



Diving blocks were among the last items waiting to be installed at the North County Recreation District's new natatorium.

NCRD pools set to open

WILL CHAPPELL
Citizen Editor

Following delays caused by issues with faulty equipment, the North County Recreation District's new natatorium is set to open for business in the coming weeks.

North County Recreation District Executive Director Justin Smith said that training was nearly complete, and the district planned a soft opening for the facility ahead of a later, formal grand opening ceremony.

Started in early 2023, the new pool project's \$18 million budget is being financed by district savings, private donations, including one from Adventist Health Tillamook to build the therapy pool, and a county award of \$1.7 million in transient lodging tax funds.

Now, the pools are complete, with equipment installed and

staff nearly completely trained on lifesaving procedures for the pools and maintenance operations for the new equipment, with only some training on specific scenarios left for lifeguards.

The new facility features two pools, one a six-lane lap pool and the other a therapy pool featuring a wheelchair ramp for access. Smith said that the smaller pool has a capacity of 48, while the larger pool could accommodate 142.

Completion of the project was originally scheduled for early this summer, but a series of issues with equipment—late delivery of sand filters that arrived leaky and malfunctioning heat exchangers—caused a delay of several months.

NCRD staff are planning to operate the pool with the same hours and programming as the legacy pool to start, and at least half the larger pool will



NCRD's new pool building will have a dedicated receptionist and at least one lifeguard on duty at all times.

be configured for lap swimmers outside of open swims. Smith said the larger pool will be kept at 81-82 degrees, while the therapy pool will be maintained around 91-92 degrees, and the air temperature around 80 degrees.

Students from the Neah-Kah-Nie School district are set to begin

lessons in the new space in late September and Smith said he was hoping to add lessons outside of the school program as well as classes for those suffering arthritis.

A plan is in development for securing the district's existing pool, which Smith said will be closed to the public

while the district raises funds to take next steps with the space.

As for a grand opening for the pool, Smith said that would occur once bricks and a display wall thanking donors to the project are installed in the coming months so that the district can recognize their contributions.

Track use debate heats up

WILL CHAPPELL
Citizen Editor

A request by the City of Rockaway Beach to allow the city to take over the section of tracks north of its wayside, currently used by the Oregon Coast Scenic Railroad, to construct a portion of the Salmonberry Trail at last month's Port of Tillamook Bay meeting has ignited a passionate discussion in north county.

Proponents of the trail and representatives from the city argue that the cost of building the trail alongside the railroad is prohibitive in the northern section of Rockaway Beach and that the trail's benefits for Rockaway Beach and neighboring Wheeler would outweigh those provided by the railroad, while questioning the railroad's future, given its financial situation.

Oregon Coast Scenic Railroad (OCSR) General Manager Trevor Park said that the railroad is on track to repay debts incurred by previous management and be in a strong financial situation by next year, and argued that the railroad's continued success and growth, as well as its future plans are reliant on continued use of the tracks.

"What's going to happen to OCSR if 20% of our income vanishes overnight," Park wondered referencing the revenue generated by trips on the section of rail. "It's a death blow. There's no question that it is a death blow."

The discussion arose at July's meeting of the Port of Tillamook Bay board of commissioners, when Rockaway Beach City Manager Luke Shepard appeared to give an update on the trail based on a preliminary trail design. During the design work, Shepard said that it had become apparent to the project team that the planned rails-and-trails configuration, with the trail adjoining the operational rail track, was not going to be feasible north of the OCSR depot at the city's wayside.

Shepard said that the cost of constructing the mile of trail between 19th and Beech Streets would be \$4.6 million, a figure that would not be competitive when applying for further funding from the Oregon Department of

See **TRACK**, Page A3

Jammin' at the Pearl and Oyster

STAFF REPORT

Beautiful weather set the stage for a weekend packed with music and family fun at the fourth annual Pearl and Oyster festival on August 23 and 24.

On Saturday, bands played for eight hours as festivalgoers enjoyed vendors and food, while on Sunday kids took center stage with a talent show, kid vendors and pet parade.

