



Photos by Edward Stratton/The Astorian

Portland Timbers fans gathered Sunday at Camp 18 Restaurant in Elsie to bless a section of log, a 2-inch round of which will be cut off by mascot Timber Joey for each goal scored by the soccer team at Providence Park.

BLESSING THE TREE

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

ELSIE — The log has been blessed. Now home goals can (hopefully) commence.

Fans of the Portland Timbers soccer team gathered en masse on Sunday outside Camp 18 Restaurant on Highway 26 to bless a section of Douglas fir, a 2-inch round of which team mascot Timber Joey will roll off each time the team scores a goal.

Jim Serrill — former mascot Timber Jim — had been exciting fans at Providence Park with his chainsaw since the 1970s, until his retirement in 2008. His replacement Joey Webber — known as Timber Joey — took over and felt the tradition needed to continue.

More than a decade ago, Serrill, Webber and a group of fans traveled to Timber Junction, including a side trip to Camp 18 for breakfast, to acquire the first log of the season.

“We actually loaded up the trailer by hand with the first Timbers log in 2009, and helped a guy out who was suffering from diabetes, got his wood split for him,” Webber told the crowd Sunday at Camp 18.

The ceremony has grown, with Timbers fans packing a banquet room at Camp 18. Instead of Timber Joey finding, scaling and delimiting a tree, Hampton Lumber finds a log between 18 and 24 inches thick needing removal for safety or disease concerns. The log, often from the forests of Clatsop County, this year came from near Grand Ronde.

After gorging on breakfast and presenting a check for more than \$4,200 to

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From left, brothers Gabriel and Levi Xochihua grab 2-year-old Douglas fir seedlings for planting next to the loggers memorial at Camp 18.



The Portland Timbers' tree-blessing ceremony Sunday was overseen by former mascot Jim Serrill, left, known as Timber Jim, and the current mascot Joey Webber, known as Timber Joey.

Thiel's Music store closes

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
The Astorian

Thiel's Music Center, a staple in downtown Astoria since 1974, has closed its Commercial Street store but hopes to reopen at a different location this summer.

A sign on the window states that the store is moving to a sister shop in Longview, Washington. But employee Rick Weiler, who helps manage the Longview store, said owner Rick Holt “really likes Astoria and he wants another store back up and running.”

Holt has already filled out an application for a new location in Astoria, according to Weiler. Holt was not available for comment.

Holt, who bought the business from the Thiel family in 2000, decided to close the Commercial Street store following the sale of the Osburn-O'Brien Building to developer Joe Barnes earlier this year.

The bottom floor of the Osburn-O'Brien Building, located on 14th Street between Commercial and Duane streets,

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Lawmakers eye windfall

State revenue growth creates more options

By MARK MILLER
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — Oregon has come into an unexpected windfall, and now it's up to lawmakers to figure out what to do with it.

Personal and corporate income tax collections during the 2019 tax filing season were dramatically higher than state economists expected. While much of that money will go back to taxpayers next year in the form of Oregon's unique “kicker” rebate, the new forecast gives legislative budget-writers about three-quarters of a billion dollars more to work with as they decide how the state will spend its money over the next two years.

They aren't getting too excited, though. “It may seem strange, but the revenue forecast does not change the method in which we're budgeting,” said state Rep. Dan Rayfield, D-Corvallis, who co-chairs the budget-writing committee. “We are still looking at reduction options. We are still being cautious and prudent about how we spend the resources that the state has.”

Decisions on agency spending touch

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Latino adviser brings business expertise from U.S., Mexico

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

SEASIDE — Hermenegildo Ochoa, a Latino business advisor with Clatsop Community College, remembers managing more than 30 branches of the Bank of Mexico. But he also remembers the cartels, violence, bribes and death threats faced by businesspeople large and small, including himself.

Ochoa has since taken to a lower-key role on the North Coast helping the Latino business community follow the rules and succeed in a more law-abiding environment.

Ochoa, 71, was a certified pub-

lic accountant in Mexico who spent most his career in finance, human resources and insurance. He also spent 10 years as a business teacher at the University of Mexico.

He moved to the North Coast in 2010 from El Paso, Texas. There, he'd regularly commute between Texas and Juarez, a city in the Chihuahua state of Mexico with a reputation for cartels and violence.

“At that time, I was an insurance agent,” he said. “The criminal people, if you have a small business or big business — it doesn't matter — they come to talk with you. They send a message to give money. And if you didn't give money to them, then in some cases they kill you.”

Ochoa decided that life was no longer for him. He had family in



the Pacific Northwest and relocated to the North Coast in 2010. He ran a business trucking supplies to Hispanic businesses in Clatsop County and the Long Beach Peninsula in Washington.

Ochoa took English courses at the college, where instructor Eileen Purcell found out about his experience as an accountant, banker and human resources manager. The college had issues holding onto Latino business clients who could not speak English, Ochoa said. His skillsets, combined with his native



Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian
Hermenegildo Ochoa is an adviser at Clatsop Community College for Latino business owners.

Latino business community.

Ochoa advises about 30 clients — mostly restaurants, landscapers, construction contractors, maintenance providers and other service-oriented businesses — across Clatsop and Tillamook counties, along with two from Washington. He takes business owners through the steps of starting a business in Oregon and following labor and other laws, while showing them how to incorporate technology and streamline their operations.

“The most important thing is to create a culture,” he said. “That's a big problem. In Mexico, if you want to have a business, you can open the door of your home, put out a table, and you can start immediately. But here in the United States, we have laws. We need to respect the laws.”

tongue, made him a perfect candidate to reach out to the region's

