

IN BRIEF

Kelso man dies after getting stuck in the snow near Nicolai Mainline

A Kelso, Washington, man died of hypothermia after getting stuck in the snow while riding his side-by-side in the Nicolai Mainline area east of Astoria.

Wayne Bittner called the Clatsop County Sheriff's Office on Friday night to report that he was stuck in the snow, authorities said. Due to poor cellphone coverage, communication was brief and deputies were unable to get his name, location or vehicle description. Deputies searched the area, but were unable to locate Bittner.

After continuing to search Saturday morning, deputies found Bittner's side-by-side off an off-road vehicle riding trail on Nicolai Mainline. Shortly after, they located Bittner's body.

Deputies said snow in the area was up to 18 inches deep, which made the driving and searching conditions treacherous.

"This is a very sad and unfortunate outcome," the sheriff's office said in a statement. "The sheriff's office would like to remind anyone going to play in the snow to make sure they are dressed for the weather and have emergency supplies with them.

"Also let a family member or loved one know where you will be going and if possible take someone with you."

Man briefly escapes from prison work crew in Salem

A man who drove his truck into the Columbia River in Astoria in 2018 walked away from a prison work crew in Salem on Friday afternoon but was captured within a few hours.

The crew was working near Pringle Park in Salem when staff noticed Timofey Erofeeff was missing around 12:15 p.m.

Authorities said he was arrested at about 2:30 p.m. in Salem.

Erofeeff, 29, was taken into custody in 2018 on two counts of burglary in the first degree out of Clackamas County, one count of attempted burglary in the first degree and one count of eluding police out of Clatsop County.

His earliest release date from the Mill Creek Correctional Facility in Salem is January 2, 2021.

Peterson sworn in as judge

Beau Peterson was sworn in Friday afternoon as a Clatsop County Circuit Court judge.

Gov. Kate Brown appointed Peterson, a senior deputy district attorney, in December to replace Paula Brownhill, who retired after 25 years on the bench.

— *The Astorian*

DEATH

Jan. 17, 2020

HORTON, Lynn Alice, 79, of Astoria, died in Portland. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

MEMORIAL

Saturday, Jan. 25

McCARTHY, William H. "Bill" — Funeral Mass at 1 p.m., Our Lady of Victory Catholic Church, 120 Ocean Way in Seaside.

ON THE RECORD

DUII

• William Strozier, 41, of Seaside, was arrested Saturday on Second Avenue and N. Roosevelt Drive in Seaside for driving under the influence of

intoxicants and driving without a license.

• Christopher Peterson, 34, of St. Helens, was arrested Sunday on S. Roosevelt Drive and Avenue A in Seaside for DUII.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

TUESDAY

Union Health District of Clatsop County Board, 8 a.m., Providence Seaside Hospital, Education Center, Room B, 725 S. Wahanna Road, Seaside.

Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District Board of Directors, 5:15 p.m., Bob Chisholm Community Center, 1225 Avenue A, Seaside.

Astoria City Council, 7 p.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

Shoreline Sanitary District Board, 7 p.m., Gearhart Hertig Station, 33496 West Lake Lane, Warrenton.

Seaside School District Board of Directors, 7 p.m., 1801 S. Franklin.

Seaside Planning Commission, 7 p.m., work session, 989 Broadway.

WEDNESDAY

Astoria Parks Board, 6:45 a.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

Clatsop County Board of Commissioners, 6 p.m., Judge Guy Boyington Building, 857 Commercial, Astoria.

THURSDAY

Sunset Empire Transportation District Board, 9 a.m., Astoria Transit Center Conference Room, 900 Marine Drive.

Columbia River Estuary Study Taskforce Council, noon, 818 Commercial Street, Suite 203, Astoria.

Astoria City Council, 1 p.m., work session, City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

the Astorian

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MARCH TO WIN



Indivisible North Coast Oregon

Indivisible North Coast Oregon organized the March to Win in Astoria on Saturday afternoon. The event was part of women's marches across the country.

Democrats make climate bill a priority

Senate Republicans could walk out

By ANDREW SELSKY
Associated Press

SALEM — Gov. Kate Brown and the state House speaker, both Democrats, said Friday that passing legislation aimed at stemming global warming is their priority when lawmakers return to the Capitol next month.

But Rep. Christine Drazen, the leader of the minority Republicans in the House, said she opposes the so-called cap-and-trade bill that was unveiled last week. The 35-day session of the 2020 Legislature begins on Feb. 3.

"The only thing that cap and trade guarantees is that prices for individual Oregonians will go up, their daily cost of living is going to go up under this proposal," Drazen said.

Their comments at an Associated Press forum in the Capitol on Friday foreshadowed a fight over the same issue that in the 2019 legislative session triggered a walkout by Republican senators.

The new bill largely authored by Senate Democrats includes changes designed to assuage critics in the manufacturing and utility sectors, and create fewer impacts for rural Oregon, but maintains a commitment to reduce greenhouse gases by certain percentages below 1990 levels.

