



Lydia Ely/The Astorian

Local agencies often struggle to fill potholes.

Potholes: ‘You go through our downtown and can see potholes everywhere’

Continued from Page A1

“I can tell you that it’s difficult here to repair potholes based on my experience of actually doing it myself,” Mark Buffington, the district manager on the North Coast for the Oregon Department of Transportation, said. “Working in the valley and the Portland area, the difference between fixing a pothole there versus here — it’s definitely tougher on the coast, and it’s weather-related.”

Cities, Clatsop County and the Department of Transportation will look toward the warmer months of summer to tackle road work and fill potholes.

“Most street maintenance is most efficient, most cost-effective when you’ve got prolonged periods of dry weather, where you can address things on a larger scale,” Crater said. “When you have basically three to four months of pretty decent weather, your maintenance schedule is compacted into that.”

Temporary fix

In the colder months, when asphalt plants shut down, local agencies will often patch potholes with a cold mix asphalt, a temporary fix that doesn’t require heating. However, cold mix is less effective and not durable enough for keeping roads intact under heavy traffic.

“Cold mix is not a great tool. Often we’re out in the rain trying to fix potholes and they’re full of water and you get as much water out of the hole as you can and slap the cold mix in,” Buffington said. “After traffic has it for a while, you’ve got a pothole again. It’s a constant battle.”

With cities seeking to tackle street maintenance around the same time, com-

‘I HAVEN’T REALLY NOTICED A CHANGE (WITH THE PROBLEM OF POTHOLES). I WOULD SAY THAT THE CHANGE THAT I’VE SEEN IS THAT THE ODOT ROADS, ESPECIALLY DOWNTOWN, ARE GETTING OLDER’

Collin Stelzig | public works director in Warrenton

petition in hiring contractors for paving work becomes an issue.

Agencies also point to a shortage of funding and resources in dealing with street maintenance.

“Potholes are a symptom of bad asphalt and ODOT doesn’t have enough money to keep bad asphalt out of there and new asphalt in its place all the time. This is why we call it maintenance,” said Buffington, who added that his district is also short on staff.

The funding the city receives from fuel taxes typically does not come close to financing an ideal street maintenance program, Crater said.

Agencies in the region primarily track potholes through a logging system, which grows as they receive complaints or locate them during travel. Potholes are typically prioritized based on hazard level and location.

Some cities are trying phone applications to make the system for reporting potholes quicker and more convenient for drivers.

“I think that’s a process we could work on, but again I would tell anybody, even if you do see those things, give us a call, send us an email, do a Facebook post,” Collin Stelzig, the public works director in Warrenton, said. “We definitely try to get to them as soon as we know

about them.”

While the Department of Transportation’s regional district prioritizes major highways for filling potholes, such as U.S. Highway 101, U.S. Highway 26 and U.S. Highway 30, a number of streets are also state-owned, meaning maintenance and repair is up to Buffington and his crew.

“You go through our downtown and can see potholes everywhere,” Stelzig said, noting that the state just recently went through and filled some of them.

Frustrations among locals and city leaders about the quality of state-owned roads have bubbled up in the past. Earlier this year, the Warrenton City Commission sent a letter to Buffington concerning the pavement conditions on the roads in the city, including S. Main Avenue and state Highway 104.

“The hole out here,” City Commissioner Rick Newton said at a March meeting, gesturing to the intersection near S. Main Avenue, “that hole will break tires.”

“There are multiple holes that will break tires,” Mayor Henry Balensifer added.

Buffington responded by saying that while patching the road was a priority, permanent repairs could not be done at the time in worn areas near curbs and sidewalks due to the extensive costs.

“I haven’t really noticed a change (with the problem of potholes). I would say that the change that I’ve seen is that the ODOT roads, especially downtown, are getting older,” Stelzig said. “They appear to have more potholes than they have in the past.”

With Warrenton eyeing improvements downtown, there have been talks of the city taking ownership of some roads in the city, but it has been a few years since that conversation took place, Stelzig said.

“We tend to have a better line of communication now than we have had in the past, but I would say that they have their concerns and they have their own issues going on,” Stelzig said. “Just because we make a complaint, doesn’t mean that it’s a huge priority to ODOT.”

Basic maintenance

Amid the challenges for local agencies, Crater sees an opportunity for the more basic maintenance to be done more efficiently.

“The surface maintenance items that we handle aren’t necessarily the easiest, but they’re probably the things that have the least risk associated with running into unknown conditions and things like that which could drive up costs,” he said. “That would be something we are starting to look into — maybe some different administrative framework to procure services from locals ... rather than potentially having to go through a more lengthy procurement process if we were going to go down that route. So something a little more immediate.”

