

the Astorian



AT ISSUE/TIMBER

FOR TIMBER, A STEADY DECLINE IN JOBS

Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

A worker at Hampton Lumber in Warrenton uses a chainsaw to cut a large log into smaller chunks.

Downward trend sparked political backlash

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

Even amid the economic recovery from the Great Recession, Clatsop County’s timber industry has declined. Jobs in forestry and logging are off by nearly 40% from 2008 — 280 to 169 in 2018 — while wood and paper manufacturing fell by more than a quarter, or 1,294 to 948.

The loss of traditional, higher-paying timber jobs has sparked a political backlash, from a \$1 billion lawsuit by rural counties claiming Oregon is not maximizing timber harvests, to the #TimberUnity movement lobbying against climate-friendly policies in Salem they fear will further hobble the industry. A closer look at the decline of timber-related employment shows an interplay of factors. The demand for wood

products was kneecapped by the recession. The industry is growing more consolidated and automated. There is increased global competition and worries about government regulation. The Oregon Forest Resources Institute estimates that each 1 million board feet of timber harvested translates to 11 jobs in logging, millwork, pulp mills and other areas of the forestry pipeline. See *Timber*, Page A8

AT ISSUE/TIMBER
Debate over cap and trade has led many people in Clatsop County to choose sides between the timber industry and the environment. The Astorian took a closer look at employment data and found a steady decline in timber jobs since the Great Recession. Let us know what you think in a letter to the editor: bit.ly/2kuT0PZ

Hampton Lumber invests to make the most of logs

A \$25 million boost over five years

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

WARRENTON — Each Douglas fir and western hemlock entering Hampton Lumber’s mill runs

MORE ONLINE
Watch video: Take a look inside Hampton Lumber bit.ly/2N8bL7u
through several scanners as it’s broken down from a tree trunk into

boards. As much of the log as possible is utilized for lumber, with wood chips sent to Georgia-Pacific’s Wauna Mill for papermaking and sawdust used to power the boilers of the mill’s dry kilns. After buying the mill from Weyerhaeuser Co. during the See *Hampton Lumber*, Page A8



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Watching from high above, two Hampton Lumber mill workers oversee lumber production. Workers are also able to monitor other parts of the mill from a TV screen with live feeds from other sections.

Documentary highlights child care dilemma

Screening held at the college

By NICOLE BALES
The Astorian

Community leaders and educators convened Wednesday night at Clatsop Community College for a panel discussion to address the lack of child care and preschool options in Clatsop County. The discussion followed a screening of the documentary, “No Small Matter,” which investigates the importance of early childhood education. The Northwest Early Learning Hub recently formed a task force to look at more child care and preschool options. “As a new parent — I have a 2-year-old — having a lot of hopes in thinking you can provide everything you can for your child and

then unable to do that. It is hard,” said Maritza Romero, the executive director of the Lower Columbia Hispanic Council. “And parents are doing what they can, as well. And I’m amazed because I have a job that is flexible and I can work my 40 hours and I can be with my child and provide that education. But I know the parents that I work with don’t have that flexibility ... I want to see more commitment from our community because we’re talking about children.” Romero said she hopes the state’s investment in early childhood education through the Student Success Act will help the county create more child care slots. Dan Gaffney, a retired Seaside principal, said although the Student Success Act is the biggest investment the state has made in early childhood education, it is not

enough. He said the county cannot continue to wait on state funding to solve the problem. “What I envision, what I want, what I see is the business community taking a lead in a lot of these political choices of where we’re going to put our efforts and energies,” said Brian Owen, the chief executive officer of the Seaside Chamber of Commerce. He said businesses often pour money into sports and the arts because it’s a way to visibly promote their business. But he said it’s time the business community recognizes the importance of investing in early childhood education. Adrienne Hunter, the owner of Simply Kids Preschool, a Preschool Promise funded program, said along with funding more options, local educators need more training. She said Preschool Promise has strict parameters and many local

educators don’t meet the qualifications. She said the task force is looking at ways to get local educators where they need to be to qualify. When asked what the role of county government is in growing early education, Commissioner Lianne Thompson began by saying the county hasn’t done enough. “But we’ve got a new county manager and I think the level of functionality in actually making a difference for the lives of people all over Clatsop County is going to head up exponentially. Because I think every commissioner has wanted to make a difference in this area, but we didn’t have all the right players on the team,” she said. “I think we’re going to own this a lot more and use what you’re doing, what we’re doing together, to raise up the visibility of this issue. It’s essential to solve.”

FALL BACK

Daylight Saving Time ends on **Sunday at 2 a.m.** when clocks are turned backward one hour to **1 a.m.** Sunrise and sunset will be earlier, which means more light in the morning.

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