



The Astorian

New businesses abound downtown



Seth Howard, center, recently opened Blaylock's Whiskey Bar in Astoria with business partner Michael Angiletta. The bar offers more than 100 types of whiskey.

Photos by Edward Stratton/The Astorian

Lawmakers direct state money to Astoria

Astoria Warehousing, county jail, Liberty get help

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

State lawmakers have directed \$1 million in lottery money for the cleanup and redevelopment of Astoria Warehousing, a sprawling former canned seafood packing and labeling complex on Marine Drive under contract to be sold.

The money was included in state House Bill 5050 — a so-called “Christmas tree bill” for different projects — along with \$2 million to help turn a former youth prison in Warrenton into the new Clatsop County Jail and \$1 million for stage and other improvements at the Liberty Theatre.

Peter Tadei, a listing agent for Astoria Warehousing, confirmed the sales contract but declined to name the potential buyer. The Uniontown property, listed at \$8.8 million, includes more than 5 acres of land, 7 acres over the Columbia River

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Legislature adjourns after marathon weekend.

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Educators, health officials see rise in youth vaping

A call for more education

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

Laurel Smalley, the principal of Knappa High School, said the number of vaping devices her staff confiscated from students over the past school year outstripped anything she's ever seen with cigarettes and alcohol.

She and other educators, along with Clatsop County health officials, are calling for a more robust educational campaign and policy changes around tobacco retailers as they see a local spike in youth vaping that mirrors national trends.

Vaping refers to the inhalation of vapors through an electronic cigarette or similar battery-powered device that mimics some aspects of smoking. E-cigarettes attach to cartridges filled with liquid commonly containing nicotine or THC, the psychoactive component of marijuana, and are often flavored.

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Investment in the urban core

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

Downtown Astoria has added more than 20 new businesses in the first half of the year, part of a longer-term surge of investment in the urban core.

Sarah Lu Heath, the executive director of the Astoria Downtown Historic District Association, has been touring new businesses with the group's board members, welcoming them with flowers.

When consternation rose last year over more than 20 vacant storefronts downtown, Heath cautioned that turnover is regular.

“Compared to this time last year, last fall, we're doing great,” Heath said after a tour.

The downtown association submits quarterly reports to the state Main Street Revitalization program on business openings and investments. Since 2013, Astoria added 72 new businesses, compared to 32 closures, growing downtown employment by 175. More than \$5.6 million in private and \$1.7 million in public financing has gone into more than 30 building rehabs.

Downtown now has about 13 storefront vacancies, Heath said. The vacancies include several ongoing

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William Hicks, who purchased and redeveloped the former Abeco Office Systems store on Commercial Street into a minimall, recently removed the tin facade and replaced it with a more colorful covering.



Rachel Atkinson, left, and Zack McFarlane prepare fudge at Schwietert's Cones & Candy's new location in Astoria.

Kicking butts off the curb

A Champion for Cannon Beach

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
The Astorian

CANNON BEACH — A South County woman's campaign to clean up a very specific type of litter comes with a memorable tagline: “Cannon Beach: Too Beautiful for Butts.”

Lolly Champion is not proposing a war on anatomy. She is trying to get rid of cigarette butts.



The discarded butts, with their plastic filters and often toxic ingredients, affect not just the appearance of Cannon Beach, but could also have a big impact on the wildlife and ecosystems residents and visitors prize, she said.

In June, Champion received permission from the City Council to attach disposal containers specifically for cigarette butts to existing city trash receptacles.

Champion found the contain-

ers herself, negotiated a mass order price with the company that sells them, designed informational posters, raised money in the community to pay for the containers and is working with a recycling company to recycle what she collects.

You know, something to do when there's nothing good on TV, joked Champion, who was involved in organizing Portland's first Race for the Cure event for breast cancer awareness in the 1990s.

As a private citizen, Champion figured she could move more quickly than city government or local boards to address the issue. She also plans to send some of the

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Katie Frankowicz/The Astorian

Lolly Champion unpacks one of 24 cigarette butt disposal containers that will be attached to city trash receptacles around Cannon Beach in an effort to address litter.

