



R.J. Marx

More than 26,000 gallons of sewage spilled onto Cannon Beach in late July.

Sewage spill in Cannon Beach

By NICOLE BALES
The Astorian

CANNON BEACH — Dump trucks carried 28 loads of sand off of Cannon Beach in late July after a sewage overflow.

The city said it was notified of a wastewater pump station failure on the morning of July 24 that led to more than 26,000 gallons of sewage spilling onto the beach at the end of Nelchena Street.

While the city worked to correct the problem, it was unclear there was a sewage overflow until the afternoon.

A report by Karen La Bonte, the city’s public works director, said she received a phone call from a resident at around 4 p.m. informing her that he noticed water coming from the southernmost outfall during his walk on the beach that morning. When public works staff went back out to inspect the area, they found specks of toilet paper.

The city notified the state

Department of Environmental Quality and Oregon State Parks.

Barricades and caution tape were placed around the area, along with sandwich boards with warning signs. Signs on the beach will remain for several more weeks.

The city’s excavation contractor brought four dump trucks and removed 28 loads of sand from the beach. The sand was taken to an area east of U.S. Highway 101.

The city said the spill did not reach the ocean and that the cleanup was completed before high tide.

Notifications regarding the incident were sent the evening of July 24 to the City Council, city attorney, nearby hotels, the Ecola Creek Watershed Council and Surfrider Foundation and committees that partner with the city on environmental projects.

La Bonte’s report said the city’s electrical contractor concluded that the valves on two of the wastewater pump stations were adjusted incorrectly. The

incorrect valves caused the pressure to increase, which damaged the pump stations. Other malfunctions were also exposed by the incident.

“We will be reviewing our training procedures for new employees starting to do routine maintenance in our pump stations, in addition to adding signage that make certain procedures more clear,” La Bonte said in the report.

Public works will also reexamine routine maintenance intervals.

In her report, La Bonte said another contributing factor was that the wastewater department has been short-staffed for some time.

“Team members from other departments and agencies have stepped up to assist the wastewater team whenever possible,” she said. “This has resulted in a level of inconsistencies in who was performing various operations.”

She said there also needs to be improvements to the utility systems, but funding will require adjustments to utility rates.

Union spars over House race

Local endorsement of Weber was withdrawn

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

The North Coast Labor Federation, a chapter of Oregon AFL-CIO for Clatsop and Tillamook counties, met in late July in Astoria and endorsed Republican Suzanne Weber for state House District 32, upending a traditional dynamic of labor groups backing Democrats.

Last Monday, the endorsement had been pulled by order of the Oregon AFL-CIO, which had endorsed Weber’s opponent, Democrat Debbie Boothe-Schmidt. The local endorsement of Weber violated the AFL-CIO’s national charter leaving state Legislature endorsements at the statewide level.

Members of the labor federation and Weber have characterized the rule as another

example of urban elites dictating their will over local sentiment. Democrats face a more challenging race for House District 32 since state Rep. Tiffany Mitchell announced she was moving to Washington state and would not run for reelection. Republicans, buoyed by a backlash to proposed climate legislation and the rural advocacy group #TimberUnity, have one of their best chances in years to flip the district.

Boothe-Schmidt, a trial assistant with Clatsop County Circuit Court, has received most of the union support. Weber, the mayor of Tillamook and a former teacher, has been backed by #TimberUnity and most industry groups, including Koch Industries, the owner of the Wauna Mill.

Mike Smith, a worker at the Wauna Mill and president of the local federation, said members of the local federation invited both Weber and Boothe-Schmidt to interview for the endorsement at their general meeting recently, but that only Weber showed. Boothe-Schmidt denied ever being invited to speak with labor federation members and said the group hasn’t previously done endorsements.

A representative of Boothe-Schmidt’s campaign said she had approached Smith more than a month ago about an endorsement



Suzanne Weber

from the United Steelworkers, which represents workers at Wauna Mill.

Paul Putkey, a county surveyor and president of Boothe-Schmidt’s union, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 2746 chapter, said none of his approximately 250 members in the local labor federation were told about an endorsement interview. His local union would not endorse candidates for state Legislature, he said. The statewide affiliate of his union has backed Boothe-Schmidt.

“Time and time again, when local members in this district were given the chance to participate in the process, they chose me,” Boothe-Schmidt said in a statement. “I’m endorsed by unions for teachers, nurses, home care workers, mental health providers, public safety and other county workers.”

