

Christmas tree farmers are facing tough times

By KALE WILLIAMS
The Oregonian

A seedling shortage a decade ago has left some Oregon Christmas tree farmers with no trees to sell this year, and back-to-back hot summers in recent years have left others looking for ways to adapt to a changing climate.

Cher Tollefson, co-owner of Historic Kirchem Tree Farm outside of Oregon City, said her fields will be closed this season for the first time in 27 years.

"We just don't have the trees," she said. "We have 2,000 that will be ready next year, but they are not up to size. They are not up to our standards."

Christmas trees take between seven and 11 years to mature and, just about a decade ago, seedling suppliers grew too few small trees to go around, according to Chal Landgren, a Christmas tree specialist at Oregon State University.

"It became harder to get them," he said. "Nurseries didn't want to grow on speculation."

Now, 10 years later, that short supply of seedlings has left fields full of trees that are too short to sell, according to Tollefson.

Then in 2017 and 2018, the Pacific Northwest sweated through two hot and dry summers in a row. Those conditions can be particularly hard on young trees, Landgren said. Christmas trees aren't irrigated, they are "watered by God," as Tollefson said, and young



Christmas tree farmers in Oregon are facing a tough season in 2019 after a seedling shortage a decade ago left some farms with no trees to sell.

trees are especially susceptible to heat stress.

She said the 110-acre farm lost a "high percentage" of its seedlings. Once trees are established, they stand a better chance of withstanding high temperatures.

The hot summers of late had no effect on this year's crop, but they have left Christmas tree farmers looking for ways to cope with longer and warmer dry seasons.

With climate change expected to increase the frequency of hot and dry summers, some farmers have begun looking for ways to adapt. Growers are looking at new mulching strategies that retain more moisture, erecting shade structures and planting different species of trees that are more heat tolerant.

Others are diversifying their crops, opting to grow products with shorter rotations, like grass seed or hazelnuts. Tollefson set aside a few acres this year

and hosted a pumpkin patch around Halloween, complete with games for kids, food carts and beer for adults. That supplemental business won't come close to making up for the lost tree business, however.

"It's not a fun time to be in the business," she said. "In an average year we'll take in \$30,000 to \$50,000. This year is a big zero."

Landgren said that, despite some farms facing trouble this year, others were forced to close for last season for similar reasons and should have a decent crop. He said Oregon typically produces about 4.2 million Christmas trees annually and looks to be on track to get close to that number this year.

With some growers sidelined, Landgren cautioned that others could be tempted to raise prices.

"In general prices may go up," he said. "But if you talk to growers, we're about right in terms of supply."

Timber: Lawsuit focused on three words — 'greatest permanent value'

Continued from Page A1

In a statement, the Oregon Department of Forestry said it "believes that balanced and science-based public forest management produces the best long-term outcomes for all Oregonians, including the counties and taxing districts that receive revenue from state forests."

"We are disappointed that the jury did not agree ... We will be reviewing options and next steps with attorneys from the Oregon Department of Justice."

During the four-week trial, attorneys for the state had argued that the counties wanted to allow clearcutting of forests and did not care about endangered species.

The lawsuit was focused on three words — "greatest permanent value" — and what that meant when the phrase was written into law 80 years ago.

Lawyers for the counties say it meant maximizing revenue from logging. Attorneys for the state argue that it includes other factors such as recreation and habitat.

The law stemmed from a time decades ago when private lumber companies descended on Oregon and clearcut forests. Instead of paying taxes, the companies left counties to deal with the land in a practice known as cut and run.

The counties didn't have the resources to restore the land. So, during his 1939 inaugural address, Gov. Charles Sprague urged the Legislature to pass a bill allowing the state to designate the land as state forests, grow back the trees and manage the land "to secure the greatest permanent value" and share revenue with the counties.

The law enabled the state to adopt about 1,000 square miles — roughly the size of Rhode Island — from 15 counties that receive 64% of the logging revenues. Clatsop County was the only county that declined to join the lawsuit.

