



Tuna Classic
Nets Big
Dontation

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TAPA Presents
'Things My Mother
Taught Me'

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Tillamook Headlight Herald

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Representative Cyrus Javadi

Javadi pushes TLT reform in Salem

WILL CHAPPELL
Headlight Editor

With 2025's long legislative session in full swing in Salem, Representative Cyrus Javadi is working hard to push for a change to Oregon's transient lodging tax allotment requirements.

Counties along the coast have been clamoring for a change in the allotment as their budgets are stretched tight by restrictions on property tax increases coupled with a growing number of visitors who are straining public safety and infrastructure resources. Javadi said that though similar proposals have failed in the face of withering opposition from the Oregon Restaurant and Lodging Association (ORLA), he feels like there is a strong chance for a change this year, as more legislators become familiar with the issue.

"As we started having those discussions in the building here at the capitol, it was clear that there were a lot of legislators who would like to see something changed with the transient lodging tax," Javadi said.

Passed in 2003, House Bill 2267 established the current regime for transient lodging tax (TLT) collection across the State of Oregon. The bill allowed city and county governments to institute a TLT in their jurisdiction and required that the revenues generated by the tax be split, with 70% dedicated to the construction of tourism-related facilities or tourism promotion, while the remaining 30% could be used

See **JAVADI**, Page A3

Merkley, Bonamici sound alarm on 'constitutional crisis' at town hall

WILL CHAPPELL
Headlight Editor

As 450 concerned constituents packed the Neah-Kah-Nie High School gymnasium on February 22, Senator Jeff Merkley and Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici sounded the alarm about the Trump administration's early actions.

Merkley said that the moment represented a constitutional crisis and both exhorted worried citizens to contact representatives and join politically active groups.

"Our system is built on an understanding the executive will obey the laws, and when the executive stops obeying the law, everything starts to crumble," Merkley said. "That is a constitutional crisis right there that we have to confront in a very fierce fashion."

The town hall, one of 36 that Merkley hosts each year in every Oregon county, was moved from its traditional location at the Officers' Mess at the Port of Tillamook Bay in anticipation of large crowds, after recent town halls have drawn crowds of hundreds, several times larger than in past years.

Throughout the hour-long meeting, around a dozen constituents asked questions of the representatives, with all focused on concerns about the Trump administration's actions and the Democratic response.

Merkley and Bonamici both defended their party's response to the Trump administration's aggressive actions, while pointing out that being the minority party in both the Senate and House of Representatives limited their options.

Merkley mentioned several recent marathon budget committee hearings where he and fellow Dem-



Photos by Will Chappell
(Top) Merkley and Bonamici both implored constituents to stay engaged on concerns they had about actions by the Trump Administration. (Bottom) Senator Jeff Merkley and Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici field questions from the large crowd at Neah-Kah-Nie High School on February 22.

ocratic senators pushed Republicans on the budget being proposed, which included cuts to Medicaid and other social programs. Merkley said that he and his colleagues had gone amendment by amendment to force committee Republicans to show where their priorities really lay. They also proposed an amendment saying that the budget would not include tax cuts for mega-millionaires but were rebuffed.

"The whole night just put in stark relief what the real plan is for

See **MERKLEY**, Page A3



Salmonberry Trail planning progresses in Rockaway Beach

WILL CHAPPELL
Headlight Editor

Consultants working on the design of a three-mile section of the Salmonberry Trail being planned for Rockaway Beach gathered community feedback on the trail's alignment at meetings on February 19.

Mike Rose, from Alta Planning and Design, led the meetings and solicited input on the trail's placement in its southernmost section between Washington Street and South Third Street from potentially impacted homeowners.

Rose began the day's first meeting, which was hosted virtually while the second was held in-person at Rockaway Beach city hall, by giving attendees a brief history of the project.

Rose said that the team working on the project has completed the planning phase, which included an existing condition summary, public outreach and a 10% cost estimate for the project. The project's next phase, currently in progress, will see those plans developed more fully to a 30% cost estimate, as well as geotechnical, environmental and other necessary surveys undertaken, and will

allow the city to apply for grants to support further development and construction.

The survey conducted by the project team last summer received 153 responses, according to Rose, with one third coming from city residents and the remainder coming from area residents or visitors. Half of respondents indicated that they would use the trail occasionally, less than once a month, with 40% saying they would use it more frequently and 10% indicating they would not use it at all.

The total budget to complete the three sections was estimated at \$6.6 million including a 30% contingency. The section from Washington to South Third Streets is projected to cost \$1.5 million, the section between South Third and North 20th, \$2 million, and the section north of North 20th, \$3 million. Rose said the high estimate for the northernmost section was due to several creeks that would need to be bridge in that area.

As part of the design process, the team divided the trail into three sections, one between Washington Street and South Third, one from South Third to

North 20th, and the third from that point to Beach Street, across from the high school.

Originally, the team had planned to have the southernmost section of trail on the east side of the railroad tracks, adjacent to Highway 101, but during the 30% design phase they had realized that either side of the tracks would be suitable, according to Rose.

Upon realizing this, the team decided to seek additional input on the alignment, with a focus on engaging nearby property owners, whose backyards would be in close proximity to the trail, leading to the meetings.

The asphalt trail will be ten to 12 feet in width with its edge nine and a half feet from the center of the rail line, along which it will run in the Port of Tillamook Bay's right of way, according to Rose. Rose said that siting the trail on either side of the tracks would be feasible and safe but that putting it on the west side, away from Highway 101 would be safer.

Meeting attendees then weighed in, with several saying that they felt an eastside placement of the trail would not be

safe given drivers' habits in the area, especially around Pronto Pup at South 6th Street. They said that they felt placing the trail on the west side would slow traffic down as it crossed the tracks and provide a more inviting trail experience for users.

Other property owners asked if there was a plan for a fence or vegetation to provide properties privacy from the trail. Rose said that the recent identification of the possible westside placement meant the team had not had time to develop a plan for such facilities but that they could be added.

In the virtual meeting's chat, several attendees voiced their preference for an eastside placement and by the meeting's end, the response seemed to be evenly divided.

Rose said that the decision on the southern section's alignment would need to be made in the next month. He also estimated that the earliest construction might begin would be summer 2026 and said that grants being applied for to support the trail would only contribute to the northern section near the high school.

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Weather

Tuesday



High 53° Low 40°

Wednesday



High 65° Low 45°

Thursday



High 61° Low 42°

Friday



High 62° Low 44°

Saturday



High 52° Low 43°

Sunday



High 52° Low 39°

Monday



High 55° Low 38°



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Proceeds benefit the Lions Clubs' sight and hearing services for low income families in Tillamook County

H24972

Tillamook Bay Estuaries Partnership begins eelgrass monitoring

Will Chappell
Headlight Editor

Concerned about human actions or natural events possibly causing a die off of eelgrass in Tillamook Bay, the Tillamook Bay National Estuaries Partnership (TBNEP), discussed the program's aims and shared preliminary data collected in 2024 at a meeting of the Tillamook Chapter of the Coastal Conservation Association (CCA).

Flynn Delaney, a field and data scientist with Tillamook Bay National Estuaries Partnership (TBNEP), discussed the program's aims and shared preliminary data collected in 2024 at a meeting of the Tillamook Chapter of the Coastal Conservation Association (CCA).

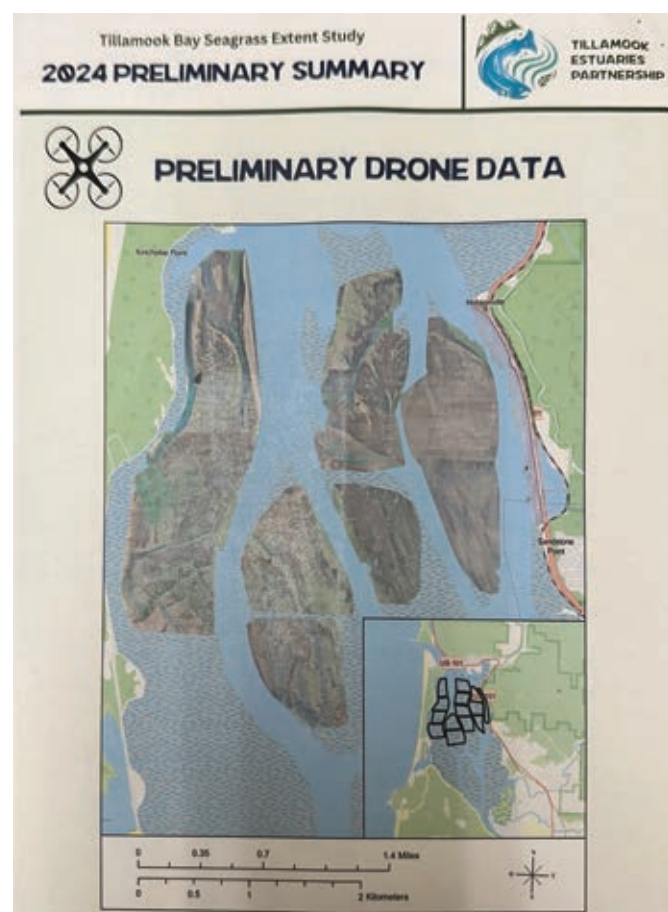
Delaney said that Tillamook Bay has the largest concentration of eelgrass in Tillamook County and that the decision to monitor it had been spurred by a die off event in Coos Bay a decade ago and concerns raised by locals about large quantities washing up on local beaches. Delaney said that the die off event in Coos Bay had been caused by a marine heat wave.

Delaney arrived in Tillamook two years ago and began working with TBNEP as part of a masters' program, after previously working on the east coast. There, 90% of local seagrasses have died since the 1930s due to warming waters, human contamination and a seagrass wasting disease.

Compared to the east coast, west coast seagrass is in a much stronger position, according to Delaney, owing to the colder waters of the pacific, relative lack of human development and local species' resistance to the wasting disease that devastated east coast grasses.

Nonetheless, the Coos Bay incident showed that Oregon seagrass meadows could also be subject to mass die offs and Delaney said that to be able to respond if one occurs, locals would first need to know that it was happening, leading to the monitoring program.

The monitoring program relies on three sources of data to build maps of the range of eelgrass in Tillamook Bay and monitor its health: first-hand inspections by snorkeling scientists, drone overflights and satellite imagery. Delaney said that the first-hand inspections were limited by TBNEP's resources and that the bulk



The preliminary drone data gathered by Delaney and his team in 2024.

of the data came from the other sources.

Drone flights give Delaney and his colleagues the most detailed picture of the eelgrass situation in the bay and began last year, with 30 flights in June, July and August. Delaney said that these were the months when eelgrass was at its peak biomass and that the flights had been concentrated on non-channel areas in the northern section of the bay.