The new bill splits the state into three geographic zones that would be phased in separately for rules that would likely increase gas and diesel prices, with Portland being affected first, then other large urban areas, and finally rural regions. That approach is designed to address concerns that last year's failed measure would have disproportionately affected rural communities where distances between homes and towns are great, with residents having little option but to drive.

But Drazen said it was an insufficient fix.

"The people who cannot



Andrew Selsky/AP Photo

Gov. Kate Brown speaks to journalists on Friday in Salem.

'THE ONLY THING THAT CAP AND TRADE GUARANTEES IS THAT PRICES FOR INDIVIDUAL OREGONIANS WILL GO UP, THEIR DAILY COST OF LIVING IS GOING TO GO UP UNDER THIS PROPOSAL.'

Rep. Christine Drazen | leader of the minority Republicans in the House

afford it in Portland are no different than the people who could not have afforded it in rural Oregon," she said.

Drazen, who will be leading Republicans in the House for the first time this session, said she did not want to see a repeat of the GOP boycott last year that deprived Democrats of achieving a quorum in the Senate, but added: "I think all options have to be on the table."

Still, Brown said she was "cautiously optimistic" something could pass despite Republicans saying there could be another walkout by the GOP to thwart the effort.

"From the impact on our seafood, to our forests, to the snow in our mountains, it's critically important that we move forward on a climate change bill," Brown said, adding that the bill must not exacerbate economic imbalances in rural and minority communities.

Lawmakers should also

address fighting wildfires, which have grown more intense with climate change and federal mismanagement, Brown said.

"The way we have been fighting fire no longer suits the fires we've been seeing."

She said she will ask the Legislature to make \$150 million to \$200 million in investments now that will reduce impact of devastating wildfires, for example by forest thinning and controlled burning.

"We have an opportunity to get boots on the ground and put Oregonians in rural Oregon to work," she said.

Sen. Ginny Burdick, the Senate majority leader, was the only senate leader to appear before the reporters, with Senate President Peter Courtney out with a hip injury and Sen. Herman Baertschiger, Jr., the Senate minority leader, saying through a spokeswoman that he canceled so he could drive

to his home district amid winter storms.

Burdick, who revealed that she is sponsoring a gun control bill, said it would be counterproductive for Republicans to stage a walkout again this year.

"The Republicans say they don't like one party rule," she said. "Well, if they don't show up, you really do have one party, and that's not healthy."

Burdick said her bill would allow local governments to have completely gun free zones if they choose.

"In many school districts that you talk to, people who have experience with parents coming to their parent teacher conferences, packing heat, they don't like that. And they would like their schools to be gun free. The bill would it would simply give local governments the option," Burdick said.

Brown said Friday that her party, which controls the Legislature, had addressed the GOP's two main concerns about last year's climate legislation: that rural Oregonians would have to pay more for gas and worries about the impact on rural manufacturers.

Like its predecessor, the draft bill would force big greenhouse gas emitters to obtain credits for each ton of gas they emit, and create an overall cap for emissions allowed in the state.

Washington Supreme Court OKs lesser version of carbon cap

By GENE JOHNSON
Associated Press

OLYMPIA, Wash. — The Washington Supreme Court has reinstated a severely limited version of Gov. Jay Inslee's plan to cap carbon pollution in the state, a decision the Democrat described as a "clarion call" that lawmakers must act on climate change.

In a 5-4 ruling Thursday, the court said the Clean Air Rule cannot apply to companies that sell or distribute petroleum or natural gas because they don't make their own emissions — other people burn the fuel they provide. The Department of Ecology only has the authority to regulate "actual emitters," the court said.

While environmental groups said it is a good

step to require refineries, power plants, factories and other big polluters to cut their emissions, cars remain the biggest source of greenhouse gas pollution. About three-quarters of the emissions that would have been covered by the rule came indirectly from petroleum and natural gas importers and sellers.

That means the court's decision left the state with a much-diminished rule.

"This ruling will significantly affect our ability to reduce emissions," Inslee told a news conference in Olympia. "This decision has made it even more abundantly clear that we need to take action in the Legislature. The reason is it has disabled one tool that has been used in our toolbox."

A Thurston County Super-

ior Court judge struck down the rule after it was challenged by industry groups. The four justices in the minority would have reinstated it entirely.

"The issue is not whether man-made climate change is real — it is," Justice Debra Stephens wrote for the majority. "Nor is the issue whether dramatic steps are needed to curb the worst effects of climate change — they are. Instead, this case asks whether the Washington Clean Air Act grants Ecology the broad authority to establish and enforce greenhouse gas emission standards for businesses and utilities that do not directly emit greenhouse gases, but whose products ultimately do."

Ecology has no such authority, Stephens wrote.

After the Legislature failed to adopt a cap-and-trade program, Inslee directed Ecology in 2015 to use authority under the 1967 Clean Air Act to limit carbon emissions from Washington's largest sources. He called climate change a threat to the state and said the new regulations would help Washington meet its requirements to reduce carbon emissions.

Inslee has long touted environmental issues and made climate change the core issue of his fleeting presidential campaign last year. He said his office is reviewing the opinion and that it wasn't clear if he would ask lawmakers to expand Ecology's authority to allow it to regulate "indirect emitters" or what his next step would be.