Weber has taken a hard line against proposed cap-



Debbie Boothe-Schmidt

40 members from different unions across the state, the representative said.

“I had no intention of seeking the endorsement of political insiders in Portland,” Weber said in a statement. “The Oregon AFL-CIO is one of the most overtly hyperpartisan lobbyist groups in the state, and extreme partisanship is exactly what we do not need.”

After news of the local federation’s endorsement of Weber came out, Smith said, the head of the Oregon AFL-CIO reached out and gave them until July 24 to remove the endorsement. They had never reached out to consult with the local federation about the endorsement of Boothe-Schmidt, he said.

Weber’s campaign removed mention of the endorsement on her social media and later issued a response in which she decried Portland political elites.

“These are the people who want to defund our police departments, shut down our forests and do whatever extremist politicians tell them,” Weber said in a statement. “The supposed ‘leaders’ in Portland might choose to ignore the will

THE LOCAL ENDORSEMENT OF WEBER VIOLATED THE AFL-CIO’S NATIONAL CHARTER LEAVING STATE LEGISLATURE ENDORSEMENTS AT THE STATEWIDE LEVEL.

and-trade legislation that would tax large industrial polluters like Wauna Mill and has become a flashpoint for the urban-rural divide in the Legislature. Boothe-Schmidt has been noncommittal on the legislation.

Smith claimed the local endorsement had nothing to do with cap and trade. A representative of the Oregon AFL-CIO said both Weber and Boothe-Schmidt had been sent questionnaires representing the group’s priorities as part of its endorsement process for state races. Weber never responded, while Boothe-Schmidt submitted the questionnaire and was voted for by at least two-thirds of an endorsement board, including around

of union members in rural Northwest Oregon, but I never will. We need a state representative chosen by the people who live and work here, not someone like Debbie Boothe-Schmidt who will only rubber-stamp anything and everything the Portland political elites tell her to.”

Boothe-Schmidt responded that Weber “doesn’t have support from working people and doesn’t support important policies that impact working families like expanding paid sick leave or raising wages. She is misleading you by pointing to this one group that doesn’t have dues-paying members to make it look like she’s a champion for working families.”

Seaside woman dies after being hit by vehicle on U.S. Highway 101

Seaside Signal

A Seaside woman died last Thursday night after being struck by a vehicle on U.S. Highway 101 near

Gearhart.

Police say the driver of a Chevrolet coupe was traveling northbound when he saw a pedestrian cross into his path and was unable to avoid her.

Emergency crews arrived at about 9:30 p.m. and Rachel Faith McCune, 35, was pronounced dead at the scene.

The highway was closed to one lane for about three hours after the crash.

Kawasoe scores big victory in Portland

By GARY HENLEY
Seaside Signal

The weather was hot, but Seaside’s Carson Kawasoe was hotter on the golf course last week.

A junior-to-be and three-sport athlete with the Gulls, Kawasoe scored a major win in his best sport, when he won the annual Bob Allard Memorial Golf Classic, July 27 and July 28 at Rose City Golf Course in Portland.

Competing in the age 14-18 boys open division, Kawasoe shot a four-under par 140 to win by just one stroke over Cole Rueck, who shot a three-under par in the final round July 28. There were 60 golfers in the division, with top age group golfers from around the state.

Kawasoe shot a 74 in the first round on July 27, highlighted by an eagle on the 10th hole.

But it was Rueck who was atop the leaderboard after the first round with a 70, followed by Nicholas Nautiyal (71), two golfers with a 72, and two others at 73.

So Kawasoe had his work cut out for him on July 28’s second round.

“I was tied for seventh, but I told the guys in my group, ‘you know guys, I’m just going to go win it.’ And I kept it going.”

And Kawasoe answered the challenge by scorching the



Misty Kawasoe

Seaside’s Carson Kawasoe following his win in the Bob Allard Memorial tournament in Portland.

course in Round 2, with birdies on three of the first five holes. Kawasoe birdied No. 8 and finished the front nine with a 32. He recorded his second eagle on the 11th hole, on his way to a 34 on the back nine, for a six-under par 66.

Kawasoe said Rueck “played really solid. He bogeyed (holes) three, six and nine. I had one bogey on the day and the putter got pretty hot on the front.”

Still, Kawasoe was not following the leaderboard very closely.

“I actually wasn’t,” he

said. “Two of the kids I was playing with knew one of the dads in the last group, and we passed each other when I was

on 18, and they were on 16. I had a two-shot lead with five to play, and everyone seemed to know except for me.

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