

the Astorian

149TH YEAR, NO. 124

WEEKEND EDITION // SATURDAY, APRIL 16, 2022

\$1.50



Photos by Lydia Ely/The Astorian

U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley, U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai, U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden and Astoria Mayor Bruce Jones participated in a roundtable discussion on the fishing industry at the Port of Astoria.

Trade ambassador appears at roundtable on fishing

Tai stopped at the Port and toured a fishing boat

By ETHAN MYERS
The Astorian

Katherine Tai, the U.S. trade representative, stopped in Astoria on Wednesday morning to discuss fishing, sustainability and the effects of foreign subsidies on competition.

The ambassador toured commercial fisherman Paul Kujala's boat, Cape Windy, before participating in a roundtable at the Port of Astoria that included U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley, Astoria Mayor Bruce Jones and representatives of the fishing and seafood processing industries.

A significant focus of the roundtable was on foreign government subsidies and international fishing and labor practices — particularly in China — and how they impact competition.

China is one of the world's largest producers of seafood and a major exporter to the U.S. Because of overfishing, many of the fish stocks closest to China are depleted, so fleets venture farther out and into other markets.

China's reported use of forced labor, as well as other illegal and unregulated fishing activities, also drives down the country's seafood costs.

Kujala told the roundtable that about 20% to 30% of his gross income goes toward compliance, observers, monitoring and other practices.

"Oregonians want a fair shot in competing in the global economy and



Paul Kujala, the owner of the commercial fishing vessel Cape Windy, tells U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley and U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai about the boat.

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when it comes to fisheries, Oregonians on the coast from Astoria down to Brookings just aren't getting that fair shot," Wyden said.

Tai's role is to advise President Joe Biden on trade issues, lead negotiations

with foreign governments and oversee disputes and enforcement before global trade policy regulators like the World Trade Organization.

See Roundtable, Page A6

Affordable housing could expand at Owens-Adair

A 50-unit project for seniors and the disabled

By NICOLE BALES
The Astorian

The Northwest Oregon Housing Authority has unveiled a plan to double the size of the Owens-Adair, an affordable housing complex for seniors and the disabled near downtown.

The housing authority, which provides critical housing assistance to low-income residents in Clatsop, Columbia and Tillamook counties, previewed the concept during a City Council work session on Friday morning.

A new four-story, 50-unit apartment project called the Owens-Adair Annex would mirror the building on 15th and Exchange streets. The \$22.6 million annex would likely serve low-income seniors and people with disabilities earning 30% to 50% of the area median income.

The annex, which would be built over the housing authority's parking lot, would include 40 one-bedroom apartments and 10 studio apartments. It would include basement parking with 55 parking spots.

See Housing, Page A2

MORE INSIDE

County briefs city on surplus property for housing • A2

City close to child care decision

A new partner at Sprouts Learning Center

By NICOLE BALES
The Astorian

After reviewing proposals from two Astoria preschool providers, the City Council on Monday expects to choose one to partner with on child care.

The city announced plans to close Sprouts Learning Center in February after reaching a critical staffing shortage and operating at an unsustainable loss. The facility, which serves 21 children, is expected to close by the end of June.

Since announcing the decision to close, Bumble Art Studio and Astoria Head Start have approached the city with proposals for a public-private partnership to continue the service.

The City Council reviewed the proposals during a work session Friday morning and heard from the providers and the public.

See Child care, Page A6

Restaurateur takes on Silver Salmon Grille

Scully intends to keep restaurant the same

By ABBEY McDONALD
The Astorian

Local restaurateur Robert Scully has purchased the Silver Salmon Grille, one of the city's most popular eateries.

Scully said the Commercial Street restaurant's operation and appearance will remain the same and that

executive chef John Sowa will be staying on.

Sowa joined the Silver Salmon in 2020 after his Cannon Beach restaurant, Sweet Basil's Cafe, closed due to the coronavirus pandemic. The menu combined Sowa's Cajun themes with chef and owner Jeff Martin's seafood dishes.

"What they have is incredible. And I have no plans to change what the Silver Salmon Grille and what Jeff and Laurie have built over the years," Scully said.

Jeff and Laurie Martin purchased the restaurant in 2001 and remodeled the space that features an



Lissa Brewer/The Astorian

The Silver Salmon Grille on Commercial Street.

See Grille, Page A6

Commissioners want more info on vacation rentals

A moratorium is set to expire

By ERICK BENGEL
The Astorian

Clatsop County commissioners say they want more information before they vote on where vacation rentals should be allowed in unincorporated areas, raising the possibility that a moratorium could be extended.

On Wednesday, the county Board of Commissioners held first readings of two ordinances that would address vacation rentals. One deals with where the development code should explicitly permit rentals, the other with county code

standards for operating them.

Cities on the North Coast have adopted rules restricting short-term rentals. But the county has not yet called them out as an allowable use in areas other than Arch Cape.

Rentals of 30 or fewer days can help drive tourism and bring in lodging tax dollars. They have also led to strife in residential neighborhoods due to some vacationers' behavior. Coastal communities must weigh the economic benefits of attracting visitors against the harm incurred when people without a stake in the communities show up, make noise, leave trash, park thoughtlessly, act rudely and leave.

See Vacation rentals, Page A6



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