“Basically utilizing third party assistance more effectively — more efficiently — is the way I would look at that.”

Kylo: ‘When you get to compete, you get to really test yourself against others’

Continued from Page A1

When the dojo in Warrenton closed, she joined a mixed martial arts gym in Astoria.

That’s where she met Adamson. “I was just doing kickboxing, although they did have jiu-jitsu and grappling,” she said. “But at the time, it was mostly just big, burly shirtless guys doing it. I was 16 and watching, thinking, ‘I will never grapple, I will never do jujitsu, I’m just going to stand up, punch and kick, and that’s going to be great.’”

Fast forward to college.

She attended Southern Utah University, where she studied sociology and psychology with the goal of becoming a counselor or a therapist. It was also there that she trained in the mixed martial arts program. “I just fell in love with the grappling part, the wrestling aspect — more so than getting punched in the face,” she said.

Kylo was so good in the ring that she drew the eye of show promoters in Las Vegas and Cedar City, on the border of Utah and Nevada, but ultimately decided against it — to the relief of her parents, who while supporting the jiu-jitsu aspect, didn’t want to see her get hurt.

After college, her career direction was still unsettled and she moved back to Seaside.

When she saw Nate and Zach Adamson had opened a studio in Seaside, she saw an opportunity to continue on the mat. “I’m like, I gotta try it out,” she said. “And so I came in here, and I was obsessed.”

As she entered tournaments, she found that being from the North Coast can be “like being a big fish in a little pond.” She had a wake-up call at the International Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Federation world champi-

onship in Long Beach, California, in 2019.

“In Oregon and Washington, I compete very well,” she said. “I usually get gold. And then going to California spending \$1,000 and losing in the first round — done. That was my biggest disappointment as a competitor.”

She learned from the experience.

“When you get to compete, you get to really test yourself against others,” she said. “I just kept progressing and progressing on that.”

Kylo has been competing for more than seven years now.

She works at Bank of the Pacific in Seaside as a customer service representative. Eventually, she may work toward a counseling career, “possibly after I have children.”

She met her husband, Grant, when he took a class from her at Adamson Bros. “He was my student, so I waited till he graduated from my class,” she said. “When he leveled out of the introduction class, we started coaching together, and that’s how we fell in love. He’s still my favorite training partner.”

Grant Kylo is now a purple belt.

A Minnesota native, his real passion is farming.

The Kylos own land in Elsie with goats, chickens, pigs — “the whole everything. That’s what we kind of do.”

She continues classes two days a week with the Adamson Bros. and teaches private and group classes.

“People should come in and give it a try,” she said. “Most fights do go to the ground and you can defend yourself. If you’re looking to lose weight, give jiu-jitsu a try. I lost like 40 pounds. Just come and check it out.”



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

A study has projected job growth in the fermentation sector.

Brewery jobs: ‘Decisive shift in industrial capacity for the city’

Continued from Page A1

She said the business model allows the cluster to remain nimble during economic downturns.

“We definitely saw that in our county these past few years,” Ivanovic said. “And we believe that the fermentation industry, because of this adeptness, enabled Clatsop County to recover more quickly than the rest of the Northwest region in their job recuperates, their manufacturing capacity and even more so to continue making capital investments throughout an economic downturn.”

The study found that in the past five years, the fermentation sector brought over \$30 million of local spending and investments to the county. More than \$21 million in local visitor spending was generated in 2019 through festivals and events. The nonprofit expects that annual spending to be fully recovered by 2025.

Ivanovic noted that Fort George’s and Buoy Beer’s acquisition of former manufacturing properties along the waterfront “points to a decisive shift in industrial capacity for the city, from seafood canning to beer canning.”

Child care: \$120M investment comes from the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

Continued from Page A1

is interested to see whether other families can participate if the Coast Guard child development center has excess capacity.

Kelly Smitherman, the Coast Guard’s child development services specialist in Astoria, said there has historically been opportunities, if not all slots are filled, for children from the community to enroll. “It’s not completely exclusive; it’s based on the need,” she said.

Capt. Scott Jackson, the commander of Coast Guard Sector Columbia River, said the child development center is part of “building resilience

for our family members,” and will provide “a little more peace of mind, as they’re moving into new locations, that there’s something there for them to care for their children when they go to work.”

The Coast Guard’s presence is set to expand on the North Coast. New fast response cutters have been approved for Astoria.

“So that footprint’s gonna get a little bit bigger here,” Jackson said.

The \$120 million investment in child care for the Coast Guard comes from the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law approved by Congress and signed by President Joe Biden last year.



Erick Bengel/The Astorian

Jonah Dart-McLean, Astoria’s parks and recreation director, took U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici on a tour of Sprouts Learning Center on Thursday.