The Music kicked off in Al Griffin Memorial Park on Saturday with Tombstone Shadows, a Creedence Clearwater Revival tribute band performing., before

Beastie Boys tribute Grand Royale played a second afternoon set and Eagle Eyes finished the night with favorites from the Eagles.

Dozens of vendors set up on A and 4th Streets selling crafts and food across the weekend and on Sunday a local kids' band performed ahead of the talent show.



Grande Royale performs at the Pearl and Oyster Festival on Saturday afternoon.



Festivalgoers browse vendors' goods at the fourth annual Pearl and Oyster festival.



The new clinic's parking lot is now complete, including electric car chargers.

NBHD Clinic to open October 4

WILL CHAPPELL
Citizen Editor

With substantial completion mere weeks away, workers are completing a final punch list of items at the Nehalem Bay Health District's new clinic facility in Wheeler, and a grand opening is scheduled for October 4.

After a groundbreaking last July, work on the \$12.2-million facility has progressed smoothly and is on track to come in under budget, according to Nehalem Bay Health District (NBHD) Board President Marc Johnson.

The new 16,000-square-foot building will expand the district's exam room capacity from seven to 15, while Johnson estimated that the new pharmacy has about ten times more space for staff than the current facility.

The clinic and pharmacy will be located on

See **NBHD**, Page A3





The interior of the new building that will house four operating rooms at Adventist Health Tillamook.



The building's exterior with work underway on the roof.

Adventist surgery project underway

WILL CHAPPELL
CITIZEN EDITOR

Crews from Skanska USA Building are hard at work on a 4,500 square-foot addition to Adventist Health Tillamook that will house four new operating rooms when complete next March.

The new space is part of a two-phase revamping of the hospital's surgical facilities, and its completion will be followed by an extensive renovation of the existing surgery suite, expected to be complete by the end of September 2026.

Work on the \$18 million project officially broke ground last fall and the addition is now weeks away from being dried in, with work on a roof taking place in the last week of August.

Coordinating work to allow operations to continue in the hospital as two existing areas are renovated to tie into the new construction has been a complicated procedure, with workers making sure to keep utilities connected even as they removed unnecessary overhead piping and wiring.

That logistical dance will continue when the new building construction wraps, allowing surgical procedures to shift to the new rooms while the old operating rooms, built in 1995, have a foundation issue repaired and are renovated to serve new functions.

Surgeries have been ongoing throughout the project, with surgery prep taking place on the second floor.

Stone placement resumes at south jetty

WILL CHAPPELL
CITIZEN EDITOR

Crews from Trade West began placing stones near the head of the south jetty at the entrance to Tillamook Bay in the second week of August, after working to stockpile stones since last fall.

Originally scheduled as a three-year project but eventually contracted for completion in two, workers are now pushing to complete the 800-foot section before high tides shut down operations at some point in October, though they are unsure if that will be possible.

The repair of the south jetty began last year, with Trade West first spending months preparing the area at Bay Ocean County Park between Kincheloe Point and the root of the South Jetty to support the repair. This included the repair of an existing road and the construction of a new segment so that it could serve as a haul road for transport trucks between the offload point at Kincheloe and the Jetty. Crews also cleared a ten-acre site at the base of the jetty to serve as a secondary staging area for rocks.

After completing preparatory work, stone placement began in June of last year, with crews completing the 600-foot section of the jetty with around 5,500 tons of rock placed by September.

Since completing that section last fall, work had shifted into lower gear, with workers transporting stones from the Port of Garibaldi to the secondary staging area near the jetty's base, creating a large stockpile.

This summer, workers prepared for stone placement by building a temporary road on top of the jetty to access the head section, starting 3,500 feet from the root section repaired last year, and continued stockpiling rocks.

The project hit a slight

snag when mining operations were suspended at the eastern Oregon quarry providing the stone for the project because of concerns around impacts to Northern Spotted Owls in the area. But a team member said that the issue had been quickly resolved with a call to the Bureau of Land Management, which owns the land the quarry is on.

After starting stone placement on August 12, work progressed quickly, with two-person stone-placing crews having completed 400 of the 800 required feet in the first three and a half days of work.

But the remaining work, building the head of the jetty itself, will be a much more time-consuming process as crews place the heaviest rocks of the project at the highest volumes.

