

Port sailing through a reputation rebuild

Everyone wants to go camping!

BY CINDY YINGST
The Columbia Press

While many people have thought about camping during the pandemic, at least two municipalities are wrestling with the idea, too.

The city of Warrenton is looking at ways to increase the availability of camping at its two marinas. And the Port of Astoria may consider creating a new campground altogether.

The idea to build a campground on the bayfront – property on the Skipanon Peninsula owned by the Port of Astoria – was brought up Tuesday by Warrenton City Commissioner Rick Newton. And port leaders were interested.

“RV parks are real big right now,” said Matt McGrath, deputy executive director for the port. “The Port of Newport spent \$5 million to build an RV park ... and it paid for itself in seven years.”

Newport’s South Beach RV Park and Marina has 144 spaces, full hookups, showers, laundry, a dump



Cindy Yingst/The Columbia Press

The Pride of America pulls into port Tuesday afternoon, dwarfing the Port of Astoria’s Pier 1 building. The return of cruise ships signals good news for the port’s finances in fiscal year 2021-22.

station, and miles of hiking and biking trails.

Newton suggested the port build 200 to 300 campsites, dredge the bayfront to build mooring slips, and build a boardwalk over wetlands. A high-end

hotel could go at the tip of the peninsula.

“I want you guys to make money,” Newton said. Later, in a discussion about the port’s financial situation,

See ‘Camping’ on Page 5

Despite tough year, finances are coming together

BY CINDY YINGST
The Columbia Press

The Port of Astoria, which has spent years paying the consequences of mismanagement and questionable business decisions, is working its way back as a respectable member of society.

Business Oregon, the state’s economic development agency, approved the port’s business strategy and capital facilities plans recently. Without their completion -- and without the agency’s stamp of approval -- the port had failed to obtain grants and its public and private partnerships were drying up.

Two weeks ago, Port Executive Director Will Isom met with a regional support team set up by the Governor’s Office. Representatives from Oregon Department of Transportation, Business Oregon, Department of Environmental Quality, and Department of Land Conservation

See ‘Port’ on Page 4

Lift-span repairs require nighttime bridge closures

The Columbia Press

Nighttime closures of Youngs Bay Bridge begin this weekend and for two weeks as part of the repair project that began there in March 2019.

The \$12.4 million project includes raising the bracing for the lift span, replacing rocker bearings, repairing damaged concrete, and replacing compression joint seals.

Most of the work on the 58-year-old bridge was performed from

below using a barge. While there have been some single-lane closures during repairs, the remaining repairs to the tower require a complete closure.

The bridge will be closed from 9 p.m. to 5:30 a.m. each weeknight (Sunday night through Friday morning). The closures are Sunday, June 6, through Friday, June 18.

Message signs already have been posted to warn travelers of the impending closure. Once

work has begun, drivers will be instructed to a detour on Highway 101 Business over the Lewis and Clark River and Old Youngs Bay Bridges as the alternate route.

The work by Oregon State Bridge Construction of Scio is weather dependent, which means the schedule could be changed at the last minute.

Pedestrians are expected to have access across the bridge during the closures.



By Steve Morgan

Youngs Bay Bridge was built in 1964 and is undergoing multiyear repairs.