

Boats: Abandoned vessels have become expensive statewide problem

Continued from Page 1

about a dozen derelict or abandoned vessels and is down to six or seven today.

"We're trying to get them all out of here," Sweet said. "We've come a very long way."

The abandoned commercial vessels take up space that could otherwise be rented.

"The trick is to not allow them in here," she said. "We don't let anybody in here (now) without proper registration, documentation and insurance."

The Lily Marlene, a century old commercial boat abandoned by its owner, was one of Warrenton's first projects.

In January, the city hired a

company to pull up the sunk-en boat so it could finish the \$9.1 million Warrenton Marina improvement project.

Warrenton is not alone in dealing with abandoned vessels.

The privately owned Skipanon Marina, which is adjacent to Warrenton Marina, held a public auction Nov. 30 on an abandoned sailboat named Tolli.

"It's a big problem and a very expensive problem," said Bob Link, Skipanon Marina's owner.

The Tolli was his second auction, a legal process that costs about \$9,000 per boat. Yet leaving a boat that's garnering no moorage fees is ex-

pensive, too.

"They're abandoned and become a hazard to the waterways because of contaminants," he said.

The Port of Astoria Board of Commissioners considered a bid Tuesday night to dismantle a fishing vessel that has been dry-docked at Tongue Point after the port pulled it from the muck several years ago.

The cost to dismantle: more than \$20,000.

While there are some dilapidated boats in the boat yard, the 74-foot Recruit is the port's last real problem vessel, said Jim Knight, the port's executive director. "There are even dirty dishes

in the sink and before we tear it apart we have to empty it."

Abandoned boats have become such a problem for Oregon's marinas that the Oregon State Marine Board formed the Abandoned/Derelict Commercial Vessel Task Force, an advisory group that helps develop solutions.

And a decade ago, legislators set up a fund providing \$150,000 every two years to help in removing the boats. The money doesn't stretch far enough, said James Cogle, environmental program coordinator for the Marine Board.

"We have assisted in the removal of 15 commercial vessels since the fund started,"

Cogle said.

Commercial vessels are, of course, the most expensive to remove from waterways. This biennium the fund is targeting recreational vessels and 19 of those will be removed through the fund, he said.

Warrenton has been working with the state in its sales process and has received some funding to assist in dismantling the worst boats.

"The Marine Board is trying to find a way to add on a (registration) fee for end-of-life for these boats so they're a little easier to dispose of not just for marinas, but the owners as well," Sweet said. Until then, "it's one headache at a time."

Marine Board seeks comments on rule change

The Oregon State Marine Board seeks public comment on amending a rule adopted in 2015 for visual distress signals in Oregon's ocean waters.

The rule established requirements for boats west of the "line of demarcation" at the tips of the jetties for Oregon's coastal bays with one exception: the Columbia River.

The proposed rule change would remove the Columbia River exemption, making it consistent with U.S. Coast Guard designations.

The visual distress signal requirement would be for the ocean west of coastal bays and their associated jetties.

Written comments are being accepted through Dec. 29 and can be submitted via email to osmb.rulemaking@oregon.gov or mailed to June LeTarte, administrative rules coordinator, 435 Commercial St. N.E., Suite 400, Salem OR 97301.

Save the date!



Pet pix with Santa





FABULOUS Bake Sale



Silent Auction



Raffle



AND MORE!

Don't miss
CAA's Annual
December
Fundraiser
&
Holiday Party!

Saturday,
December 9th
9 am to 4 pm

Located at
The Lovell
Showroom
at the
Fort George
Brewery





Animal Shelter
CLATSOP
ANIMAL
ASSISTANCE
Helping the Shelter with volunteers and \$\$



SENDING YOU WARM WISHES

Happy Holidays

Warm Wishes

From our family to yours, wishing you a double dose of health and happiness topped with good fortune.

May the joys of the Holiday Season be with you now and throughout the New Year.



COLUMBIA
MEMORIAL
HOSPITAL

2111 Exchange Street, Astoria, Oregon 97103
503.325.4321 | columbiamemorial.org