Last year, work on the root section mostly involved stones weighing six to ten tons, while in the head, stones will at least 23 tons and up to 40. This also means that while Trade West had taken delivery of 42,000 tons of stone by mid-August, another 45,000 tons are yet to arrive.

A site superintendent with Trade West said the large volume would test the quarry's capacity and that the team wasn't sure rock would arrive fast enough to complete the project before weather shuts it down for the year.

Currently, a large stockpile of rocks sits at the base of the



A crew at work placing stones near the head of the south jetty.

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A front-end loader at the secondary staging area near the jetty's trunk with stockpiled stones.



Three transport trucks return to the barge for the ride from Kincheloe Point to the Port of Garibaldi after delivering stones to the jetty.



A small plaza at the building’s entrance features benches and a view of Nehalem Bay.

NBHD Clinic

From Page A1

the building’s first floor, while the second floor

will house a dental clinic, with three operatories now installed and a dentist hired. The dental suite also has room for two additional operatories. Two behavioral health counselors will also be located on the second floor, as

well as administrative office space, a sound-isolated room for telemedicine consultations and a community room, including a kitchen for nutrition classes. Substantial completion of the facility is expected on September 8, at which point



Finishing touches being completed in the new clinic's waiting room.

staff will begin moving in. A grand opening ceremony including tours and a ribbon cutting is planned for October 4, at 1 p.m., before patients are seen in the new building beginning on October 8. Funding for the project

is coming principally from a \$10.25-million bond approved by voters in May 2023, with the balance coming from the federal government in the form of a \$3 million appropriation in 2022’s OMNIBUS spending bill and a further \$500,000 grant.

Beyond supporting the new clinic’s construction, those funds are also being used to renovate the district’s skilled nursing facility in Wheeler and will be used to repurpose the district’s existing clinic, the old Rinehart Hospital.

TRACK Use Debate

From Page A1

Transportation’s community paths program, which funded the design work. The high construction cost was due to environmental concerns driving up permitting costs, a crowded area around the tracks making colocation challenging and the need to build a new bridge over Crescent Creek.

Shepard argued that the difficulties of building in north Rockaway Beach were common across many segments of the trail and said that it was time to move the Salmonberry Trail to a rails-to-trails model between the Rockaway wayside and Banks, to allow easier development, and requested the board institute the change when OCSR’s lease expires at the end of 2026.

The suggestion immediately set off alarm bells for Parks and OCSR Board President Paul Daniels, who both spoke against the proposal at the meeting, and subsequently sat down with the Headlight Herald to discuss the issue in more depth.

A major issue, not mentioned by Shepard in the port’s board meeting but raised by McGinnis and Port Commissioner Bill Baertlein in a letter to the editor, is OCSR’s financial health. Tax returns from 2023 (the most recent available year) show that OCSR had revenues of \$1.76 million against expenses of \$2 million, with assets worth \$1.06 million against liabilities of \$1.19 million. Baertlein and McGinnis both argued that given this situation, OCSR would be hard pressed to maintain the section of railway to Wheeler or restore the tracks beyond, as leaders have said it plans.

Park and Daniels said that the railroad’s financial situation was not as bad as was being construed by trail proponents and that the major issues were a costly maintenance project on a locomotive and prior management allowing costs to overrun on the construction of a new water tower in Garibaldi.

The construction project was being managed by then General Manager Racheal Aldridge who failed to rein in spending when costs escalated past the projected budget of \$400,000 causing OCSR to fall behind on other payments, including lease payments to the Port of Tillamook Bay. OCSR’s board became aware of the overspending in June at which point Daniels returned as board president. Aldridge was then dismissed, Park promoted to general manager and tighter financial controls, including weekly reviews by board members, instituted.

“They just overspent and overcommitted, okay, and the board caught it,” Daniels said. “So, then the board made some executive changes, and they also made some changes on the board,

and we got the whole thing under control.” In his first weeks as general manager, Park worked to bring costs in line and established payment plans with OCSR’s creditors. Since then, the railroad has repaid \$300,000 in outstanding debts, according to Park, and is on track to repay \$500,000 by the end of the summer and have a “very clean” balance sheet a year from now, according to Daniels.

