County Education Service District. She arrived in Jewell after a tumultuous three years under former superintendent-principal Brian Gander, followed by a school year that included three interim leaders.

"I think with our difficulties we've had in the past, when Alice Hunsaker came in, she was what the school district needed at the time," Swearingen said. "She's done a real good job at rebuilding staff morale and confidence."

Phillips has indicated he would like to be in Jewell for a while. He, his wife and five children have all relocated to campus housing and enrolled in the school district. Jewell hopes to have his contract prepared by a board meeting later this month.

## Commercial boat had sought Coast Guard escort before capsizing

Three fishermen dead off Newport

By GILLIAN FLACCUS  
Associated Press

A commercial crabbing boat that capsized in rough waters off the Oregon Coast, killing the three men aboard, sent a shock wave through a seafaring community already struggling from a monthlong delay to the annual crabbing season.

The Coast Guard said the vessel, the Mary B. II, overturned about 10 p.m. Tuesday as it crossed Yaquina Bay bar in Newport. The bar is one of the most notorious off the coast, and authorities said crews faced 12- to 14-foot waves as they tried to rescue the fishermen.

The men had called for an escort across the bar and a responding Coast Guard boat was nearby when the crabbing boat capsized "without warning," the Coast Guard said Wednesday evening in a news release. The Coast Guard is investigating the incident.

James Lacey, 48, of South Toms River, New Jersey, was pulled from the ocean by helicopter and flown to a local hospital, where he was pronounced dead. The body of Joshua Porter, 50, of Toledo, washed up on a beach early Wednesday.

The body of the boat's skipper, Stephen Biernacki, 50, of Barnegat Township, New Jersey, was found on the hull of the boat after it, too, washed up on a jetty.

The tragedy was nothing new for Newport, a working fishing port on the central coast. The small town hosts a granite memorial at Yaquina Bay etched with more than 100 names of local fishermen lost at sea over the past century and shared tragedies are woven into the fabric of the community.

"It happens frequently enough that we actually have funds that help families during this time. We fundraise all year long, and we try to help them as much as we can," said Taunette Dixon, president of the nonprofit Newport Fishermen's Wives, which supports families who have lost a breadwinner to the waves.



A Coast Guard boat crew responds to three fishermen in the water after the commercial fishing vessel Mary B II capsized while crossing Yaquina Bay bar off the coast of Newport.



Authorities in Newport examine the wreckage of the Mary B. II, a commercial crabbing boat that capsized.

But those in the industry said the loss hit particularly hard this year, when crabbers were rushing to sea to try to catch up after the Dungeness crab season was delayed more than a month. The season usually begins Dec. 1, but this year it only began last week because the crabs were too small and didn't have enough meat to harvest.

Then, a series of bad storms in the first week of the season prevented many crabbers from recovering their pots on Friday, the first day they could do so, said Tim Novotny, spokesman for Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission.

"When they did get out, some of them had to stay out a little longer because of the weather. The difficulty is once you're out at sea, they can handle a lot of conditions. But the trouble is trying to get back across those bars," Novotny said.

A bar is an area near the coast where a river — in this case the Yaquina River — meets the sea. The force of the river water colliding with the ocean can create hazardous currents and swells, particularly during a storm. The Yaquina Bay bar is considered one of the more dangerous ones along the coast. On Wednesday,

reports showed waves 16 feet tall there.

It's so treacherous that the dangers of crossing it with a fully loaded crab boat were the premise of a spinoff of the "The Deadliest Catch," a reality TV

show about commercial fishermen that aired on the Discovery channel.

"The fishermen and their families know all too well, unfortunately ... that that danger is real. They accept the challenge because they love what they do," Novotny said. "It's part of who they are and what they do."

The appeal also lies in the money that the succulent crabs can bring.

Live Oregon Dungeness crabs are currently selling for anywhere between \$5.99 a pound and \$11.99 a

pound, depending on location, and they are a staple of the holidays for many on the West Coast. The crabs are also fished in California and Washington.

Crabbing permits are capped at 424 vessels spread over six major ports running the length of the Oregon Coast, from Astoria in the north to Brookings near the California border. Three-quarters of the harvest is brought in during the first eight weeks of the season, which usually runs from December to August.

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