

Sixth-graders attend school in the forest

Hundreds of sixth-graders took a hike through the forest recently as part of a half-century tradition in Clatsop County.

The hike featured 11 educational stations that related science, technology, engineering, arts and math to forestry and natural resources. The field day provides students an opportunity to learn about the forests that surround us.

"Clatsop County is 94 percent forestland," said Valerie Elder of Oregon State University Extension Services. "It is valuable for students to experience the place we live, the forest, and meet the people who call the woods their office."

Topics included social, economic and environmental benefits that forests provide and how human activities affect them. Other topics included fire, water quality, forest wildlife, how people use forests and streams, fungi, recreation, forestry tools, wood products and natural resource careers. This year's event at the Bill Lecture Demonstration For-



Submitted photo

John Christie, who developed the program, leads a class of Clatsop County sixth-graders in this 1965 photo.

est was organized by Elder and Charley Moyer, who is with the Oregon Department of Forestry. The demonstration forest is adjacent to the ODF Astoria District Headquarters near the Clatsop County Fairgrounds.

For nearly two decades the Big Walluski Tree Farm, owned by the Christie Family, hosted the tour. John Christie was a small woodland owner, forestry professor at Clatsop Community College

and ODF employee who was instrumental in developing this educational opportunity for local youth.

The Christie Family legacy was carried on this year by volunteers from private and public natural resource agencies.

The field trip was based on conceptual framework developed by the Oregon Forest Resources Institute. The annual event is open to sixth-graders in Clatsop and Pacific counties.

Mini-storage: Issue returned to City Commission

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Todd Chase, who lives south of the high school.

Chase's neighbor, Brad Johnson, wondered what "similar storage uses" meant. What if he wants to allow someone to share his garage? "I don't consider my property in the downtown," he said.

Many residents were less than pleased when a mini-storage facility was built at the four-way stop in the heart of downtown 17 years ago.

City leaders and residents have described a desire for a walkable downtown with

lots of shopping choices and places to hang out. A project in the works to put a veterans' memorial plaza in front of the post office is a step in the right direction.

"The question boils down to 'what do you want your downtown to look like?'" Mayor Balensifer said Wednesday.

Do you let property develop willy-nilly or should thought be given to creating a city that has a sense of place for residents and is welcoming to visitors, he asked.

He initially proposed the code change two years ago and again last year, but both

times it died because no one seconded his motion. This year, new members on the commission agreed with him.

Balensifer said his goal is to set a policy that keeps the city's main entryways and downtowns – both Warrenton's and Hammond's -- open to more walkable and shoppable retail uses.

While the Planning Commission rejected the new rule, the City Commission can draft a less restrictive code change or include the restrictions as it revises the city's development codes in the months and years ahead.

CMH wins quality accreditation

Columbia Memorial Hospital has been accredited by the Healthcare Facilities Accreditation Program, the nation's original independent accreditation organization.

The award confirms that the hospital provides high-quality care as determined by an independent, external process of evaluation. The program is recognized by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

"Columbia Memorial Hospital clearly demonstrates

a commitment to quality and patient safety," said Dr. Lawrence Haspel, chairman of HFAP's accreditation bureau. "We base our decision on the findings of an extensive and thorough on-site review."

The accreditation is prestigious, said Erik Thorsen, CMH's chief executive officer.

"Being an accredited hospital signals to our patients that CMH has been thoroughly evaluated for quality and safety," Thorsen said.

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