As for past years’ underwhelming tax returns, Park and Daniels said that as a nonprofit OCSR reinvests its revenues in maintenance, projects and equipment acquisitions. Good examples of this are the ten-month inspection process of the railroad’s primary steam engine which cost \$150,000 and spanned 2023 and 2024, and the acquisition of a collection of locomotives from southern Oregon in 2021.

Park said that the railroad itself operated in the black and that incurring debt to facilitate those projects was key to OCSR’s continued growth and sustainability.

“We kind of got to this point where, you know, you can’t be the small, dinky tourist railroad anymore, you have to make large investments to secure a prosperous future,” Park said. “And so, to do that, of course, you know, in the interim, it means there’s going to be some losses in order to sustain the infrastructure projects that are being undertaken to ensure that long-term viability, which is, I feel, where we’re at at the moment.”

That approach is paying dividends, Park argued, sharing that OCSR’s ridership is on a record-setting pace this year, set to eclipse 2023’s mark of 55,000 riders. Park said that so far, 40,000 riders have taken a trip with OCSR this year, putting the railroad on track to serve between 60,000 and 65,000 by the end of the year. The record ridership comes following a down year in 2024 but matches a steady trend of growth from 2,500 riders in the railroad’s first year of operations in 2003.

According to Park, that trajectory puts OCSR on track to reach capacity on the Garibaldi to Rockaway Beach section of track at some point in the next ten years or so, as parking and the railroad’s platforms are unable to accommodate more riders.

That is one of the primary reasons why Park said that allowing the railroad continued use of the tracks north of the wayside is crucial to OCSR’s future success.

Currently, that section of tracks is less utilized than the section between Garibaldi and Rockaway, hosting special excursions in the spring and fall and infrequent summertime voyages set to add up to 80 trips this year.

However, Park said that almost 20% of the railroad’s trips were accounted for by passengers going to or through Wheeler, with more than 8,000 riders disembarking in the city last year. Park

said that the longer trips to Wheeler appeal to a different clientele than the trips between Garibaldi and Rockaway Beach, and that while the railroad has prioritized that section historically, it has begun to shift more focus to the tracks to Wheeler.

“We have focused so much on getting the infrastructure in shape to do Garibaldi to Rockaway that we are transitioning now to focusing on more up to Wheeler because we’re running more trains to Wheeler now than we ever have,” Park said.

Rockaway Beach Councilor McGinnis argued that this was a common refrain from OCSR, which has long promised further expansion, and argued that a trail between Rockaway and Wheeler would offer more benefit. McGinnis also stressed the trail’s importance to the citizens of Rockaway Beach and its incompatibility with the railroad in the city, despite OCSR’s arguments to the contrary.

McGinnis highlighted that consideration of converting the rails to the trail was not being taken lightly and followed a two-year process of public input and design work on the trail, which culminated with the \$4.6-million estimate for the one-mile section between 19th and Beach Streets. Between underground utilities, the need for a new bridge and a general lack of space, with the rail running less than three feet from Miller Street in one section, McGinnis said the task would be complex as well as expensive.

Asked about the possibility of building the trail to a lower standard than the 12-foot-wide, paved path envisioned in the estimate, McGinnis said that through the planning process, members of the community had made it clear they wanted a trail built to that standard.

“It all was based on it being a usable trail for everyone,” McGinnis said, “paved, ADA-accessible, wheelchairs can go on it, children can learn to skateboard and bike on it, elderly people could ride their e-bikes on it easily, so that’s always been the concept design in Rockaway.”

As for the potential impacts on Wheeler considering that the idea for the Salmonberry Trail has been germinating for 15 years and the first section of less than a mile is only scheduled to open this fall in Wheeler, McGinnis said that she believed that once Rockaway Beach’s section is completed, more support will be forthcoming.

“Once we get a huge quality section of it built then I think funders will say this is viable, this is really going to happen and then we can get the big funding,” McGinnis said.

Hanging over those possibilities though is the drastically altered federal funding landscape and questions around the Oregon Department of Transportation’s funding, which Shepard said at Rockaway Beach’s

August council meeting had devastated funding for such projects.