Delaney explained that eelgrass needed to be completely submerged but at a depth that would allow it to receive enough sunlight to photosynthesize, leading to a goldilocks zone for its habitat in shallow areas, of which there are many in Tillamook Bay. Delaney also said that the effluence of rivers into the southern portions of the bay led to higher levels of sediment in the water, which negatively impacted light transmission and discouraged eelgrass growth.

The third source of data is satellite imagery available through federal databases to TBNEP, comprising daily snapshots of the bay dating back to 2009. Delaney said that these images' utility was limited by poor weather conditions, high tides or cloud cover during their once daily overflight, but that he and his team were reviewing the troves of data to find the images with the best

views of the bay.

Delaney said that the goal is to use the satellite imagery to look longitudinally at historic data as best they can and determine the normal fluctuations in eelgrass's range in the bay. These can be caused by shifting sedimentation causing new channels to form, changing the areas that are suited for the grass.

Team members will pair the satellite data with the drone data they began collecting last year to establish a baseline from which they will be able to observe if a change occurs.

Delaney showed the preliminary drone data at the meeting, including several examples of human-caused damage to eelgrass meadows.

Members of the CCA then asked questions, focusing in on the impacts of mechanized oyster harvesting in the bay, which they believe has caused extreme harm to the eelgrass and impacted local fishermen and recreators by clogging the bay with uprooted grass.

Delaney cautioned that his project was using the scientific method to deliver a wholistic picture of eelgrass's health in the bay and that it would be up to people like the association's members to use that data to convince policy makers of the need for action to protect the grass.

BULLS - AND - BRONCS

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H23061

Charity Drive totals announced

Staff report

Students from Tillamook High School gathered for the annual alumni basketball games, Charity Drive coronation and the reveal of fundraising totals for the weeklong event, which came in at \$206,756.

The junior class, for the third straight year, came out on top of the friendly competition between classes

to raise the most with \$83,867.35 brought in.

Tillamook High School's 72nd annual Charity Drive kicked off on February 7 and ran through February 17, with students hosting events at the high school and around town. After a busy first week, the second week was highlighted by the coronation ceremony, Mr. THS competition on February 16, and stud muf-

fin volleyball on February 17.

Half of the total funds raised after expenses was donated to Doernbecher Children's Hospital in Portland and the other half will go towards scholarships for the senior class and grants for local organizations, to be chosen later in the spring. The total amount raised in the drive's history now stands at \$4,603,342.



JAVADI

from

From Page A1

for any purpose.

Most jurisdictions across the state have since instituted a TLT, but as tourism has boomed in certain areas of the state with small populations, particularly along the coast and in Hood River and Deschutes Counties, problems have arisen. With property taxes frozen and the assessed value of properties limited to 3% annual increases, jurisdictions in these areas have found their budgets crunched as they try to handle the emergency response and infrastructure needs generated by large numbers of visitors.

For at least a decade, members of those communities have proposed changing the split and Javadi said that it had been one of the main issues raised throughout his time campaigning and serving

in Salem. "This was an issue brought to my attention from the very first day that I announced I was going to run for office in 2021," Javadi said, "and that was that the transient lodging tax was a potential solution to some budget issues at the county and city level."

After spending his first term in Salem getting familiar with the legislature and its processes, Javadi focused on the issue in his 2024 campaign for reelection and has made it his main priority in this year's long session.

Currently, there are two bills on the table to address the issue. The first, proposed by Javadi in his campaign, would see a group of counties with high tourism designated for a different split in the tax's allocation, with 50% of TLT revenues made available to the counties' general funds. The second bill would simply change the definition section of the current bill to include law enforcement and tourist facility maintenance in the allowed expenditures for the 70% of restricted funds.

Both bills are going to begin the legislative process with a hearing in the Emergency Management Committee, before advancing to the Revenue Committee. Javadi said that he plans to hold a meeting with representatives from ORLA, which still opposes changes to the split, and the Association of Oregon Counties and League of Oregon Cities, which support an update, as well as other stakeholders, to come to a compromise on which bill to move forward.

"I think in the end what will happen will be some type of compromise in there that makes the most sense so that we don't push too far but that we don't make the mistake also of not going far enough," Javadi said.

While he expects ORLA to fight to maintain the current split, Javadi said that he is bullish on the prospect of a bill advancing, given the issues that have become apparent with the current split. Not only have highly visited localities struggled to meet growing demands

posed by tourists, they have also struggled to spend the restricted funds on projects as required, with Seaside amassing \$9 million in reserves and Lincoln City \$6 million.

As for other issues on the docket for this session, Javadi said that he was opposed to increasing the fuel or truck mileage taxes to help pay for transportation costs, instead favoring cutting down on duplicative costs and increasing transparency at the Oregon Department of Transportation. However, he said that he expected Democrats to use their super majority to increase taxes.

Javadi is also sponsoring

several other bills, including the Habitat Conservation Plan Transparency Bill that would require the Oregon Department of Forestry to share more detailed timber harvest projection data with counties to help them map out their revenues. "(It's) so that we can make sure the harvest levels in the forest management plans that we've adopted will provide some type of predictability for the revenue for counties going forward," Javadi said.

Another bill proposed by Javadi would instruct the Department of Forestry to decrease their lease rates for telecommunications providers to promote the addition of

new cell towers in Northwest Oregon. Currently, the department charges \$40,000 for an annual lease for a macro tower site while federal agencies charge between \$2,000 and \$5,000.

Javadi is also working on bills to reduce the minimum purchases for businesses to use car lock gas stations, define homeless camps to help cities and counties address them and expand OHP to cover emergency dental procedures for seniors while the state applies for total coverage with the federal government.

MERKLEY

from

From Page A1

team Trump," Merkley said, "and to me this is a great betrayal because this is a president who campaigned on defending families and then he's in office and it's about undercutting the programs that families depend on to thrive and giving away the government to the richest Americans."

Bonamici said that she has been spending time rallying at various agencies, including the Department of Education and Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to try to bring attention to the impacts the changes were having.

In response to constituent concerns about the Department of Government Efficiency, Bonamici said that Elon Musk, the department's head, was sharing false and misleading information about the agency's cuts.

Bonamici said that she and other Democrats were not opposed to increasing efficiency, but that mass layoffs and programmatic cuts were not the correct approach.

"We can always find smarter, better ways to do things, like around the FAFSA (Free Application for Student Aid) rollout, you know, that could have been a heck of a lot better," Bonamici said, "but you don't just lay people off without a plan or without an understanding of the consequences of the layoffs."

In addition to concerns about the department's approach, Bonamici also took Musk to task over conflicts of interest engendered by his companies' billions of dollars in government contracts and interactions with federal regulators. "He has a lot of government contracts with

a lot of business," Bonamici said, "is he doing this for the good of the country or is he doing this for his profit motive?"

Merkley also took Musk, Trump and senate Republicans to task, calling out threats made by President Trump that the billionaire would finance primary challenges against Republicans who opposed the confirmation of Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth, characterizing it as blackmail.

"Have we ever been at a point in our nation where the president is essentially blackmailing members of the senate to get their loyalty, rather than a leadership through ideals and a passion and just positive pathways forward instead of blackmailing members of the senate," Merkley said. "Those Republican senators need to get a spine and stand up for our country"

Likewise, Merkley raised concerns about the Supreme Court agreeing with the Trump administration's arguments for a unitary executive capable of cutting programs approved by congress and violating the separation of powers in a way that would effectively turn the president into a monarch.

"If you do that, you have broken the line that's so essential to the separation of the powers, between congress writing the law and the president enacting it," Merkley said. "At that point, we do not have a president, we have a king or a future queen and that's not okay because we are Americans, and we stand for the republic. Every patriotic American is going to have to be in the streets and be loud and be aggressive to save our republic."

Merkley said that the mere specter of such a decision was a perfect example of the need for reform of the Supreme Court, mentioning that he was arguing for a bill to set fixed terms for the court and insti-

tute a code of ethics. Merkley also said that the congress needed to pass legislation to get rid of the Citizens United ruling, which said that corporations were people and entitled to free speech, which could take the form of political contributions.

In response to questions from constituents about the best ways for citizens to get involved, both urged people to continue to be engaged.

Bonamici said that voters should contact their representatives in Washington to let them know about their concerns and especially to share stories about the impacts the changes were having on their lives. "People are really, really wanting us to do something, I said a lot of it is going to come from the people," Bonamici said. "When they start talking to their representatives and saying, 'look, this is not helping us in our rural community as well,' then we're going to start to see more people push back, I hope."

Bonamici said that people should also work to counter false information when they hear it from friends and family and build and strengthen bonds within their communities. "Stay strong and stay together," Bonamici said, "some people feel sort of overwhelmed and scared, which is understandable, but that's part of their goal is to wear us down and to say, you know, we're going overwhelm you with all this."

Merkley urged concerned citizens to join affinity groups, mentioning Indivisible, Move On, Planned Parenthood and the Sierra Club. He applauded those in attendance at the town hall for acting and implored them to continue.

"It's like, get off the sofa," Merkley said. "If you get off the sofa and do everything you can and we do everything we can, then we will turn the table on this, really what is a coup."

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Several town hall attendees had signs, with one (pictured here) parading around the gym in the leadup to the meeting leading chants against Elon Musk.

Photo by Will Chappell

Tillamook County Community Health Centers

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Did you know that good oral hygiene begins before your child's first tooth? Helping kids develop healthy brushing habits can set the foundation for a lifetime of strong, cavity-free teeth. Some important tips to remember are:

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Oregon Tuna Classic donates to Oregon Food Bank

On Tuesday, February 4th, the Oregon Tuna Classic, presented by Pacific Seafood, made a \$55,000 donation to the Oregon Food Bank to support its vital efforts to combat hunger..

The funds came from the 19th Annual Oregon Tuna Classic, held in Garibaldi, Oregon, on August 16th and 17th, 2024. This event is organized each year in support of the Oregon Food Bank.

In August, tournament participants collectively caught over 6,000 pounds of tuna. Every year, Pacific Seafood, a seafood company headquartered in Clackamas, Oregon, volunteers to process all the tuna and deliver it to the Oregon Food Bank. This initiative aligns with Pacific Seafood's mission of providing the healthiest protein to the world.

"Partnerships like this one with Pacific Seafood and the Oregon Tuna Classic are critical in ensuring families do not have to choose between essentials, like putting

food on the table, securing a roof over their heads, or paying medical bills," said Kathryn Kocarnik, spokesperson for the Oregon Food Bank. "Their support helps provide nourishing food that feels like home to our communities. We believe that Oregon can lead the way in connecting and supporting our communities—because no one should experience hunger."

In addition to the \$55,000 cash donation, the Oregon Tuna Classic is proud to provide the Oregon Food Bank with monetary donations that will allow them to convert funds raised into approximately 275,000 pounds of food, based on the conversion rate of five pounds for every dollar raised.

