

IN BRIEF

Sea otter washes up in Ocean Park

A severely ill sea otter washed up Monday on an Ocean Park beach.

Officials say it is rare for sea otters to come to land unless they experience illness or rough waves.

The sea otter will be euthanized and tested to determine the cause of illness.

Three dead sea otters washed up on beaches along the Washington Peninsula in 2015 which may be a result of warming ocean temperatures.

Officials advise not to approach a sea otter if it is spotted on land, but gather detail and call 1-87-SEAOTTER (877-326-8837) to report the sighting.



Warrenton police officer Robert Wirt was presented with the ‘Life Saving Award’ at the Oregon Peace Officers Association annual awards banquet.

Warrenton police officer honored

Warrenton police officer Robert Wirt was honored on Nov. 15 for saving a man’s life earlier this year.

In January, Wirt administered naloxone for a man who stopped breathing from an apparent overdose at the Mini Mart in Warrenton.

For his action, Wirt received the “Life Saving Award” at the Oregon Peace Officers Association annual awards banquet.

Project asking for photos of king tides

This week the world will experience king tides, which are the highest tides of the year.

The Oregon King Tides Project, part of the international project, is asking people to send in their photos of the tides to help scientists determine where the water might be when the oceans rise. They hope to use the photos to determine which communities will be affected by rising sea levels.

Project leaders are seeking pictures from all along the coast by familiar landmarks to help show the height of the waves.

They also want photos of beaches to show how far the tide has come in or out.

They encourage people to also take photos a week after to show the difference between the tides.

Photos can be uploaded on the Oregon King Tides website or posted to social media with the hashtags #orkingtides and #kingtides.

Driving conditions may be unsafe due to snow

Officials at the Portland National Weather Service say travel conditions may be dangerous in parts of the state during the holiday week.

A powerful storm coming off the coast may bring snow, especially in higher elevation.

The Portland metro area is expected to see rain mixed with snow.

Lower elevation areas in the valley may see an inch of snow. The Oregon Cascade Mountain Range from Mount Hood down to the Santiam Pass may get 10 to 18 inches of snow.

The Willamette Pass could get one to two feet of snow accompanied by wind gusts of 45 to 50 miles per hour.

—The Astorian

DEATH

Nov. 23, 2019

ROGERS, James LeRoy, 77, of Saint Helens, died in Seaside. Caldwell’s Funeral & Cremation Arrangement Center of Seaside is in charge of the arrangements.



Photos by Edward Stratton/The Astorian

An oncology team at the Knight Cancer Collaborative uses highly concentrated beams of radiation in the the Versa HD linear particle accelerator to destroy the cellular structure of cancerous growths in patients.

Hospital debuts more accurate, powerful radiation therapy

New procedure for rural hospitals

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

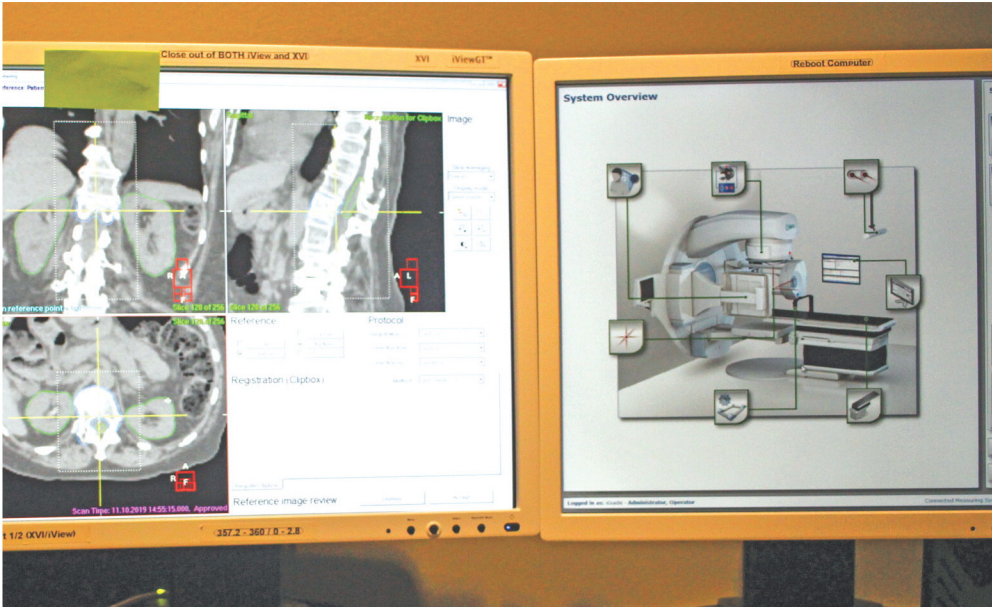
A patient came in last month to the Knight Cancer Collaborative, a partnership between Columbia Memorial Hospital and Oregon Health & Science University, with a tumor growing around their spinal cord and in between the kidneys.

Traditional surgery was too risky. Instead, an oncology team created a 3D image of the patient and delivered highly powerful radiation beams within 2 millimeters of accuracy over three days to destroy the tumor’s cellular structure while avoiding damage to the spine and kidneys.

It was the cancer center’s first use of stereotactic body radiation therapy, a newer procedure for rural hospitals.

The therapy uses 3D imaging to more accurately target beams of radiation from the cancer center’s linear particle accelerator. It is commonly used to treat cancers of the liver, lung, abdomen, lymph nodes and spine.

“We can treat a much



A bank of computers outside the radiation therapy chamber allows the oncology team to monitor a patient’s treatment in real time.

smaller area of normal tissue and give a high dose,” said Sahar Rosenbaum, medical director at the cancer center.

The center has performed three stereotactic body radiation therapies since beginning the treatments last month, Rosenbaum said. The first patient was treated for a spinal tumor, the second for a recurrent lung cancer and the third for their pelvis.

An oncology team including a physician, a medical physicist, a dosi-

metrist and radiation therapists agree on a treatment plan. The dosimetrist targets the most lethal levels of radiation over the tumor and toward areas it is clinically proven to likely spread.

Traditional radiation treatment can take anywhere from five to eight weeks. Dr. Pehr Hartvigson, a radiation oncologist at the center, said the first stereotactic body radiation therapy last month took three days.

“We basically bend the radiation around the contours of the spinal area,” he

said. “We were able to carve out where the spinal cord is and also miss both kidneys.”

Subsequent imaging over the patient’s three treatments showed whether the radiation beams were stopping the growth of the tumor while avoiding damage to the spine and kidneys, Hartvigson said.

“As long as things are stable or starting to shrink, that’s how we know we’ve been successful,” he said. “Ultimately, as long as we’ve been able to prevent her from having a spinal cord compression, we’re going to call that a success.”

The center recently added technology making it one of the few clinics in Oregon where prostate cancers can safely be treated with the high doses involved in stereotactic body radiation therapy, Hartvigson said, and hopes to soon add technology for stereotactic radiosurgery, a type of radiation therapy on the brain.

“It’s almost like using radiation as a scalpel,” Rosenbaum said.

Stereotactic therapy is more labor intensive and requires physicians to be on site, Rosenbaum said, but the demand for local radiation and chemotherapy has been clear.

“When we started this, we were assuming we were going to treat five patients a day,” she said. “And we have been up to 22 patients a day at this clinic. It’s just exceeded everybody’s expectations.”

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