



Seaside Fire and Rescue

Firefighters respond to a blaze near South Wahanna Road.

Shed fire in Seaside stalls traffic

The Daily Astorian

SEASIDE — A shed fire brought firefighters from throughout the region to 1190 Spruce Drive in Seaside on Thursday morning.

According to Seaside Fire and Rescue, a single-level, metal pole shed adjacent to a single-family residence and the Salmonberry Knoll apartment complex was billowing smoke when crews arrived on scene shortly after 11:30 a.m.

Firefighters were advised by the property owner that the shed contained hazardous materials, making containment “a slow and arduous process.”

Traffic was diverted from South Wahanna Road between Cooper Street and the entrance to Providence Seaside Hospital just south of Whispering Pines Drive for close to three hours.

The cause of the fire is under investigation.



Gregg Freedman/For Seaside Signal

Smoke as seen from Providence Seaside Hospital shortly after a reported blaze on South Wahanna.

North Coast man accused of rape, attempted sexual abuse

By BRENNA VISSER
The Daily Astorian

A 21-year-old North Coast man has been indicted for allegedly raping two women and attempting to sexually abuse another woman at local get-togethers.

Parker Philip Whitsett is charged with three counts of first-degree rape, first-degree sexual abuse, first-degree attempted sexual abuse and two counts of unlawful sexual penetration in the first degree.

Whitsett is accused of having sex with a woman who was unable to consent while she was unconscious and under the influence of intoxicants at a get-together in December 2017.

Whitsett allegedly had sex with another woman while she was unconscious at different gathering in November.

He attempted to make sexual contact with another woman who was unable to consent at the same get-together, according to court documents.



Parker Philip Whitsett

States would get free hand under pot bill

By MICHAEL R. BLOOD
Associated Press

U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden has proposed legislation that would give states a free hand to allow legal marijuana markets without the threat of federal criminal intervention.

The proposal by the Oregon Democrat aims to ease the conflict between the U.S. government and the growing number of states where cannabis is legal in some form.

The Democrat says the federal prohibition of marijuana “is wrong, plain and simple” and “too many economic opportunities have been missed.”

The proposal would remove federal criminal penalties for individuals and businesses acting in compliance with state marijuana laws. It would also reduce barriers for legal marijuana businesses to get access to banking.

A separate bill would impose a tax on marijuana products similar to federal excise taxes on alcohol.

Washington state lawmakers weigh new vaccine exemption bill

Associated Press

OLYMPIA, Wash. — Amid a measles outbreak that has sickened more than 50 people in the Pacific Northwest, Washington state lawmakers heard testimony on a bill that would

remove parents’ ability to claim a personal or philosophical exemption to opt their school-age children out of the combined measles, mumps and rubella vaccine.

Hundreds of people opposed to the measure lined up more than an hour before

the start of the hearing before the House Health Care and Wellness Committee.

The bill comes as health officials have reported at least 52 known cases in Washington state and four in Oregon. Currently, Washington allows school-vacci-

nation exemptions for children at public or private schools or licensed day care centers based on medical, religious and personal or philosophical beliefs.

The committee is scheduled to vote on the bill next week.

Oregon pot export bill gets hearing, and a warning

By ANDREW SELSKY
Associated Press

SALEM — A bill that would create the possibility of Oregon exporting marijuana to adjacent states where cannabis is also legal had its first public hearing Thursday, where advocates said it would give Oregon a way to relieve its oversupply and grow its brand.

Separately, the U.S. attorney for Oregon warned against it.

There is little expectation that Senate Bill 582, if passed by the Legislature, would soon open marijuana commerce between Oregon and California, Nevada and Washington state, the three states contiguous to Oregon where it is legal.

But some advocates see it as a way to start laying groundwork for when the federal government either

decriminalizes marijuana or decides not to prosecute if pot-legal states export to each other.

One advocate suggested going even further, since several countries, including Canada and Uruguay, have legalized marijuana.

“I would like to see an amendment that would allow international agreements in this bill, if federal law allows, so Oregon can cash in immediately without having to wait for the next legislative session,” Sarah Duff, spokeswoman for several pro-marijuana groups, said in testimony to the Senate judiciary committee.

U.S. Attorney Billy J. Williams told The Associated Press on Thursday that the bill does not change the fact that transporting marijuana across state lines is a federal crime.

“This bill is an attempt to remedy the rampant overproduction and trafficking of marijuana outside of Oregon,” Williams said in an emailed statement. He complained about the negative impacts of the marijuana industry on public health, minors and the environment.

But Steve Marks, director of Oregon’s recreational marijuana regulatory agency, said Oregon farmers have produced “copious amounts of cannabis” for generations and that the illegal export of

pot has been taking place “for decades.”

“Oregon is not creating a new industry, it is converting an illegal cannabis production economy, and a loosely-regulated medical program, into a well-regulated legal market,” Marks wrote in a Jan. 31 letter to stakeholders.

Marks, the director of the Oregon Liquor Control Commission, said the state is “at a crossroads where our state’s history with marijuana and the future of cannabis commercialization meet.”

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