Wheeler leaders are also not sold on the proposed change, with both Mayor Denise Donohue and City Councilor Karen Matthews appearing at the port’s August meeting to speak in favor of maintaining rail service. Both Matthews and Donohue said that while they were supporters of the trail, OCSR was a symbol of the city and critical to local businesses’ success.

Donohue said that OCSR offered a unique opportunity for riders to not only visit Wheeler but also experience its beautiful surroundings and catch a glimpse of its history. She said that ending operations north of Rockaway would cripple Wheeler’s economy and asked to be included in future discussions about the decision.

Parks and Daniel at OCSR argue that Rockaway’s request is short-sighted and heartily push back against the notion that the rail and trail cannot coexist in the city. “I think that there’s more research and collaboration necessary to find something that is truly realistic for us to be able to coexist with them, for them to be able to get built and get funded,” Parks said.

Daniels also argued that the railroad offers access to more types of people than would the trail, which is primarily aimed at active residents and visitors. Daniels said that the railroad has supported the trail project since its inception and he believed that beyond coexisting, the railroad and trail could complement each other by helping expand and ease access to the trail.

“We support that,”

Daniels said of the trail, “we don’t see where we’re in competition with any of that, because we’re all in the tourist industry and we’re all here to create an experience for people.”

Looking ahead, the situation does not promise to become any less complicated as lease negotiations between OCSR and the Port of Tillamook Bay proceed.

Complicating matters is the fact that the Salmonberry Trail Intergovernmental Agency (STIA) holds a lease for the entire 82-mile section of rail between Banks and Tillamook and must sign off on any new lease with OCSR. STIA is also in the process of sunseting and transitioning to be an advisory committee under the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, which will take control of the lease, at the end of September.



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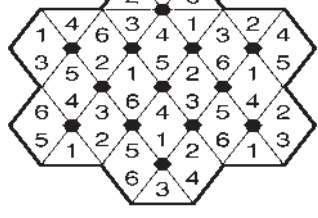
The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

	-		x	7	=	21		
+		+		-				
	+		-		=	9		
-		x		-				
	+		x		=	51		
=		=		=				
1		48		2				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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SNOWFLAKES

solution



Weekly SUDOKU


Answer

5	2	6	8	4	9	7	1	3
8	4	1	5	7	3	6	2	9
3	7	9	6	1	2	4	5	8
7	1	3	9	2	4	8	6	5
4	8	5	3	6	1	9	7	2
9	6	2	7	8	5	3	4	1
2	9	8	4	5	6	1	3	7
1	3	4	2	9	7	5	8	6
6	5	7	1	3	8	2	9	4

CryptoQuip

answer

You really can't miss that heavy, muscular guy sitting over there. He's burly recognizable.



Go Figure!

answers

4	-	1	x	7	=	21
+		+		-		
6	+	5	-	2	=	9
-		x		-		
9	+	8	x	3	=	51
=		=		=		
1		48		2		

Super Crossword

PREPARING FOR NOTHING

ACROSS

1 Pleased

5 Rocker

Townshend

9 Helper for Frankenstein

13 Jumped ship

19 Member of a canine unit

21 Nada

22 Remove adhesive strips from

23 Start of a riddle

25 Nonstudent resident of a college city

26 Microsoft Word creations, informally

27 Regret a lot

28 First-time fathers

30 Riddle, part 2

36 Prego

37 — -mo

38 Tiny, informally

39 Manner

40 Tavern spigot

43 In addition

47 Largest known asteroid

48 Riddle, part 3

53 Sch. near Harvard

54 Disposed (of)

55 Actor Sharif

56 Nero's 2,001

57 Fearful

58 Bro relative

59 — orange (inedible fruit)

61 Smidgen

63 "POV"

network

65 Huck Finn's floater

67 Bandleader

Arnaz

68 Riddle, part 4

71 Broiling bar

75 Lane of the Daily Planet

77 Nintendo console

78 Tyrant Amin

79 Tree of the pine family

80 — "a deal!"

