

### Warrenton wages a fight against blight

By CINDY YINGST  
The Columbia Press

Warrenton has declared war on blight.

And, like any strategy meant to entice or force people to do what's in the best interest of others, it will take diligence and perseverance to pull off.

After success at two properties last year and a third property this month -- with partial success at a fourth, the City Commission moved on to other problem parcels Tuesday night and discussed tactics for dealing with them.

One of the commission's goals this year is to use grants and urban renewal funds to improve downtown and the city's main entryways.

"We plan on updating our urban renewal plan to detail the most strategic use of funds ... (and) we also are going to deal with blighted and nuisance properties," Mayor Henry Balensifer wrote in a column in April about the city's goals.

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**Top left:** An unoccupied house at 11th Street and South Main Avenue. The three other photos at top were taken on Highway 104.

**Right:** A house and warehouses at South Main and Ninth Street.



### Life Flight hopes for better response with new app

The Columbia Press

Life Flight Network, which has a base of operations at the Astoria-Warrenton Airport, released a cellphone application Wednesday that allows hospitals and medics to call for an air ambulance with the touch of a button.

Victims of a serious crash who have life-threatening injuries could get help faster, which could save their lives, the company said.

"With LFN Respond, approved hospital and emergency responders can instantly request a Life Flight Network aircraft by tapping the flight call button in the app, sending vital information and GPS location directly to dispatch personnel at our communications center," said Michael Griffiths, Life Flight's chief executive officer.

"(It) saves precious seconds and makes calling for air ambulance

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### Those killed in line of duty honored in local Memorial Day observances

The Columbia Press

Those who died to keep Americans free will be honored across the country and locally Monday in Memorial Day observances.

This year marks the country's 150th Memorial Day. On May 5, 1868, a Civil War veterans group, urged the country to honor soldiers lost in the war they lived through when many of their friends did not.

It was a war that nearly tore the country apart. It was America's bloodiest conflict, with more than 620,000 casualties -- more than World War I, II, Korea and

Vietnam combined, points out Mitch Sparks, director of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs.

An estimated 6,000 Oregon service members have died in the line of duty since Oregon became a state.

"Today, Memorial Day is a cherished and protected national holiday," Sparks said. "However Memorial Day is celebrated in your community, and however different it may appear from the simple ceremonies of a grieving, post-Civil War America, the sentiment remains the same. It is that of a grateful nation to its fallen

soldiers: "Thank you. We will never forget you."

In Clatsop County, several events will publicly honor the country's service members who lost their lives.

• **Veterans of Foreign Wars** Post 10580 will have a ceremony at 11 a.m. at the Fort Stevens Army Post Cemetery.

"We pay tributes to the crew of the lifeboat Triumph, lost Jan. 12, 1961, while assisting the fishing vessel Mermaid on Peacock Spit and a wreath will be placed for all the lost military members who lost their lives," said Bert Little, quartermaster.

To get to the cemetery from Pacific Drive in Hammond, head toward the

ocean and turn left on Seventh Avenue and then left on Russell Drive, which dead-ends at the cemetery.

• **VFW Post 10580** will have a changing of the flags ceremony at 12:30 p.m. at the park in front of Warrenton Post Office.

Fallen Warrenton Police Reserve Officer Robert McMaster, killed in the line of duty in March 1996, will be honored and a wreath will be placed under the U.S. flag and the POW/MIA Flag to honor all service men and women who left home, never to return.

Guest speaker is Warrenton High School Principal Rod Heyen.

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Sparks