****Key Highlights from the Oregon Tuna Classic:****
- Over 6,000 pounds of food were provided in 2024, contributing to more than 1 million pounds of food distributed to date.
- The \$55,000 cash contri-

bution in 2024 will translate to 275,000 pounds of food donated.

Members of the Oregon Tuna Classic board, including Mike Susee, Mark Hagedorn, Mike Humes, John Stanfield, and Darci Hansen, will join Juan Delgado, General Manager of the Pacific Seafoods Warrenton Facility, and Brian Boudreau, the Warrenton fleet manager, to present a check to representatives from the Oregon Food Bank. Kathryn Kocarnik, the Community Philanthropy Developer for Corporate and Community Relations at the Oregon Food Bank, will speak about the impact of this donation and emphasize the ongoing collaborative efforts to end hunger in our community.

About the Oregon Tuna Classic
The Oregon Tuna Classic aims to provide a platform for fishermen to engage in friendly competition, catch albacore tuna, and donate their catches to local food



banks and conservation efforts, such as Ducks Unlimited. As a non-profit organization with 501(c)(3) status, the Oregon Tuna Classic is comprised entirely of volunteers. The organization takes pride in effectively managing and protecting the generous donations received from corporations, individuals, and organizations that support these important causes.

OTC's 20th anniversary, dates are August 15th (big fish Friday) and main event on August 16th.

For more information, visit Oregon Tuna Classic – Oregon Tuna Classic Fishing Tournament

About Pacific Seafood
Founded in 1941 by Frank Dulcich, Pacific Seafood remains a family-owned and operated company dedicated

to providing the healthiest protein on the planet. Pacific Seafood manages all parts of the supply chain from harvesting/fishing, processing, and distribution to provide customers with fresh, sustainable, and high-quality products. Pacific Seafood Group is headquartered in Clackamas, Ore. Learn more at PacificSeafood.com.

TAPA presents ‘Things My Mother Taught Me’

The Tillamook Association for the Performing Arts and Cyndi Lewis of Rob Trost Real Estate are pleased to present for your viewing pleasure the comedy "Things My Mother Taught Me" written by Katherine DiSavino and directed by Ann Harper.

It's move in day for Olivia and Gabe. The young couple have relocated from New York to Chicago and are moving into their first apartment

together, but things don't go quite as planned. Their parents show up to help, unbeknownst to one of the pair, while the building super pops in and out of the action with her own sense of style and wit. Surprises await the characters and the audience.

Join in the fun by purchasing your seat to see "Things My Mother Taught Me". Opening night is Friday February 21 and the closing

date is Sunday March 9. Gala night will be on Feb. 21 with complimentary hors d'oeuvres and one free beverage per person. Performances are on Friday (2/21, 2/28, 3/7) and Saturday (2/22, 3/1, 3/8) nights at 7 with Sunday (2/23, 3/2, 3/9) matinees at 2. Doors open half an hour before the show begins. Buy your tickets at TAPA's website tillamook-theater.com or by phoning (503) 812-0275. Tickets may also be purchased at the door, but reservations are highly recommended as sales have been brisk.





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Racers start your... Crabs!

The Lions Club will host the 40th anniversary of the Garibaldi Crab Races on Saturday, March 8 and Sunday, March 9. The family friendly event features prizes, delicious food, beer and wine, and fun for all ages. You won't want to miss all the excitement of your crabs crawling to victory. The races again take

place at the Old Mill Center, 210 3rd Street in Garibaldi. Saturday's races are 10 a.m. to 6 pm, and Sunday's are 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Admission is \$5 for adults and \$2 for children ages 6 to 17. Children ages 5 and under are free. All funds go to local community services.

This annual fundraising gathering also is in support of the nonprofit Lions Clubs' sight and hearing programs for school age children and low-income families in Tillamook County. For this year's races, the Garibaldi club is supported by volunteers from both the Rockaway Beach and Tillamook



Lions Clubs.

To aid in running the event, the community group is still welcoming volunteers for short shifts. Also, more

sponsors and prize contributions are appreciated. For more information, contact Tim Hall at 503-381-0056 or halltimpx7@gmail.com.



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H24895

Tillamook Air Museum to launch virtual reality station: Hangar B: A Virtual Ascent

The Tillamook Air Museum is excited to announce

its latest addition: Hangar B: A Virtual Ascent, a new,

four-minute virtual reality (VR) station that will allow visitors to experience the Museum's iconic "Hangar B" from a whole new perspective.

This dynamic experience invites guests to virtually scale the heights of the historic hangar, combining immersive visuals with innovative storytelling. The VR station will be FREE with Museum admission, adding even more value to every visit.

"At the Tillamook Air Museum, we are committed to innovation and providing distinctive experiences," said Museum Curator Christian Gurling. We strive to offer fresh, exciting ways for our visitors to discover and connect with aviation history."

For more information, visit www.Tillamookair.com



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H23851



FENCEPOSTS



CAPE MEARES
ELLEN STEEN
ellensteen2@gmail.com

February 13-14 saw some mighty cold weather in Oregon, including right here in Cape Meares. Ice coated decks and streets in the village. Our volunteer firefighters checked out Bayocean Road and advised against traveling it. We saw only a dusting of snow with this event, unlike a couple of years ago when Cape Meares had 10+ inches of snow in February. We were fortunate that power stayed during this rough weather and that temperatures soon returned to more moderate levels.

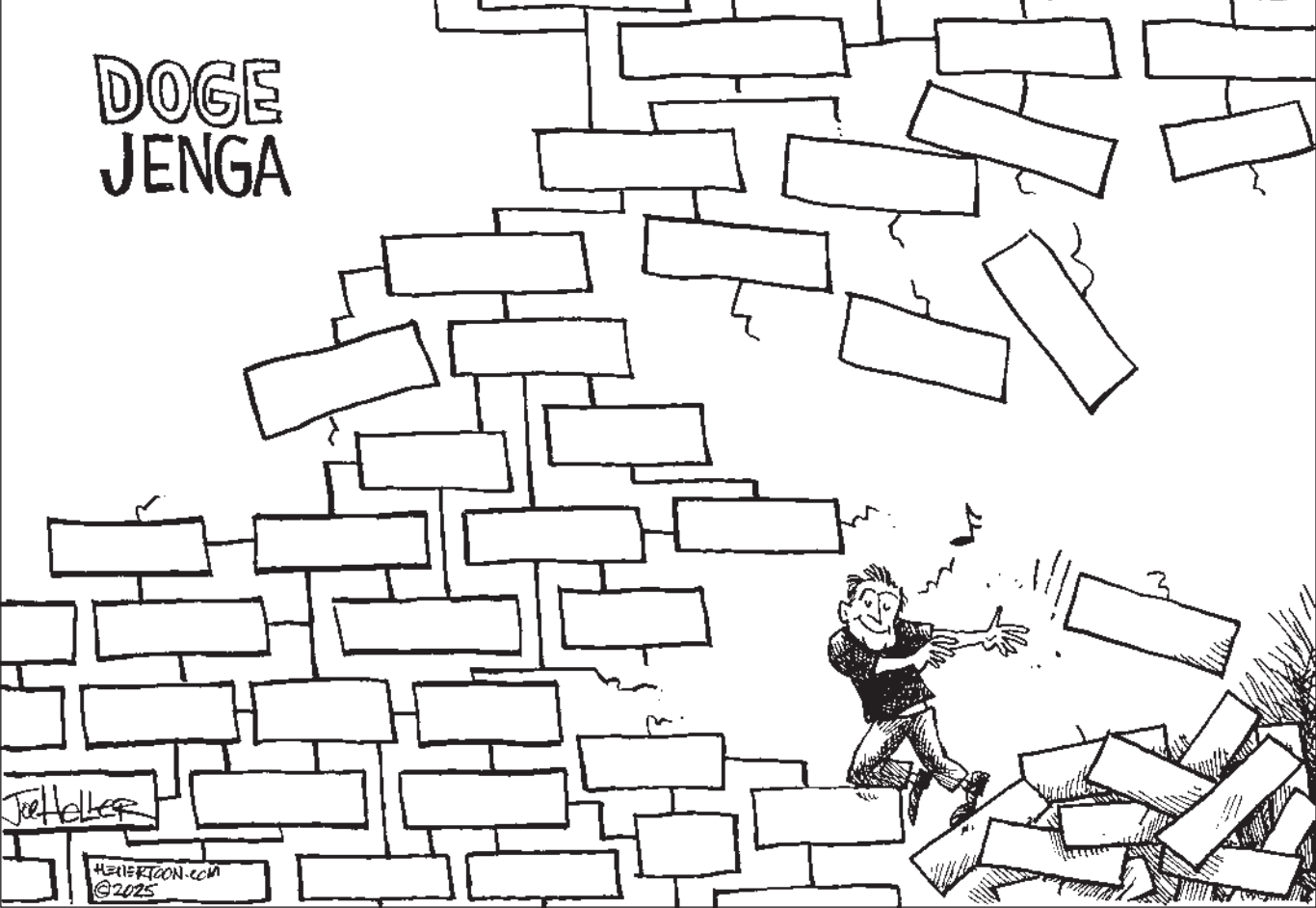
The next day, February 15, Mimi Maduro and Michael Stevens hosted a potluck at the Barbara Bennett Community Center. Close to 30 people braved a cold, damp Saturday evening to bask in the warmth and conviviality of a Cape Meares community potluck. They enjoyed entrées ranging from salmon to curried shrimp to lasagna; side dishes of orzo and peas, sweet potatoes and coleslaw; and scrumptious desserts with chocolate, berries and nuts. The old schoolhouse was toasty with a roaring pellet stove, a space heater, and recently installed insulation under the floor. The highlight of the evening was Deborah Thomas Neal reading the Valentine poem she had written for her husband this year. What a wonderful evening of good cheer and good conversation with our neighbors; thanks, Mimi and Michael.

The “Aging With Grace” series continues with the next presentation on Saturday, March 1, from 10 a.m.–noon at the Barbara Bennett Community Center. Dr. Tina Castanares will give information on advanced

directives, dementia directives, medical aid in dying (MAiD), and voluntary stop eating and drinking (VSED). Dr. Castanares is a retired hospice medical director, co-founder of the Aging in the Gorge Alliance and serves on the Age+ Foundation Board. There will be one more presentation in April to wrap up this important project presented for the benefit of Cape Meares residents and property owners.

Cape Meares’s own Ciel Downing will be one of several poets reading from their work at the Tillamook County Library on March 15 at 2 p.m. Ciel joins Daneen Bergland, Emily Ransdell and Karen Rigby for this special afternoon. You may also see a list of Ciel’s published works and sign up to receive a monthly poem by visiting her website, www.cldowningbooks.com. Ciel’s poems are amazing works of art, capturing nature and her experiences in haunting imagery. Don’t miss out.