The counties claim the state breached the contact in 1998 when it adopted a rule defining greatest permanent value to mean healthy, pro-

ductive and sustainable forest ecosystems that provide a social, economic and environmental benefits to the people of Oregon.

Attorneys for the counties made it clear they want the trees treated as a commodity to be exploited.

"Timber is like a crop of wheat, except for a longer growing season, isn't that right?" John DiLorenzo, a Portland attorney hired by the plaintiffs, asked one witness at the trial.

He also noted that smaller timber harvests mean fewer jobs in logging, milling, transportation and other services.

Scott Kaplan, an attorney for the state, declared that the counties' vision of greatest permanent value is "turning Oregon into a tree farm from the Cascades to the Pacific."

Nicole Bales of *The Astorian* and *The Oregonian* contributed to this report.

Forum: 'Greatest stories reveal something'

Continued from Page A1

was where the "alcoholics and screw ups" went.

"I loved it because it gave me a thick skin and it taught me how to be a reporter," he said.

By 1993, Hallman had won a national award.

"I say what I bring through story is not intellect. What I bring is heart," he said.

Practicing his craft

Hallman doesn't like writing. "Writing is awful," he said, but he enjoys interviewing people.

"The greatest stories reveal something," Hallman said. "I learn about somebody's life and I learn more about them than their spouse might, (more) than even their therapist might."

Hallman is a listener and strives to write with voice, feeling and heart. He tries to get out of the

way in his stories and let dialogue from his reporting do the work.

Hallman gave an example of a story about the Sanford & Sun Triathlon that started out with a standard newspaper lead. It could have shined, however, if the writer used a detail included at the end of the story about a father who pulls his 13-year-old daughter who has cerebral palsy with him in his races, he said.

When he wrote the story about prom dresses, he realized it would be a challenge since there were over 3,000 girls there.

So, he chose to focus on the universal human emotions a prom dress brings.

"It's just a dress. Only a few yards of fabric on a hanger. Take the finest, most expensive silk ever spun and there's still no life and certainly no magic. What a dress always needs is a girl. A girl and a dress take a father's breath away. ... A girl and her dress stand

before her mother and you realize despite all the arguments over messy rooms and dirty dishes, they share a bond that doesn't need to be expressed with words ... A girl and a dress stands before a mirror and sees her past and her future."

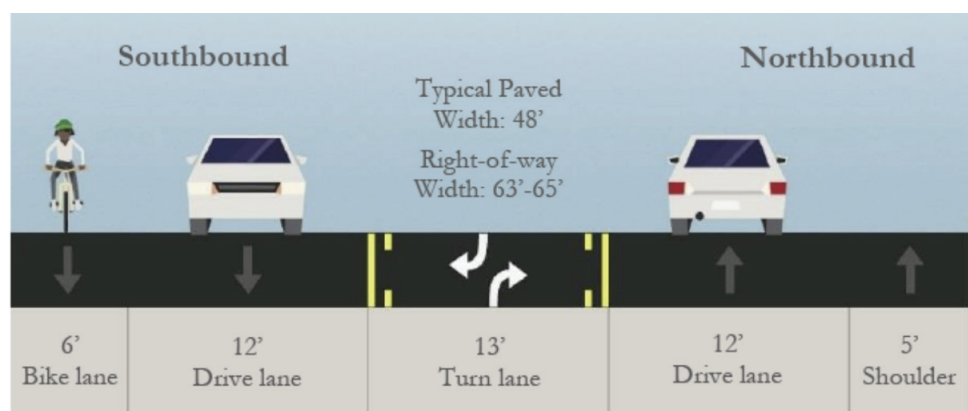
"My stories are simple in the words, complex in the thought and complex in the structure," Hallman said.

Because he gains the trust of his subjects, he lets them look over stories that aren't news before they run.

"When you write a book you are asking someone to give you their heart that you can sell," he said.

He recognizes the commercial nature of reporting on people's lives. He spoke about a time when he observed a family who let a baby die that had a birth defect.

The mother told Hallman, "In my child's 27-day life, he will live on forever because of the story you wrote."



U.S. Highway 101 could be reconfigured in Gearhart.

