

## Tourist spending rose to highest level last year

*The Columbia Press*

The amount tourists spend in Northwest Oregon rose to its highest level last year, according to an Oregon Employment Department report released Wednesday.

Visitors spent \$1.56 billion here in 2018. The previous record was \$1.32 billion in 2006 (the amount is adjusted for inflation to be comparable).

Five northwest counties are included in the tally: Clatsop, Tillamook, Columbia, Lincoln and Benton.

“Complete records aren’t available for 2019 yet, but preliminary estimates indicate that about 380 more jobs are being added this year in leisure and hospitality in the five counties,” writes Erik Knoder, a regional economist with the Employment Department. “This matches the slower employment growth experienced overall in the economy in 2019.”

Of the five counties, Clatsop County had added the most leisure/hospitality jobs in 2018.

The 2018 spending increase was a jump of 1.4 percent over the previous year. Visitor spending has been increasing since 2011.

Last year’s growth was more than in 2017 but slower than in preceding years. Slower growth in an industry is typical as an economic expansion matures, and growth in visitor spending has been slowing since 2014. Obviously, leisure and hospitality is affected the most in Clatsop County, but it also is the largest industry sector throughout Northwest Oregon. It provided nearly 16,700 payroll jobs on an annual average basis in 2018, or about 17 percent of all jobs.

“The industry’s health depends in large part on spending by visitors,” Knoder said.

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## Have fish hatchery; will travel

### Astoria company develops innovative hatchery in a box

**BY CINDY YINGST**  
*The Columbia Press*

An Astoria company has developed a fish hatchery in a box.

Redd Zone made its first Instant Hatchery sale last week to the Skokomish Indian Tribe in Washington state.

The Instant Hatchery is a self-contained unit filled with innovative upgrades to traditional hatchery equipment. The entire hatchery is built within a Conex box, or intermodal shipping container.

“What usually happens today when a hatchery wins a grant to upgrade is they build a fancy new building and fill it with 100-year-old technology,” said Tod Jones, president of Redd Zone.

He and his partner, Rog-

er Warren, have decades of experience in the fisheries industry as well as several patents each on inventions that improve fish-planting and conditions at hatcheries.

Before retiring, Warren was manager of the state’s Gnat Creek Hatchery on

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Courtesy Redd Zone

Richard and Jenna Adams, Skokomish Tribe hatchery technicians, tour the tribe’s new Instant Hatchery on Oct. 25 in Jeffers Gardens. With them is Tod Jones of Redd Zone, right.

## Everyone has a reason to vote, say three teen essay winners

A teen from Long Beach, Wash., and two brothers from Warrenton won top honors in a high school essay contest, “I Will Always Vote.”

The contest was sponsored by Indivisible North Coast Oregon and the Astoria branch of the American Association of University Women.

“All the essays showed that the students are passionate about staying informed and that they understand the importance of participating in the democratic process,” said INCO member Eric Halperin, one of the contest’s organizers.



Tristan



Erik



Forrest

Tristan Trudell of Long Beach, a senior at Ilwaco High School, won the \$250 first place prize.

“A vote is a voice, and with a voice, one has the power to enact change,” Trudell wrote. “To vote is to take yourself and

your convictions firmly into account. ... (V)oting carries with it an inherent responsibility, almost a duty, to be informed, but you must also consider the impact your vote could have on the people around you.”

Erik Cooley and Forrest Cooley, who both are home-schooled, won the second and third prizes, respectively, of \$150 and \$100. Erik is in 10th grade, and Forrest in 11th.

Erik Cooley, the second-place winner, took an activity from his own life – he and four friends deciding where to eat

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