Neighbor Sally McGee almost fell victim to a scam you may not have heard about. She was researching a recipe online when her computer froze and a red alert appeared, apparently from Apple Security. The alert urged her to call an 800 number, which she did... starting an hours-long ordeal. Luckily for her, one of our volunteer firefighters happened by, and she told him what was going on. He took her phone and confronted the person on the other end of the line, who promptly hung up. The next day they called Sally back twice, until she prudently blocked that number. Sally contacted the police, who told her this is an active scam that they cannot prevent. They urged her to spread the word—which she is doing by sharing this in the Fencepost. The correct protocol if your computer is frozen by an alert is to shut down the computer and then restart it. That way, the scammers do not gain entry. Thanks, Sally. Stay safe out there, neighbors.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Concerned about CFPB closure

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) has been shut down in the past week by Elon Musk and President Trump. This causes me alarm and makes me feel vulnerable. Think about it--the CFPB was formed by Congress after the 2008 financial crisis to protect consumers (that’s all of us) reining in banks, credit card companies, predatory lenders, credit reporting agencies and scammers. The CFPB is our watchdog! Over the past 17 years the CFPB has been able to claw back from big business \$21billion dollars for us as consumers.

Congress set up the CFPB. Musk & Trump are not authorized to dismantle this agency though they have shut its door. I urge you to speak out against this illegal action. Defend the CFPB. You can call or email our US Congressional Representative Bonamici <https://bonamici.house.gov/contact/email/comment> and our US Senators, Merkley <https://www.merkley.senate.gov/contact/> and Wyden <https://www.wyden.senate.gov/contact/email-ron>

*Mimi Maduro
Tillamook*

DOGE undercuts constitution

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, ensure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Those are the beautiful words from the Preamble of the Constitution that the Congress and the President swear to defend.

I truly believe half the Congress and the President were just mouthing the words of the oath and care not a fig for anything other than increasing the wealth of their billionaire buddies.

DOGE makes a mockery of those words. Nobody voted for DOGE. It’s the fevered brainchild of Elon Musk, an immigrant from Apartheid South Africa, who was never elected to anything but bought his position for \$250 million or more.

Mr. Sherman has a point about the problem of our indebtedness, but he is wrong to hang it solely on the legislature. The biggest problem arises out of our own ignorance and greed. We

believe tax cuts are always good. At one time, we collected enough in taxes, but starting with Reagan, tax cuts always seem to make for good politics but have had disastrous results.

68% of the electorate did not vote for Trump.

Discussion welcome at codger817@gmail.com.

*Jim Heffernan
Tillamook, Oregon*

Wrestling program supports autistic community members

To whom it may concern: Grapplers for Autism, Inc. is a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating inclusive opportunities in martial arts for individuals on the autism spectrum. Through partnerships with Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu studios and community support, we provide children and adults with the chance to build confidence, develop social skills, and improve their overall well-being through the transformative power of martial arts.

Recently, we welcomed a new sponsored participant—a military veteran ready to take on a six-week challenge at a local Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu studio. This opportunity reflects our mission to empower individuals of all backgrounds and abilities, showing that everyone can thrive on and off the mat with the right support.

Research and personal experiences continue to demonstrate the profound impact of martial arts for individuals with autism, including enhanced social skills, structured routines, reduced stimming behaviors, and increased self-confidence. At Grapplers for Autism, we strive to make these benefits accessible while fostering a spirit of equity, inclusion, and leadership. We are particularly passionate about supporting people on the autism spectrum to develop self-defense skills, achieve black belt status, and even inspire the next generation as studio leaders and trainers.

Join Us at the Grapplers’ Summit – April 12, 2025, we invite you to be part of The Grapplers’ Summit on April 12, 2025, at the Ashland Springs Hotel. This event will bring together athletes, families, and supporters to celebrate our mission and raise critical funds to sponsor more participants.

Registration Fee: \$175 per table or booth (includes complimentary lunch, a formal dinner, and access to the

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Wednesdays 4 p.m.

Tillamook Headlight Herald

WRITE TO US

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the editor should contain at most 350 words. The Headlight Herald reserves the right to edit, condense, or reject any letter to the editor. Letters published in The Headlight Herald will also be published online.

Letters to the editor and guest columns must include your first and last name, city or town or residence, and phone number for verification purposes.

Letters endorsing candidates or campaign issues must be received no later than ten days before an election. Letters written by candidates will not be accepted. Letters to the editor should be the author’s work.

We strongly discourage and will attempt to weed out form letters, letters mailed to other news outlets, or letters written and edited by a third party, including but not limited to political parties.

We try to restrict the printing of one submission per author per month. We do not publish anonymous letters, personal attacks, personal complaints, poetry, consumer complaints, or letters written in bad taste.

Letters need to be submitted by **4 p.m. Wednesday** the week prior to publication.

While we strive to publish all viewpoints, Headlight Herald and Country Media reserve the right to refuse to publish any letter or guest editorial.

OBITUARIES

Obituaries need to be submitted by **4 p.m. Wednesday** the week prior to publication.

SUBMISSIONS

Submissions may be sent in by:

- **Email:** Editor Will Chappell at headlighteditor@countrymedia.net
- **Mail:** Headlight Herald P.O. Box 444, Tillamook, OR 97141
- **Stop by our office:** 1906 Second St. Tillamook, OR

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Tillamook

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Results from our online poll:

Would you support alterations to restrictions on property tax increases and the assessed value of properties instituted by measures 5 and 50 in the 1990s?

Yes - 29

No - 99

Undecided - 14

Stay connected to us!

Check out next week’s poll at

TillamookHeadlightHerald.com

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Questionable material for children at Tillamook County Library

As a mother of 3 small children, I occasionally peruse the children’s section of the main branch of the Tillamook County Library. I find some of their choices in books for little kids highly questionable. With books like Not My Idea: A Book About Whiteness telling kids that racism is white person’s problem, innocence is overrated and being white is a bad thing. This book is loaded with Christian symbols and American flags in an attempt to ingrain into children that these are all bad things associated with being white. I guarantee that if this book were about any other skin color being bad it would have never seen the light of day,

instead our library is proudly carrying it. Two more questionable children’s books at our library are It Feels Good to Be Yourself: A Book About Gender Identity and Gender Identity for Kids. Both of these books teach kids about how you can be born a boy or a girl and not feel like you are the sex that you were born and therefore you can decide you can be something else or nothing at all or multiple identities all at once. There is also A Kids Book About Pride and Pride: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag, which glorifies alleged pederast Harvey Milk. Its astonishing how many books with LGBTQ themes there are in the children’s section of our library. The book King & King & Family even kidnaps a little native girl from the jungle to be the

daughter of the two kings in the book. As we all know children are incredibly impressionable and easily swayed. Adults hold great influence and power over a child’s development, and the adults in charge of the children’s section of our library are making a strong attempt to stock the children’s section with propaganda that is intended to fill children with lies meant to confuse. Gender Identity is not real, biological sex is. Cigarette companies are prohibited from using cartoons or any other marketing that will appeal to children because as we all know cigarettes are harmful to children. Why is it any different for books? Hormones and surgeries are being used to transition confused children because adults & media

like these books has messed with their heads during a very delicate time in their development...Childhood. No child should be told to just accept mental illness as normal and play along with it, they should be taught what is normal, healthy behavior and what is not. Furthermore, no book should ever glorify an alleged pedophile such as Harvey Milk, especially not a children’s book. I urge you to stop into the library and let them know that material like these books do not belong in the children’s section. Innocence is not overrated and should be held on to as long as possible throughout childhood. Children are a precious gift, and we must protect them.

Tiffany Jacob Tillamook



GUEST COLUMN

A lifeline delayed: OHA’s red tape is holding back Dialysis in Tillamook

Cyrus Javadi

Let’s state the unvarnished truth right up front: dialysis is not like skipping that optional Pilates class. When your kidneys quit on you, there’s no “maybe I’ll try again next week.” We’re talking life-or-death, every other day. No one does it for fun, and no one can just “take a break.” Yet, for the past year, the Oregon Health Authority (OHA)—the entity supposedly designed to safeguard public health—has been caught in a tangle of its own red tape while patients in Tillamook endure exhausting, bank-account-draining journeys to Hillsboro simply to stay alive. This isn’t just a healthcare mishap; it’s a glaring example of how bureaucratic red tape can undermine urgent needs. Government agencies are supposed to help us navigate crises, not add to them. But in this case, the snail’s pace of approvals has forced patients—our friends, family, neighbors—to bear the bur-



den of exhausting, expensive commutes for treatment they cannot afford to skip. The Tillamook Dialysis Dilemma It all started when U.S. Renal Care pulled the plug on its Tillamook facility with barely a month’s notice. For 11 local patients—each needing dialysis multiple times a week—options were immediately scarce. Lincoln City’s clinic was at capacity. Astoria was a long haul for people who already feel wiped out after treatments. That left the Portland area, transforming a routine medical appointment

into an all-day expedition. If that were the only problem, it would be bad enough. But here on the Oregon coast, roads can be shut down by landslides, ice storms, or other unpredictable events. When severe weather hits, traveling to the valley can become impossible—never mind safe. One good winter storm, and dialysis can be out of reach for days. Local healthcare providers, including Adventist Health Tillamook, stepped up to search for solutions. They reached out to major dialysis companies like Fresenius and DaVita, hoping to find someone to replace the closed clinic. Meanwhile, OHA’s approval process moved at a crawl, requiring a stack of applications and plenty of back-and-forth. That meant Tillamook’s only near-term option—a nonprofit provider ready to open a new facility—remained stuck in regulatory limbo. OHA: The Agency That’s Supposed to Care

For those who might not follow Oregon’s government structure, the Oregon Health Authority is the state’s central hub for public health and healthcare oversight. With a biennial budget of around \$27 billion and more than 4,000 employees, the agency is built to tackle everything from Medicaid programs to licensing healthcare facilities. In principle, that means ensuring care is accessible to all Oregonians, urban or rural. But there’s a difference between having resources on paper and using them effectively in practice. Too often, OHA has been slow to act, particularly when time is of the essence. The bottlenecks and layers of review might have some merit in certain contexts—quality control and safety are important—but in life-and-death cases like dialysis, there has to be a faster track. The Tillamook situation is a painful reminder that bureaucracy can sometimes overshadow common sense, even when urgent healthcare solutions are desperately needed. No one expects OHA to work magic overnight, but when it takes more than a year to even come close to approving a new clinic, you start to wonder if the regulatory safeguards are overshadowing the mission.

