

Food pantry serves more than 1,300



Hundreds of federal workers and their families affected by the government shutdown went to the Be the Light food pantry Saturday and Sunday at the Astoria Masonic Lodge.

Photos by Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

Help for workers during government shutdown

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

More than 1,300 federal employees and their families left in economic limbo by the government shutdown lined up Saturday and Sunday outside the Astoria Masonic Lodge for the Be the Light food pantry.

Inside, a small army of volunteers shepherded them through a main hall lined with food, toiletries and other daily living needs donated by civic groups, businesses and residents over the past week.

Stacey Benson, a Coast Guard spouse, organized the pantry with the help of volunteers from other Coast Guard families, MOMS Club of Astoria, local Boy Scouts and other groups. Volunteers counted 1,374 attendees, almost entirely from the Coast Guard, with several from other agencies like the National Park Service.

Boy Scout Troop 211 from Astoria helped gather donations for the Coast Guard over the past week.



The line of federal employees and their families outside the Be the Light food pantry at times stretched down Franklin Avenue.

WANT TO HELP?

To donate money for gift cards, go to paypal.me/momsclubastoria. For a tax receipt, or information, email AstoriaMCTreasurer@gmail.com

They and some other scouts from Portland were on hand over the weekend to help move supplies.

"A lot of people affected by this are my friends at school," said Kegan Rascoe, a senior patrol leader

with Troop 211. "They're struggling to feed their families."

The average federal worker lost more than \$5,000 in pay during the first month of the shutdown, according to The New York Times. There are an estimated 9,600 federal employees in Oregon furloughed or working without pay. The Coast Guard was last paid on Dec. 31.

There are more than 42,000 Coast Guard personnel working without pay, including most of the 500 in

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Kegan Rascoe | a senior patrol leader with Troop 211

Co-op breaks ground in Mill Pond

A larger store for the natural foods grocery

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

The Astoria Co-op Grocery broke ground Friday on a new 7,500-square-foot store at 23rd Street and Marine Drive it hopes to open by Thanksgiving.

The natural foods store, located in the Shark Rock Building in downtown Astoria, has been planning the expansion to Mill Pond since 2014, when membership numbered nearly 3,000. Since then, membership has climbed to more than 4,100.

The new store will cost an estimated \$9 million to build, said Matt Stanley, the co-op's general manager. The co-op's portion is approximately \$4 million. Another \$5 million is coming from property owner Astor Venture LLC, which gave the co-op a 20-year lease.

"In eight weeks, we raised over \$1.6 million in the fall of 2017," Stanley told a crowd gathered for the groundbreaking. "That was the big equity push that we needed to actually get here today."

Grading on the site will begin today. Work will begin on the foundation within a couple of weeks.

The site is subject to liquefaction, requiring rock piers 20 feet down, and a dam around the project to prevent the store from sliding in an earthquake, said Don Vallaster, an architect and partner in Astor Venture. Vallaster expects the foundation work to be completed by the end of February before crews start pouring concrete.

Expansion

The project has faced several hurdles, from fundraising to appeasing neighborhood concerns over access. A proposed entrance on the narrower Steam Whistle Way faced opposition from neighbors worried it would snarl traffic, endanger safety and hurt property values.

Access was changed to 23rd Street, and the two sides reached a compromise before an appeal of the project reached the Astoria City Council.

The co-op has touted the new location as an opportunity to build a more efficient, dedicated grocery store expanding its selection of products, including a deli and more local produce and meat. The site will include 48 parking spaces and a loading dock unavailable at the cramped Shark Rock Building location.

The expansion will increase the co-op's impact on the local economy, including adding the equivalent of about 30 additional full-time positions to an existing 20, each with an average wage of \$16 an hour and benefits, Stanley said.

"This is truly a grassroots project," he said. "It's not unlike 45 years ago, when a small group of people came together to build something, a small storefront, to provide something that none of them as individuals could do."

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A pastor finds her calling

Patterson looks to restorative justice

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
The Daily Astorian

It was a footnote to the sermon's overall message of justice, but Rebecca Patterson, pastor of First United Methodist Church in Astoria, couldn't help pointing out that the text included one of two times in the Bible where Jesus loses an argument.

"And guess what," she said. "Both times he loses



the argument to a woman."

According to the Gospel of John, Jesus performed his first public miracle — turning water into wine — at a wedding in Cana, a village or town in the region of Galilee. He performs the miracle after his mother tells him, essentially, to "fix it," when the party runs out of wine. Jesus responds: "Woman, what does your concern have to do with me?"

My hour has not yet come."

How Mary responds to this sass is not recorded, but she prevails. John goes on to recount how Jesus went with the servants and did what his mother asked, transforming six large jars filled with water into a wine that was even better than what the guests had been drinking.

Something ordinary becoming extraordinary. Patterson connected this to how people nowadays can practice restorative justice in their everyday lives with the tools, habits, abilities and

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Katie Frankowicz/The Daily Astorian

Rebecca Patterson, pastor at First United Methodist Church in Astoria, which hosts the Astoria Warming Center, has been leading the small congregation for the last six months.