Highway: 'We're still really in the beginning'

Continued from Page A1

Seventy-five potential projects are listed in the plan, which outlines policies and projects considered important to protecting and enhancing the quality of life in Gearhart.

For Highway 101, the plan presents an option for the new configuration through most of Gearhart, with additional lanes at intersections as needed.

Traffic safety and emergency evacuation is a key concern to city lead-

ers, given their role in moving people during emergencies, such as a tsunami.

"We're still having internal conversations on whether this could be done with striping, if it needs to be a part of

a paving project, or if it needs to be part of another project," Shonkwiler said. "We're still really in the beginning of this. We know the direction right now. We're just trying to find out the details."

Consult a PROFESSIONAL



LEOFINZI

Astoria's Best

Microsoft REGISTERED Refurbisher

FAST, FRIENDLY & AFFORDABLE!

WINDOWS 7 SUPPORT ENDS JAN. 2020. FULL UPGRADE ONLY \$199

Mon-Fri 10-6, Sat 11-4
77 11th Street, Suite H
Astoria, OR • 503-325-2300

[Astoria's Best.com](http://Astoria'sBest.com)

Q: If your computer seems "stuck" try this.

A: Hold down the "CTRL" and "ALT" keys, tap the "Delete" key & release all keys. Click "Task Manager" then "File" (top left), then, "Run new task." In the new window, type "explorer.exe"

If the above does not work, or if Task Manager doesn't start, press the power button on your computer to shut your computer down so you can try starting it again.

Still not working? Press and hold the power button for 30 seconds to power down, then try restarting again.

If it still doesn't work, you may need to bring it in for repairs.



JEFFREY M. LEINASSAR
DMD, FAGD



503/325-0310
1414 MARINE DRIVE,
ASTORIA

www.smileastoria.com

Q: How does sensitive toothpaste work?

A: Imagine one of your teeth — it has two main sections: the crown above the gum line and the root below.

People with sensitive teeth experience pain when their teeth are exposed to something hot, cold or when pressure is applied.

The layer of enamel may be thinner and the gum line may have receded, exposing more dentin. Therefore, the recession makes teeth more sensitive.

Sensitive toothpaste works by blocking the tubules in the dentine with a chemical called strontium chloride. Repeated use builds up a strong barrier by plugging the tubules more and more, leading to less-sensitive teeth.



Jeremy Feldman
Circulation Manager

the Astorian

800-781-3214

www.dailyastorian.com

949 Exchange St., Astoria, OR

Q: I'm going out of town and need to stop my newspaper. What are my options?

A: We have different options for you if you are heading out of town. We can switch you to a Web subscription while you are away and you can read the paper online. You can have your delivery stopped and you can donate your missed papers to local schools. Whichever option fits your needs, just call our circulation department at 800-781-3214 and we will take care of it for you; or go online and put in your vacation at www.dailyastorian.com under "Subscriber Services."

CODA
health - recovery - community

New Clinic Coming to Seaside Soon!



Bringing 50 years of service this state of the art outpatient clinic provides medication-assisted treatment for adults with opiate use disorders. We are building a high energy team of professionals dedicated to treating the individual, wiping away stigma and helping to rebuild the health and life of the people they serve. Competitive wages and exceptionally strong benefits package for employees working at least 20 hours per week. Contact us today and you can make a difference in one of the following positions:

Site Medical Director
MD or DO with experience managing medication assisted treatments for substance use disorders and board certification by a member board of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS)

Medical Operations Manager
RN with strong leadership experience and supervision skills

Senior Clinical Manager
Masters Degree from nationally accredited school in human services. Requires licensure and/or CADC, or in process of obtaining either.

Nurse Practitioner
Experience treating patients with substance use disorders. Data Waivered.

We are very excited to bring these excellent opportunities to members of the community.

Contract Recruiter Patrice Cavins PatriceCavins@codainc.org

In observance of Thanksgiving

the Astorian

will be closed
Thanksgiving Day
November 28th

The Thanksgiving edition will be delivered
Wednesday,
November 27th