After all, if the essential goal is to protect lives, shouldn’t an emergency like the Tillamook dialysis shortage get expedited, not bogged down? A Year of Waiting The biggest frustration? We’re well over a year into this saga, and there’s still no firm date for when Tillamook will have its own dialysis clinic again. Each additional delay forces patients to endure draining roundtrip journeys to keep themselves alive. Many of these individuals have limited financial and emotional reserves as it is; piling on travel expenses and stress only makes matters worse. And it’s not as if a formal timeline has been laid out—no one seems able to say exactly when the red tape will be cut. While local advocates write letters, gather petitions, and plead for action, the approval process remains murky. It’s easy to see how people would grow cynical. When the agency tasked with safeguarding public health can’t or won’t move swiftly in an emergency, skepticism is bound to follow. This doesn’t have to be the norm. OHA, in theory, is well-positioned to respond decisively to crises, especially in rural communities where healthcare options can be scarce. The current slow-motion approach isn’t just inconveniencing patients—it’s actively risking their health. If oversight is meant to protect people, that protection should never devolve into endless waiting. Walking the Tightrope Between Care and Chaos Let’s be clear: A certain level of oversight is valid—nobody wants a medical clinic running on corner-cutting approvals. But there’s a balance between diligence and overkill. When the clock is ticking for patients who can’t afford to miss even a single treatment, that balance needs to favor urgent, well-structured solutions. This impasse also highlights a broader concern about how rural healthcare is handled. Small communities like Tillamook are vulnerable to service closures precisely because they don’t have a lot of backup options. If one company decides to leave, patients can face a life-or-death crisis overnight. And if the state agency in charge can’t respond in a timely way, the crisis just drags on. We can hope that OHA is taking lessons from this and examining how to streamline emergency approvals. Admittedly, balancing thorough reviews with quick action isn’t a trivial task. But if a year of delayed dialysis services doesn’t move the needle, it’s hard to imagine what will. Time to Hold OHA’s Feet to the Fire

At the end of the day, this isn’t about bashing one agency for the sake of it—there are undoubtedly dedicated people at OHA trying to do the right thing. It’s about recognizing that bureaucratic inertia can have real and dangerous consequences, especially for medically fragile individuals. Tillamook’s dialysis patients deserve better than endless administrative hurdles. Whether you lean left, right, or somewhere in between, it’s fair to expect our public health authority to make essential services a top priority. This is, after all, a literal matter of life and death. Dialysis isn’t a luxury. It can’t be postponed. And when geography and severe weather already compound the difficulty, every delay in opening a local clinic makes an already precarious situation worse. So here’s the simple ask: OHA needs to step up, break through the logjam of regulations, and communicate clear, achievable timelines. A year of waiting and uncertainty is simply too long for patients who need dialysis to stay alive. We should all keep pushing for clarity and action—because if our system can’t handle this urgent need promptly, what faith can any of us have in its ability to address future crises? And that’s really the crux of it. Government exists to ensure basic services are there when people need them. When that process gets stuck, it’s up to the rest of us—neighbors, lawmakers, journalists—to demand accountability. Let’s hope OHA can turn this around and show that, yes, it’s capable of serving Oregonians as intended. Tillamook’s patients can’t afford another year stuck in limbo, and neither can we.

Cyrus Javadi (R) is a Representative for Oregon’s Dist. 32. He is also a Dentist living in Tillamook OR.

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MLS#25-54 Coley Trost \$389,000

Well-maintained triple-wide manufactured home on 2.02 level acres located in the desirable South Prairie area, just minutes from downtown Tillamook. This spacious 1,996 sq. ft. home features 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, including a primary suite with a walk-in closet and private bath. The layout offers a large kitchen, family room, living room, and dining area. Solid construction with good siding, roof, and windows. Oversized two-car garage includes a large pantry area for extra storage. The detached 1,100 sq. ft. shop with a concrete floor and electricity provides additional space for hobbies or projects. Served by public water and an on-site septic system. Enjoy country living with room to breathe, all at an excellent value. Call to schedule your showing today!
MLS#25-50 Dusty and Coley Trost \$469,000

Located just steps from miles of sandy shoreline, this stunning property offers the perfect combination of modern upgrades and coastal charm. Designed with comfort and style in mind, you'll find nothing but quality finishes inside and out of this completely updated home. Knotty alder millwork with two-tone stain finish throughout. Cozy wood burning stove. Custom knotty alder cabinets with pullouts and soft-close drawers, stunning Quartzite countertops, farm sink, pot filler and under cabinet lighting all make the kitchen as functional as it is beautiful. A spa-inspired bathroom with elegant tile work, heated floors, walk-in shower and motion sensor lighting creates a luxurious retreat after a day on the beach. Step out back and enjoy a private outdoor living with a spacious paver patio, storage for beach toys and room for an outdoor kitchen. Don't miss the opportunity to call this meticulously upgraded coastal retreat your own.
MLS#25-49 Macy Thompson \$619,700

Architecturally fascinating home in the heart of Oceanside is located just a few blocks away from the beach! This unique property offers breathtaking ocean views from every floor, especially from the large rooftop deck. The home boasts solid construction, featuring massive beams complemented by warm wood interiors and angled windows. A stone surround fireplace anchors the upper living area, where the coffee table itself becomes a work of art centered around the beam. The kitchen and bathrooms feature quartz counters and wood cabinets. Recent upgrades include LVT flooring, new hot water heater, interior paint, cedar fence and landscaping. It's truly a one-of-a-kind property!
MLS#25-42 Cyndi Lewis \$650,000

Gleneden Beach Retreat - Walk to the Beach & Salishan! This light-filled beach home offers the perfect blend of comfort and convenience—ideal for full-time living or vacation retreat. Vaulted ceilings, skylights, and expansive windows create an airy atmosphere, while the open-concept living space flows seamlessly to a spacious deck, perfect for BBQs and entertaining. The versatile loft includes a den and extra sleeping area, complementing the home's ability to accommodate all of your family and friends. With ample storage, a nice yard, and a prime location near sandy beaches, golf, fine dining, and spa amenities, this fully furnished, move-in-ready gem is a must-see!
MLS#25-38 Dusty and Coley Trost \$519,000

Beautiful 1.36 acre lot in Valley View Heights subdivision! Build your dream home with panoramic valley views and glimpses of the bay/ocean. Quiet neighborhood with paved roads and underground utilities. Bring your vision and make this spectacular lot your own!
MLS#25-57 Macy Thompson \$225,000

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Death Notices

Richard Persons, 90, of Tillamook, died on Feb. 10, 20025. Richard was born on Oct. 8, 1934.

Richard celebrated his 90th birthday in Oct. He died peacefully in his home with family support. A family gathering is planned at a future date. Waud’s Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Elaine LaRoy Blaser, 66, of Tillamook, died on Feb. 15, 2025. Elaine was born on May 12, 1958. A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

FENCEPOSTS



SOUTH COUNTY
MELONIE FERGUSON
503-812-4242
mossroses@yahoo.com

Congratulations to Ruby Fry-Matson on her recent retirement, after twenty-eight years of service, as an Administrative Assistant at Tillamook County Pioneer Museum. Her coworkers threw a party in her honor last Sunday afternoon. We’ll all miss having Ruby, one of our own, greet us when we visit the museum. Fortunately, her retirement will free up more time, we imagine, for Ruby’s enthusiastic involvement with Nestucca Valley Lion’s Club.

Hebo Women’s Book Club met for February at South Tillamook County Library last week. Attendees included established members Velma Michaud, Nancy Whitehead and Joan Wilke; new member Jodi Bordeaux joined the gathering for the first time. Melonie Merryman, Madlen Silkwood and I couldn’t be there. The group discussed “How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents” by Julia Alvarez. The library has this title in a “Book Club Kit,” which makes it especially easy to access. The fun read is a collection of recollections of four fictional daughters who immigrated from the Dominican Republic some generations ago. I am enjoying the last few chapters this week.

A news release from The Heart of CARTM requests that we save the weekend of May 15-18 for their “Trash Bash 2025.” CARTM hosts the annual reduce, re-use, recycle event in north Tillamook County. Those who care to can consider this a call to artists; there’s always a “trashion” show and an art show and sale associated with the weekend’s offerings. The theme is “Gathering.”

Northwest Parenting and Tillamook Family Counseling Center will host a free series of parent education classes via Zoom. The course

LETTERS

from

From Page A5

fashion show).

Silent Auction Contributions: If you are unable to attend, we welcome donations of items for our silent auction to support this important cause.

Your involvement helps us grow our community of inclusion, ensuring more individuals can experience the life-changing benefits of martial arts. Together, we

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Frances ‘Ellen’ Seaton-Proffitt

March 2, 1935 - Jan. 27, 2025



Frances “Ellen” Seaton-Proffitt passed from this earth on January 27th, 2025 in her own home with her family by her side. Born March 2nd, 1935 to Carl and Frances Rode in Hollywood, California, she lived a full life as a fiercely independent woman with an endless capacity for love and acceptance. After much travel and many adventures, she finally settled in Tillamook, Oregon in 1981, where she established herself here through her work at the Headlight Herald, the Kilchis House,

and her Avon business, as well as her devotion within her faith community.

She is survived by her husband, David Proffitt; her sons Douglas Lambert, James Lambert, and Carl Seaton; her daughters-in-law Mayme Seaton and Terri Lambert; 5 grandchildren; 5 great-grandchildren; and numerous others she chose to call her own.

In accordance with her faith, she has gone home to rejoin her parents; her first two husbands, Robert Lambert and Douglas Seaton; four newborn infants; and many friends and family. Please join us to celebrate her life on the afternoon of her 90th birthday at Alderbrook Hall.

Ellen’s Celebration of Life March 2nd, 2025 at 2 p.m. Alderbrook Hall 5995 Alderbrook Rd. Tillamook, OR 97141

FENCEPOSTS



ROCKAWAY BEACH
SCOTT FISHER
sfisher71@yahoo.com

Rockaway Beach Mayor Charles McNeilly has said that one of the most enjoyable parts of his position is giving out community grants.

In the February 12 City Council meeting, the mayor, city council and all in attendance heard from two grant recipients about what they were able to accomplish with their most recent grants.

Terri Walhood, former Rockaway Beach mayor and founder of the Hope Chest Thrift Shop, spoke about the use of their 2024 community grant, totaling \$8,206.64.

Many of us in Rockaway knew that the Hope Chest had lost their previous location of 20 years, just north of the Post Office on 101. “We had 30 days to move.” They would not be able to take any of their wall displays with them, adding additional expense to the rapid relocation.

Fortunately, a sympathetic Rockaway Beach resident purchased the old US Bank building, and soon the Hope Chest had signed a lease on it. Terri ordered displays, stretching the available money to have them shipped unassembled. “We called on a lot of people to help us,” she said.

Terri had ordered a heavy glass cabinet (around 500 pounds). When it arrived on short notice, City Councilor

See FENCEPOST, Page A8

We're proud to support our Oregon operating communities, and in 2024 we contributed nearly \$300,000 to projects across the state.

