

## College unveils plans for MERTS expansion

The Columbia Press

Clatsop Community College is proud of its Marine and Environmental Research and Training Station on Tongue Point.

The maritime campus is one of just a handful across the country and it's about to get better.

A \$22 million expansion is in the works.

The MERTS campus was completed in 1999. The facility needs repairs and a new design to keep up with emerging curriculum and maritime fields, said David Oser, chairman of CCC's Foundation board.

Oser and Jerry Ostermiller, former director of the Columbia River Maritime Museum and a mariner in his own right, have begun making the rounds to various maritime-related businesses, elected bodies and other potential partners for the expanded training facility.

It's an important offering for the region because entry-level jobs in the industry start at \$40,000, full-time positions bring in \$80,000 and upper-deck positions pay well over

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Cindy Yingst/The Columbia Press

Jerry Ostermiller speaks to port commissioners Tuesday night.

## New Lektro lease a 'three-fer' benefit

BY CINDY YINGST  
The Columbia Press

One of Warrenton's largest employers and one of the county's oldest businesses has signed a lease that extends local operations through 2030.

The move by Chicago-based JBT AeroTech comes as a relief to local workers and those concerned about the local economy after Lektro was acquired by the international technology manufacturing company in February 2019.

"It's not that often we get a three-fer like this," Port of Astoria Commissioner Robert Stevens said. "It's good for the port, good for JBT and good for the community."

JBT has been aggressively marketing Lektro products, a company spokesman said.

Lektro, established in 1945, is a leader in making electric towbarless aircraft tow vehicles. They can be found at airports around the globe, pushing and assisting large planes lining up at terminals.

"We see a good fit of products and markets between Lektro and JBT AeroTech," said Jesse Long, director of sales and business planning at Lektro since 2005. "It has been great joining the JBT family and having the resources of a major corporation behind us and to be offering an expanded range of

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Lektro's 93,000-square-foot facility at Astoria-Warrenton Regional Airport employs more than 80 local residents. Parent company JBT signed an agreement with the Port of Astoria to extend its lease.



Long



Stevens



Rohne



## High-speed chase causes peril on Warrenton streets

The Columbia Press

A high-speed pursuit through Warrenton on Saturday rattled nerves and forced a manhunt near Shilo Inn.

The first call came in about 5 p.m. reporting a man in a white car was involved in a road-rage incident with a woman in a sport-utility vehicle near the KOA campground.

"He was swerving at her and trying to run her down," Police Chief Matt

Workman said.

The woman, who knew the man, pulled over near Parkview Apartments on Ridge Road and, at some point, got into his vehicle either by force or of her own will.

"As officers started pulling up, he took off, swerving at them and that's what started the chase," Workman said.

The chase, with speeds up to 90 mph, continued south on Ridge to DeLaura Beach Road, where the driver turned east toward War-



Arnett

renton High School and then north on Main Avenue toward downtown.

He blazed through downtown, narrowly missing many vehicles, and then took Harbor Drive toward Highway 101. It was about that point when officers lost him.

"By the grace of God, we were lucky that there was no one who pulled out in front of this guy or pedestrians crossing the street. ... He was so reckless," Workman said.

Officers did not match his speed for everyone's safety and to prevent

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