83 — -chic

fashion

85 Old horror star Chaney

87 Prefix with Chinese

89 Island guitar, for short

90 Pro-firearm org.

91 Riddle, part 5

95 Joust

weapon

97 Pencil add-on

98 Martial arts teacher

99 Italian wine city

100 Delhi dress

102 Org. for the Ravens, but not the Falcons

105 Lock lips with

106 End of the riddle

113 Conditionally free prisoner

114 Letters before gees

115 Maui feast

116 Not endless

117 Riddle's answer

124 12-step support group

125 Chocolate-and-caramel candy

126 Talus

127 Arid expanse

128 Plumlike fruit

129 Hit with a stun gun

130 Brainstorm

7 Lump in the throat

8 Yolked thing

9 Rack up

10 Thick and sticky

11 Yoko from Tokyo

12 Mended, as a sweater

13 "How come, though?"

14 Battery end

15 "I'm the culprit"

16 Valleys, plateaus and canyons

17 "Attack of the Clones," vis-à-vis "Star Wars"

18 Actress Ruby

20 Part of UPC

24 Pooch's bark

29 D.C. hrs.

30 General discomfort

31 Schedules

32 Responsibility

33 "Our Gang" novelist Philip

34 God, in Madrid

35 Relaxes

36 Musket-loading tool

41 Healing plant

42 Pug or peke alternative

44 — -pah-pah

45 Offensively self-assertive

46 African antelope

47 Kitchen VIP

49 "Rocky and Bullwinkle" villainess

50 Slate-colored

51 Delta, for one

52 Big name in big computers

60 Street poet

Scott-Heron

62 Dawn drops

64 Lanka lead-in

66 Gp. often flagging bags

68 Celine of pop

69 — Wafers

70 Actress

Falco

72 Old German kingdom

73 Most disgusting

74 Student's Ph.D. paper

76 Certain wind instrument

79 Ear part

80 Wife's sibling, e.g.

81 Rubbish heap

82 Hot California winds

84 Listens to by chance

86 LA-to-IN dir.

88 Hosp. figures

92 "Pics — didn't happen!"

93 — II (Gillette razor)

94 Egyptian cross

96 Topaz quartz

100 Unspoken

101 Get riper

103 Entertainer

Lola

104 Makes heavy, dull sounds

107 Auto engine

108 Mello — (soft drink)

109 Tale — (sob story)

110 Troop support gp.

111 Soup scoop

112 Ditty

116 Craze

118 Cyber-guffaw

119 Kit — (candy bar)

120 Kyoto sash

121 Pea holder

122 Suffix with meth- or prop-

123 In-favor vote

North Coast
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The date of publication will depend on space.

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The North Coast Citizen has several options for submitting obituaries.

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CryptoQuip

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals Q, it will equal Q throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

Clue: I equals Y

ITE FGOQQI HOS'M JZUU MWOM

WGOCI, JEUHEQOF VEI

UZMMZSV TCGF MWGFG.

WG'U DEFQI FGHTVSZAODQG.

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Weekly SUDOKU

	2		8	4		1	3
8	4	1	5	7			
3	7	9	6	1	2	4	5
			9			8	
	8	5				7	2
		2	7			4	
2	8		5		1	3	
		4	2	9			6
6					2		

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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SNOWFLAKES

by Japheth Light

There are 13 black hexagons in the puzzle. Place the numbers 1 - 6 around each of them. No number can be repeated in any partial hexagon shape along the border of the puzzle.



DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦♦

♦ Easy ♦♦ Medium ♦♦♦ Difficult

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Super Crossword

Answers

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Korbe discusses the lighthouse's history with a tour group.



Korbe explains how the beacon's turning mechanism used to work.

Cape Meares Lighthouse turns 135

WILL CHAPPELL
CITIZEN EDITOR

On August 16, the Friends of Cape Meares Light-house and other community organizations welcomed the public to a celebration of the lighthouse's 135th birthday. Staff from Oregon State Parks and Recreation Department, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and Tillamook Pioneer Museum, and volunteers from the Tillamook Master Gardeners, Garibaldi Cultural Initiative and Friends of Netarts Bay Watershed, Estuary, Beach and Sea offered activities and tours of the lighthouse during the event.

Travis Korbe, Park Ranger and Supervisor with the Cape Lookout Management Unit

of OPRD, led tours of the lighthouse, giving its history and treating visitors to an in-depth look at the building and beacon.