Thank you to our nonprofit partners for helping us provide important resources our communities need to grow and thrive!

 **Weyerhaeuser** | **WY.COM** |    

Bill Denny Collins

July 28, 1940 - Feb. 11, 2025



Bill Denny Collins passed on February 11, 2025 at the age of 84 after spending his last days surrounded by family and friends. Bill was born July 28th, 1940 in Tillamook, Oregon. He was the third of five siblings born to Otis and Thetta Collins.

He spent his early childhood running amok with his brother Richard in Idaville. Hunting for golf balls, walking down the old railroad tracks to trout fish in their secret spot, and camping for

days at a time up at Kilchis Park.

Bill married his high school sweetheart Carlene Johnson and went on to have four children: Mike (Kim), Michelle Richardson (Randy), Mitzie, Mark (Melissa)

As well as 9 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren.

He lived in Tillamook throughout the entirety of his life and many of his closest friends remained those from his graduating class of 1958

Bill and Carlene owned and operated Bill’s Deli Mart on H

HWY 101 for 23 years and made many friends through the store as well..

He was an avid hobbyist who loved woodworking, fixing up cars, and restoring World War II era rifles among many other projects.

Please join us for a celebration of life at 1 p.m. Saturday March 1st at the Fairview Grange Hall.

BASIC OBITUARY: Includes name, age, town of residency, and funeral services info - No Cost.

CUSTOM OBITUARY: Cost is \$100 for the first 200 words, \$50 for each additional 200 words.

PREMIUM OBITUARY: Several photos and a longer announcement - cost varies by length of announcement.



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AN INTRODUCTION TO ARREST, BAIL, AND CHARGING IN OREGON

Speakers:
District Attorney Aubrey Olson
Sheriff Joshua Brown

Special Guest:
Chief Nick Troxel

An open, town hall style, educational event where will we present information about arrest decisions, bail and release, and charging decisions under Oregon law and answer questions on these subjects.

Tillamook County Library
Hatfield Room
1716 3rd St. Tillamook, OR
March 4th 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm

Virtual Link Available



TILLAMOOK COUNTY WELLNESS

Marian Johnson’s journey: Resilience, community, and the power of support

Marian Johnson

In 2005, my husband, two children, and I moved to Hebo, Oregon, in search of a fresh start. We lived in the front room of single-wide trailer. The bathroom floor had collapsed, and holes in the walls made life challenging, but even then, we felt blessed. Compared to many of our neighbors, we were fortunate to have one of the few working bathrooms in the area.

At the time, my three-year-old son, Trevon, wasn’t speaking yet, which led us to enroll him in Head Start in Beaver, Oregon. He was also picked up by Northwest ESD Tillamook for additional services later in

the day.

Tre started attending Head Start to address his developmental needs, but what I gained from the experience was far more than I ever expected.

Every day, a small bus would pick up Trevon from our trailer. They kindly made room for me and my one-year old daughter as well. Head Start didn’t just serve Tre—they fed all three of us and offered me invaluable guidance on how to move forward with my life. They counseled me on returning to school and taking steps to improve my family’s situation.

Even though Trevon went to Tillamook for part of the day, the bus would



Marian Johnson

drop my daughter and me back home, where we waited for his return. It was during those quiet hours, sitting in the front room of that trailer, that I made the decision to enroll in nursing school. It wasn’t an

ideal time—without stable housing and with two small children—but I knew it was a step I had to take.

The challenges didn’t end there. We eventually moved to Tillamook, but we lost our home again and were forced to live in a motel funded by the CARE office until they could help us find stable housing.

When we finally moved into a house, it felt like a turning point. I still live in that home today, and I’ve even been able to purchase it—a symbol of everything we’ve fought for as a family.

Today, I sit here as the manager of a labor and delivery unit. This achievement wasn’t mine alone; it’s the result of the countless

people and organizations that supported me during those difficult years. From Head Start and Northwest ESD to the Oregon Food Bank, CARE, and many others, these groups surrounded my family with warmth, meals, encouragement, and hope. They didn’t just help us survive—they empowered me to dream and take action for a better future.

Sixteen years later, I reflect on how blessed I am to have been part of such an incredible community. I’ll never forget how much these organizations helped me when I had nothing to give my children for Christmas or how they provided food and shelter when

everything else seemed to fall apart.

If I’ve learned anything from my journey, it’s this: community and compassion can change lives. I am living proof that with the right support, determination, and faith, it is possible to rise from poverty and create a life you’re proud of.

To all the organizations and individuals who dedicate their time to helping families like mine—thank you. You are the reason I am where I am today.

For more local health and wellness information, visit www.tillamookcounty-wellness.org or follow Tillamook County Wellness on Facebook and Instagram.



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All land or lots, offered for sale, improved or unimproved are subject to land use laws and regulations, and governmental approval for any zoning changes or use.

H21057

Police partner with stores to address abandoned shopping carts

The Tillamook Police Department is actively working with local store owners to ensure shopping carts remain at their designated store locations. Abandoned shopping carts can create hazards and clutter public spaces, and we appreciate the community’s assistance in addressing this issue.

If you notice an abandoned shopping cart, please contact the appropriate store using the following numbers:

- Safeway: 1-888-552-2787
- Grocery Outlet: 503-354-5298
- Fred Meyer: 1-888-552-2787

Additionally, we want to remind residents of City Ordinance 130.24, which states:

(E) Unauthorized Appropriation of Shopping Cart: A person commits a violation if they abandon or are in possession of a shopping cart off the premises of the retail establishment without written permission from the cart’s owner.

If you see someone removing or possessing a shopping

cart off store premises, please contact the Tillamook City Police at 503-842-2522 or the non-emergency line at 503-815-1911.

We appreciate the community’s cooperation in keeping Tillamook clean and safe. Thank you for your support! For questions, please contact Chief Troxel.

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24T10

2024 Escape Active AWD
List Price \$33,160.00
Dir Discount \$600.00
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24T27

2024 Escape Active AWD
List Price \$37,020.00
Dir Discount \$700.00
Rebate \$4,000.00
Sale Price \$32,320.00



24T47

2024 Ranger Lariat 4X4 2.3L EcoBoost
List Price \$49,795.00
Dir Discount \$900.00
Rebate \$1,000.00
Sale Price \$47,895.00



24F1

2024 Mustang GT Premier 5.0L V8
List Price \$56,515.00
Discount \$1,300.00
Rebate \$1,000.00
Sale Price \$54,215.00



24T65

2024 F-150 XLT 4X4 3.5L EcoBoost
List Price \$61,525.00
Discount \$1,900.00
Rebate \$2,000.00
Sale Price \$57,625.00



24T52

2024 F-150 XLT 4X4 3.5L EcoBoost
List Price \$62,425.00
Discount \$1,900.00
Rebate \$2,000.00
Sale Price \$58,525.00

FENCEPOST from

From Page A7

If somebody gets burned out of a house, or needs to leave because of emergency, they can contact me 24/7 and I’ll open up one of the stores to find them blankets, a coffee pot, toaster, or something to help them get through.”

Next, Kristine Hayes, president of the Rockaway Beach Chamber of Commerce, thanked the city for grants received. One important use of the money: advertising and brochures that feature the city’s unique features, available at the historic caboose visitor’s center.

On average, 17 volunteers staff the visitors center. “We’re open seven days a week for most of the year, and many summer days we’re open double shifts. Our volunteers are advocates for our community and experts in our local resources. We are so thankful for our volunteers, and the support and the resources these small community grants gave us this past year.”

Kristine continued: “We also have a strong team of about 10 to 15 local volunteers for events, another 40 or more from outside entities such as the American Kite Flying Association that comes and helps us with the Kite Festival.” Kristine pointed out that the kite flyers pay their own airfare and shipping to transport their kites, which as we know can be incredibly elaborate.

“We hope to have funds for our future kite festivals to offer our wonderful kite fliers complimentary festival T-shirts,” she added.

“These grant funds allocated for the Kite Festival provided lodging and meals for the kite fliers. We are incredibly grateful to have had the support this last year. It’s the first time we actually had funding and not fund-raised for that money.”

Kristine also noted, “2024 marked the second season of the Rockaway Beach Farmer’s Market, which has seen remarkable turnouts. The grant funds were a significant contributor to our success” As in years past, the 2025 market has a soft open date of May 8, from 3 p.m.-7 p.m., with regular market dates on Thursdays from June 5-September 25.

City Council also passed resolutions approving use of the Wayside for the 2025 Arts & Crafts Fair, August 1-3, and the Kite festival, September 12-14. To learn more or sign up, visit <https://rockawaybeach.net>.



Higher interest rates slowed home sales in 2024, but listings inventory on the rise

Staff report

Following a strong 2023, high interest rates slowed sales of non-beachfront homes in Tillamook County in 2024, leading to a large inventory drop midyear. However, Pam Zielinski, Principal Broker for Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Northwest Real Estate, said that she had already seen an improvement in listings in January and was feeling positive about the rest of the year. “I’m optimistic about having a good 2025 and it already has kind of started off to be much better than it was,” Zielinski said. Throughout 2024, 433 homes sold of 743 listed across Tillamook County, with the county seeing 40 or more sales each month between May and October. The average sale price for a home in the county was \$612,000, while the median was \$495,000 and the most expensive property transacted \$3.5 million. Inventory tracked up through the first half of the year, rising from 40 homes in February to a peak of almost 100 in July, before a big dip back down to just over 40 in September, with a further decrease to just 20 homes on the market by December. Zielinski said that the big dip had likely been caused by sellers who tested the market with aggressive prices due to the strong conditions in 2023 before making the decision to pull their listing when there was a lack of action. “It’s definitely an indicator that over the last year there are more people who expected higher prices because the market was so brisk the prior year,” Zielinski said. “So, they put their house on the market at a price that they really wanted to get, then reality hit



them, and nothing is happening then they take it off the market.” Hard hit in the softening market were higher end properties in beach communities with water views but no direct beach access. Zielinski said that demand for properties along the beach had remained strong, but that those up the hill or even across the street were sitting on the market. Another factor in the challenging market is high interest rates, which Zielinski believes are keeping people, especially those looking for homes in the \$350,000-650,000 price range, from buying. Despite the challenge, Zielinski said that houses in that price range in

good condition and cheaper houses were still selling and that interest rates weren’t as bad as many perceived. “I know everybody thinks interest rates are high, and they’re higher than they had been, but they really aren’t awful,” Zielinski said. “They’re okay, they’re manageable.” Zielinski also said that she believed the updated rules governing real estate agents’ relationship with prospective clients that went into effect in August had impacted the market. The new regulations require agents to sign contracts with prospective clients outlining the fees they will charge, which Zielinski said had been a challenge for many brokers

initially but has since been getting better. Another trend that Zielinski said she has noticed in recent years is an increase in people moving from out of state to escape hot climates or relocate following a natural disaster. She specifically mentioned that she had sold five homes to former residents of Paradise, California, after a fire devastated the community in 2018 and said that she expected to see a similar influx following the Los Angeles area fires earlier this year. “I think once they kind of get over the initial shock we’re going to get a lot more people coming up here wanting to buy a house in our area,” Zielinski said.

Rhodes Qualifies for State swimming

David Richmond
Tillamook Swim Coach

Indi Rhodes qualified for high school swimming’s biggest stage Saturday afternoon at the district meet in Astoria. She will swim the 500 freestyle and 100 breaststroke at Tualatin Hills in Beaverton Friday night. Rhodes star shown brightest in the 500 freestyle where she placed second and broke six minutes for the first time in her career. Her finals time was an improvement by a remarkable 10 seconds. She’s worked harder than anyone and led most of the practice sets all season. The honor of swimming at state is well deserved. We are very proud of her. The Tillamook boys placed 3rd at District for the second year in a row. Even with all the talent they graduated from the previous season, the boys were hungry and finished strong. I think we’re more motivated now than ever. We were runners up last weekend and had a chance for second slip away at the end of the district meet. The boys are already talking about next year and I think that is a great thing. The girls’ team moved well up into the top half of the district for the first time in a handful of years. I like to say we’re back as a program and it’s fun to see. Our girls are young and talented. Placing 5th out of 11 teams is a strong finish

in a development year. There were many positives we can be proud of from this meet; It was a great experience moving ahead for our future teams. In all the Cheese-makers can boast recognizing a long list of sixteen (16) All-District performers (Top 6) in the meet. In addition, there were another 18 top-12 finishers for Tillamook. In a district as talented as ours it was impressive to see us finish this strongly. We can be pleased with the overall outcome and season. The following swimmers and their respective we events were All-District:

1. Girls Medley Relay (Riley Cummings, Maloree Malcom, Indi Rhodes, Emmy Mulder) - 4th Place
2. Boys Medley Relay (Johnny Sappington, Brett Ebel, Wyatt Swart, Noel Gutierrez) - 5th Place
3. Soren Johnson - 200 Freestyle - 3rd Place
4. Diego Velazquez - 200 Freestyle - 5th Place
5. Emmy Mulder - 50 Freestyle - 6th Place
6. Wyatt Swart - 100 Butterfly - 4th Place
7. Indi Rhodes - 500 Freestyle - 2nd Place
8. Soren Johnson - 500 Freestyle - 2nd Place
9. Johnny Sappington - 500 Freestyle - 3rd Place
10. Diego Velazquez - 500 Freestyle - 5th Place
11. Boys 200 Free Relay (Tristan Valencia, Cyrus Werner, Soren Johnson, Noel Gutierrez) - 4th Place
12. Johnny Sappington - 100 Backstroke - 6th Place
13. Indi Rhodes - 100 Breaststroke - 3rd Place
14. Brett Ebel - 100 Breaststroke - 6th Place
15. Girls 400 Free Relay (Emerie Munly, Emmy Mulder, Sandra Hall, Indi Rhodes) - 6th Place
16. Boys 400 Free Relay (Cyrus Werner, Soren Johnson, Wyatt Swart, Johnny Sappington) - 4th Place

Moberly recognized for outstanding achievements by Oregon Special Districts Association recently

The statewide organization of Oregon special districts has recognized the Nehalem Bay Health District as the outstanding small special district in the state, and Health District board secretary/treasurer Debbie Moberly of Nehalem as Oregon’s outstanding special district board member. The Special Districts Association represents more than 920 special districts in

Oregon, including health, port, water, sewer, recreation and fire districts. The recognition was announced during the organization’s recent annual conference in Bend. Moberly was recognized with the “Outstanding Special District Service Award” presented annually to an “individual board member who has contributed substantially to the improvement and successful operation of his or

her district.” Among her many accomplishments, Moberly has led the modernization and enhancement of the District’s budget and financial management and served as a lead director working on issues relating to the District-owned Nehalem Valley Care Center in Wheeler. Moberly also serves as president of the Lower Nehalem Community Trust.

The Health District was recognized for “accomplishments which allow [districts] to provide better service to the public,” and particularly “for innovative projects and programs, outstanding safety, public information, public involvement in a district decision-making process, and outstanding achievement.” The District is currently constructing the new Nehalem Bay Health Center

and Pharmacy in Wheeler, a 16,000 square foot upgrade of the existing health center that will have modern facilities to offer specialty care, including dental and x-ray services. Construction is on schedule with substantial completion scheduled in early September 2025. The District has also begun renovations at the Nehalem Valley Care Center, the region’s only skilled nursing facility.

Nominations for special district awards were collected throughout 2024 and reviewed by the SDAO Awards Committee, and winners were selected using a scoring matrix. SDAO also produced short video profiles of Debbie Moberly and the Health District. You can view the video by visiting the Health District website.

Book now for the Spring and Fall editions and Save 10%

Example covers from 2024

Our Time 55+ Spring 2024

Stay active this spring with Community Events, pgs 3-4. Photo by Katherine Mace

Pat Patterson celebrates his 100th Birthday, pg 7 Photo by Ian Daniel Phelps of Tillamook Lions Club

Storytelling in Cannon Beach with historian Peter Lindsay, pg 9

Healthy and Active

Our Time 55+

Promote your services to our older readers and caregivers in this special section that celebrates good health and active lifestyles on the Oregon coast

Stay active with fall community events

Touch base with the arts this fall through our local non-profit art organizations

Music is live! at Kitty's Food & Spirits in Tillamook

Spring • Fall

Inserted into: Tillamook Headlight Herald
North Coast Citizen Cannon Beach Gazette

For more information, contact:
Katherine at 503-842-7535, headlightads@countrymedia.net
1906 Second St., Tillamook, OR 97141

Publish Dates
March 18
Sept. 16

Ad Deadlines
Friday, March 7, 5pm
Friday, Sept. 5, 5pm

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tillamookheadlightherald.com

GAZETTE

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northcoastcitizen.com

ODF proposes revised State Forest Implementation Plans, opens 30-Day comment period Thursday

The Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) opens a 30-day comment period starting Thursday on proposed Implementation Plan revisions for the Astoria, Forest Grove, Tillamook, North Cascade, West Oregon, and Western Lane (including the Veneta and Southwest units) state forest districts. Implementation plans describe forest management activities such as timber harvest targets, road construction and maintenance, reforestation and young stand management, recreation, aquatic habitat restoration and protection strategies for species of concern.

The comment period begins Feb. 20 and ends March 21 at 5 p.m. The implementation plans are available on ODF's website. Comments can be submitted online by using this form, emailing ODF.SFCComments@oregon.gov, or mailing comments to ODF Public Affairs, 2600 State St., Salem, OR 97310.

State forests by law must provide social, economic, and environmental benefits to Oregonians, and are managed under long-range forest management plans, mid-range implementation plans, and annual operations plans.

At the direction of the Board of Forestry, ODF is continuing the development of a draft Western Oregon State Forests Habitat Conservation Plan and Forest Management Plan for Western Oregon State Forests. The draft Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) is currently going through the National Environmental Policy Act process. Finalization of this process and issuance of Incidental Take Permits is expected to occur within fiscal year 2026. Revising the current implementation plans allows the agency to continue operations during this time of transition and further align with the draft HCP while focusing resources on developing a new forest management plan and accompanying implementation plans required to implement the draft HCP.

The revisions to the current Implementation Plans include new information on the district land base and forest resources, updated Species of Concern strategies and associated Forest Land Management Classification map, clarified timber harvest target descriptions, and changes to the mapped landscape design of the desired future condi-

tion. These changes align with Division policy, current Forest Management Plans and draft HCP objectives. In order to cover the HCP approval timeline, the new Forest Management Plan and new Implementation Plan development timelines, the revised Implementation Plans have been extended through June 30, 2027.

ODFW announces 2026 wildlife art contest

Artists are invited to compete in one or all three of ODFW's 2026 stamp art competitions.

The winning artist in each contest receives a \$2,000 award and the winning artwork is used to produce collector's stamps and other promotional items with sale proceeds benefitting Oregon's fish, wildlife, and their habitats.

For more information on contest rules and to order stamps and art prints, visit: https://www.dfw.state.or.us/stamp_contest/index.asp

Entries will be accepted starting August 29 through Sept. 26, 2025, at 5 p.m., at the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife headquarters, 4034 Fairview Industrial

Dr., SE, Salem, OR 97302.

Entries can be mailed, or hand delivered. If you hand-deliver your entry, please call ahead to make arrangements. (503-947-6314)

Habitat Conservation Stamp

Art entries must feature a Strategy Species identified in the Oregon Conservation Strategy in its appropriate habitat. Not all species in the Strategy are eligible, so please use the qualifying list of species. See the contest rules and entry form for more information and a list of eligible species.

https://www.dfw.state.or.us/conservationstrategy/habitat_conservation_stamp.asp

Waterfowl Stamp Contest
Art entries must feature one of the following species in its natural habitat setting: Blue-winged Teal, Lesser Scaup, or Ruddy Duck. See contest rules and entry form for more information.

<https://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/hunting/waterfowl/contest/index.asp>

Upland Game Bird Stamp Contest

Art entries must feature Ring-necked Pheasant in its natural habitat setting. See

contest rules and entry form for more information.

https://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/hunting/upland_bird/contest/index.asp

Artists are asked to use the Recommendations for Packaging Artwork on the Contest Rules' final page.

A panel will judge artwork based on artistic composition, anatomical accuracy of the species and general appeal. Collector's stamps, art prints and other promotional materials are produced from first-place artwork. Proceeds from product sales are used for habitat improvement, research surveys and conservation projects.

Interested artists are encouraged to visit ODFW's stamp art competition webpage for more information on the contests and to view entries from previous years.

Best bets for fishing

Steelhead, trout and bot-tomfish are good bets.

- With rain in the weekend forecast, coastal steelhead anglers might turn to plunking in rivers like the Chetco, Illinois and Rogue.

- Winter steelhead are making an appearance in

the Lower Columbia River. There should be some opportunity to catch steelhead on the beaches this time of year.

- There are still steelhead around in the Grande Ronde, Imnaha, Umatilla and Wall-lowa. Be ready to hit the water as weather and water conditions permit.

- Several waterbodies throughout the Willamette Valley have already been stocked with trout – some for the second time this season.

- When ocean conditions are good, rockfish fishing off the coast has been very good and lingcod fishing has been excellent with many anglers bringing in limits.

These examples are for demonstration purposes only. Refer to the zone reports for more details and possibilities.

Hunter education in time for spring bear and turkey seasons

If your young hunter wants to hunt for spring bear or turkey this year, make sure completing hunter education is on their to-do list. Hunter education is required for hunters younger than 18 to hunt in Oregon. Classes can be in person or online (additional field day required).