Originally opened in 1890, Cape Meares Lighthouse is the shortest of 15 on the Oregon coast at 38 feet but sits at the highest elevation. Oregon's lighthouses were installed to aid marine navigation, as boats in sight of the shore would always be able to see one of the beacons and identify it by a unique light pattern to determine their location.

Cape Meares Lighthouse was constructed from bricks mined onsite and plated with iron for weather reinforcement. It originally used kerosene to light its beacon and a manual winding mechanism,

house service was folded into the guard in 1939 in the leadup to World War II. Operations continued at the lighthouse until 1963, at which point the facility was decommissioned and replaced by a beacon on top of the building that previously housed the lighthouse's diesel generators, which was in turn taken offline in 2014 when it became obsolete and was replaced by a GPS waypoint.

After the lighthouse's decommissioning, rumors abounded that the Coast Guard planned to demolish the structure, but after a local outcry, the property was deeded to the county, before eventually being transferred to OPRD.

In the years immediately

following the lighthouse's closure, vandals ransacked the building, breaking windows on the tower and stealing two bullseye lenses critical to the beacon's operation. Eventually, both lenses were recovered, one returned anonymously to the Cape Lookout ranger station when amnesty from prosecution was offered, and the other recovered in a raid on a drug house in the Portland area in the 1980s.

After taking over the property, OPRD converted the lighthouse's former work room into a gift shop and have maintained the structure and giftshop, with the help of the Friends of Cape Meares Lighthouse.

Currently, OPRD is in the process of fully restoring

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Reduce plastic waste

There certainly are a lot of things to be concerned about these days but among my concerns is how we can reduce the amount of plastic in our environment. Living here on the coast makes us especially aware of plastic pollution as we see concrete evidence washing up on our beaches or entangling ocean creatures.

This has to be addressed worldwide so I was disappointed to learn that negotiations over a global treaty to reduce plastics collapsed this week. Plastic waste and the toxic chemicals used to produce them are a danger to health as well as posing huge problems for disposal. Only about 10% of plastics are recycled and the rest end up in landfills and the ocean. It is projected that plastic production will grow 70% between 2020 and 2040.

So, given the seriousness of this problem why did the countries who worked on a treaty for three years to restrict the rapid growth of plastics fail? Much of the blame falls on oil producing nations and the petrochemical industry. Plastics are made from oil and the financial incentive to produce plastics is greater than using it to propel cars.

We are forward thinking in Oregon. The Oregon Plastic Pollution and Recycling Modernization Act went into effect in July. Package producers must now pay a fee based on the weight and difficulty in recycling of their packaging. It shifts some of the burden of paying to dispose of packaging from residential customers and small businesses to the producers of packaged products. It's just a beginning but this law, already implemented in Canada and Europe, could begin to address the overproduction of plastic packaging. But keep an eye on this as the new law has just been challenged in court by the wholesale product distribution industry.

Beverly Stein
Tillamook

Support vote by mail

Mail-in ballots are one of the safest ways to vote. The ballot comes directly to you to fill out. You put it in the stamped envelope, seal it and drop it in a mailbox, drop box or at the courthouse.

Once in the hands of the county clerk and her staff, it goes through a very strict procedure.

After signature verification, the ballot goes to the electoral board, made up of citizens from both parties and north, central and south parts of the county.

There are checks and balances all along the path of this ballot before it gets to the tabulator. Voters are welcome to come to the courthouse and observe what goes on via a closed-circuit television: receiving the ballots, opening envelopes, taking out the ballots, flattening ballots, counting the ballots making sure the number matches envelopes. Then adjudication of ballots where condition is checked for going through

the tabulator. Spilled coffee or a boot print may bring about a duplicate ballot being created, with the original safely saved for verification if needed. Workers make sure the ovals are properly filled in so the tabulator will read it. The ballots are saved and stored by precinct in case they are needed in the future. The same with their envelopes after being counted. Counting happens along every single step. There is a paper trail to verify.

The election workers take their duties very seriously. There is no talk of politics, no discussion of one party over another. Even bathroom breaks are balanced - you are not allowed to have only one political party represented at a worktable in the absence of the others.

I cannot imagine a way in which the voting could be manipulated or surreptitiously altered. I feel confident in saying this as I am an election board worker and have watched the process take place for several years now.

I certainly feel my vote is safe and properly counted. You should too.

Diane Colcord
Tillamook

Thank you from the Oregon Tuna Classic

As Chair of the Oregon Tuna Classic Board, I want to extend my sincere thanks to everyone who helped make our 20th Anniversary tournament such a success. What began two decades ago as fishermen donating their catch to help feed families has grown into a community tradition that blends sport, generosity and service.

This milestone year highlighted the spirit of volunteerism and the partnerships that sustain the Classic. At the forefront, we are grateful to our Title Sponsor, Schooner Creek Boat Works, along with more than 10 additional sponsors and 45 local and statewide donors whose contributions powered our auction and raffle. Their support fuels our mission to benefit the Oregon Food Bank and Ducks Unlimited.

We are also proud to partner with the Port of Garibaldi and Captains Corner, who provided an outstanding venue for the tournament.

The Trail That Could Define Oregon's Future

The Salmonberry Trail is not just a trail. At 82 miles, it has the potential to become one of the premier biking, hiking and equestrian routes in the country—linking the Willamette Valley to the Oregon Coast. It is a project that embodies the very priorities our state and nation most need: public health and well-being, equitable access to the outdoors, education and stewardship, environmental conservation, and sustainable economic development.

Trails of this scale are transformative. They do not simply draw visitors; they create destinations. When something becomes a destination, it catalyzes industries—outdoor recreation, hospitality, local food, arts and culture, environmental education, and more. These are not just tourist dollars passing through; they are enduring, diverse sources of community wealth. The Salmonberry Trail can be that catalyst.

I recognize the Oregon Coast Scenic Railroad has a unique and historic role in the region, and that its excursions between Rockaway and Garibaldi offer real charm.

Hosting the Classic in Garibaldi feels especially fitting, as the town is known as the most authentic fishing village on the Oregon Coast.

Behind the scenes, our 13-member volunteer Board worked year-round to make the event possible. During tournament weekend, more than 25 local volunteers—including the Neah-Kah-Nie wrestling team—helped with set-up, weigh-ins, offloading, packing fish for donation, and tear-down. Their dedication is the heartbeat of the Oregon Tuna Classic.

As we reflect on 20 years, it's clear this event is not just about fishing; it's about community. It's about ensuring families on the Oregon Coast have access to fresh, nutritious protein, and about protecting the natural resources we all treasure.

On behalf of the Board, thank you to our sponsors, partners, donors, and volunteers. Because of you, the Oregon Tuna Classic has not only endured but thrived. Together, we look forward to continuing this legacy of giving, conservation, and community for decades to come.

Sincerely,
John Stanfield
Chair, Oregon Tuna Classic Board

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Kites dot the sky above Rockaway Beach during the 2023 kite festival. Photo by Manuel Cota



Large kites fly all weekend while competitions and demonstrations rotate throughout. Photo by Brad Mosher

Kite fest returns in Rockaway Beach

WILL CHAPPELL
CITIZEN EDITOR

For the 49th year, Rockaway Beach's annual Kite Festival will brighten the skies over the beach and ocean for crowds of spectators from September 12 to 14.

Sponsored by the Ameri-

can Kitefliers Association, the annual festival welcomes profession and amateur kite fliers alike for a weekend of friendly competitions and exhibitions.

Competitions include awards for the nicest kite, the kite that drags on the ground the longest before becoming airborne and

many other cool events.

Classes will be offered to teach kids how to build and fly small kites, while vendors at Rockaway Beach's wayside will have kites available for purchase.

Large kites will take up residence for longer stretches throughout the weekend, while professional groups

put on acrobatic displays choreographed to music. Members of the public are

also invited to get in on the fun by flying their own kites.

For more information on the event, visit rockaway-beach.net.



Above: Photo by Picasa

Left: Photo by Erin Dietrich

Below: An eagle seems to be hiding in the tall grass above the beach at the annual kite festival in Rockaway Beach in 2017. Photo by Brad Mosher

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