Oregon's class of 2024 defies expectations with increase in high school graduation rate

ALEX BAUMHARDT
Oregon Capital Chronicle

Students in Oregon's class of 2024, who started high school online in the midst of a global pandemic, surpassed expectations and graduated at a rate slightly higher than their peers in 2023 and significantly higher than predicted four years ago.

At the start of the pandemic, less than 74% of these students were on track to graduate in four years. But last year, nearly 82% graduated on time, the second highest in state history, according to data released Thursday by the Oregon Department of Education.

"Students and staff overcame all the obstacles

that COVID-19 threw in their path," Oregon Department of Education Director Charlene Williams said in a news release. "We are seeing results, but we know much more needs to be done so that every child is set up for success, not only to find their path to graduation, but to thrive in their educational experience."

The class of 2024 included about 38,700 students — about 1,000 more graduates than the class of 2023, which boasted about an 81% graduation rate. The rate has not budged much or only made small gains since the pandemic, and it is still below that of the pre-pandemic class of 2019. In that class, 85% of students graduated on time,

marking a high for Oregon.

The 2024 graduation rate ticked up despite state and national assessment tests showing Oregon students are struggling to make progress in key subjects and rebound from achievement losses from the pandemic. That class also had some of the worst attendance rates in the state's recent history. About one-third of Oregon students missed at least 16 days out of 160 or more days during the 2023-24 school year and were considered "chronically absent." Before the pandemic, about 20% of students were considered chronically absent.

More to the picture
Williams said assessment tests and attendance data tell



Getty Images

About 1,000 more students graduated in 2024 than in 2023, according to the latest state data.

only part of the picture.

Over the last decade, the state has seen a growing number of students across all racial and ethnic categories enroll in Advanced Placement, or AP, courses, with more of those students earning high and college credit-worthy scores on AP exams. There has also been an increase in the number of students enrolled in Career and Technical Education, or CTE, classes. Those students tend to have the highest graduation rate in the state — around 98% of them graduated on time in 2024.

English-language learners, special education students and students in foster care also achieved some of the biggest gains in graduation rates in 2024.

Students for whom English is not a first lan-

guage graduated at higher rates — nearly 88% — when they completed an English-language learner program before entering high school, the data found.

And students in foster care graduated at a record rate of 51% in 2024, and nearly 69% of special education students graduated, also a state record. Ten years ago, just over 50% of students with disabilities graduated in four years in Oregon, according to Oregon Department of Education data.

Overall, the state's graduation rate in 2024 was nearly 10 percentage points higher than it was in 2014. Alaska Native and English Language learners graduated in 2024 at rates about 20 percentage points higher than they did 10 years ago, and Black and Latino students graduated

at rates about 15 percentage points higher in 2024 than in 2014.

"This news is about resilience and dedication," Gov. Tina Kotek said in a news release. "I'm proud of the class of 2024 and the educators and parents who didn't give up on students."

<https://oregoncapitalchronicle.com/2025/01/30/class-of-2024-defies-expectations-and-increases-slightly-states-high-school-graduation-rate/>

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National assessment shows Oregon students falling behind in key subjects

ALEX BAUMHARDT
Oregon Capital Chronicle

Oregon’s fourth and eighth graders are struggling in key subjects more than students in most other states, a national assessment found.

The National Assessment for Educational Progress, often referred to as the nation’s report card, shows that Oregon’s fourth and eighth graders scored in the bottom half of all states in math and reading proficiency in tests last year.

The data released Wednesday shows that an achievement gap among the country’s high-performing students and those with the lowest scores has grown since the pandemic, said Peggy Carr, commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics, which administers the tests. Carr hosted a news conference Tuesday to discuss the latest data.

“Student achievement has not returned to pre-pandemic levels. Reading scores continue to decline, and our lowest-performing students are reading at historically low levels,” she said. “Our nation is facing complex challenges in reading.”

Data shows student scores didn’t slide much in reading or math from the last assessment in 2022, but students weren’t doing well then, either. Among Oregon fourth graders who took the assessment last year, nearly half scored “below basic” in reading. This was worse than the national average, which shows about 40% of U.S. fourth graders are not meeting that benchmark in reading. This means these students struggle to read and understand simple words.

Among Oregon eighth graders who tested, about

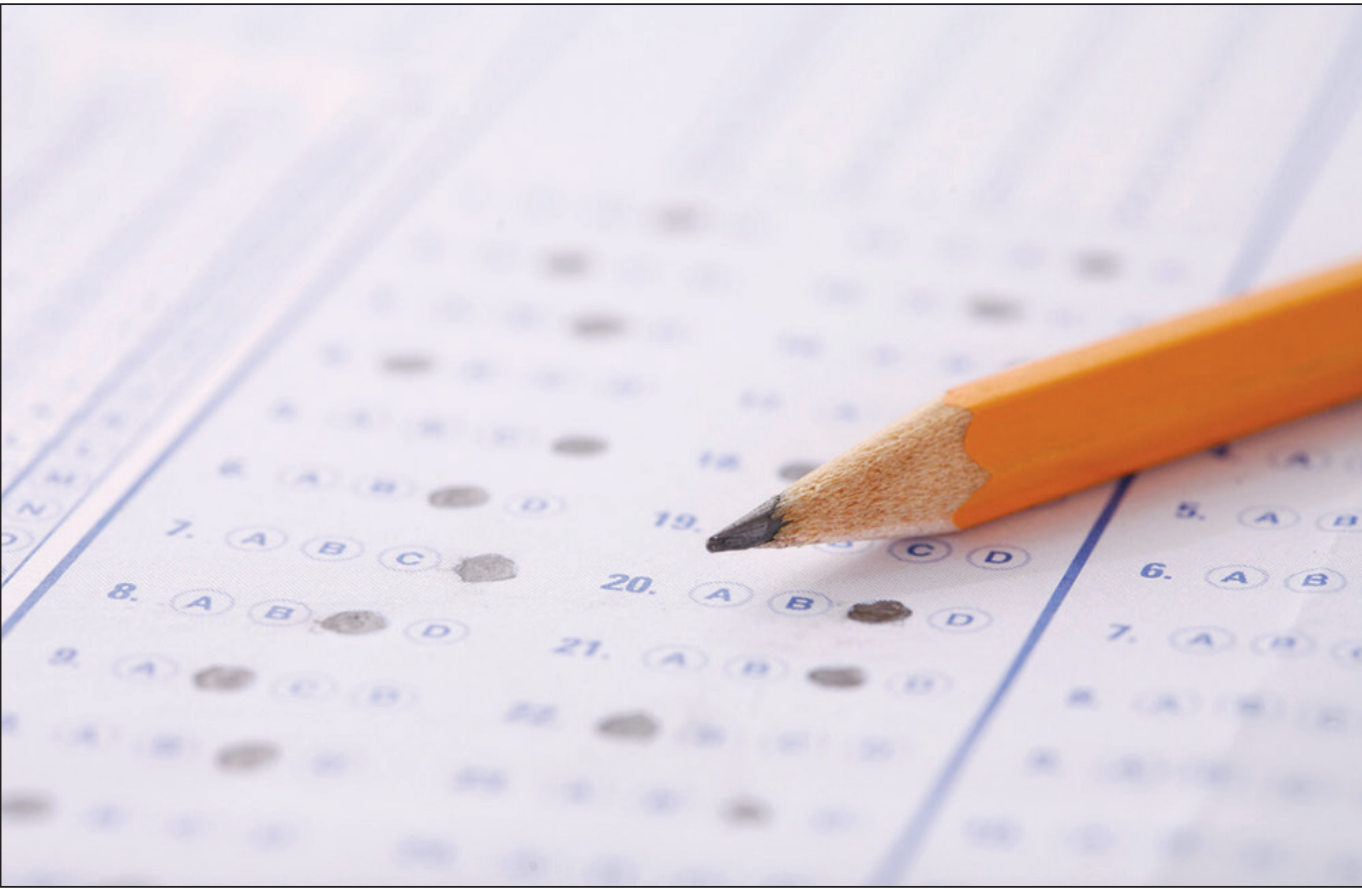
35% were considered below basic in reading. This means these students struggle to identify the main idea of a story as well as basic literary elements.

“Our NAEP scores reaffirm the trends we’ve observed in our state assessments,” Oregon Department of Education Director Charlene Williams said in a statement. “ODE is expanding literacy efforts to reach schools serving some of our most impacted students, ensuring they have access to high-quality instruction and resources. Additionally, summer and extended learning opportunities are more important than ever in closing gaps and accelerating progress.”

The state’s own assessment data, published in October, shows students are still about 10 percentage points behind pre-pandemic achievement levels in key subjects.

Gaps grow in the West when it comes to math, about one-third of Oregon fourth graders tested below basic in the national assessment, meaning they might struggle to add and subtract multi-digit numbers or understand the values and number placement in multi-digit figures up to hundred thousands. About 45% of eighth graders failed to meet the benchmark, meaning they might struggle to solve equations with integers and fractions, and might have trouble using math to determine units of measurement such as length, area and volume.

Carr said across much of the West, higher-performing students continued to score high while students who needed the most help continued to fall behind. She said it was “not just a pandemic



Getty Images

Oregon students are struggling to make gains in key subjects, state and federal assessments show.

story,” and that there are no excuses for continued declines and stagnation. Some states, such as Louisiana, showed improvements in reading scores across all students.

“I understand that they did focus heavily on the science of reading, but they didn’t start yesterday,” Carr said of the instructional shift in recent years towards lessons rooted in neuroscience research around how the brain learns to read. “They’ve been working on it for several years. So I would not say that hope is lost, and I would not say that we cannot turn this around. It’s been demonstrated that we can, even in reading.”

Carr suggested that beyond instructional changes that might be needed, high student absenteeism rates in many states are playing a

role.

“I think one of the obvious messages that we can share out of these data is that you need to send your kids to school. When they’re not there these data clearly show that they are less likely to learn. Those who don’t go to school learn less,” she said.

Absenteeism remains a problem in Oregon. Statewide, nearly 40% of Oregon students were chronically absent during the 2022-23 school year, marking a 20 percentage point drop from 2018-19. That means they missed at least 16 days in a 160-day period.

National assessment surveys show that 45% of fourth graders in Oregon who took the test and scored below the 25th percentile in math, reported missing three or more days of school in the month prior to the survey.

Fourth graders who tested in the 75th percentile in math said they had been tutored within the last year.

Carr said national surveys also have shown a decline in students reading at home and those who say they read for enjoyment while pointing to shifts in how students are tested and receive materials. She said teachers are asking less for essay responses to questions and that students are reading on devices that could contribute to disengagement with the text.

Across the board, students scoring both high and low in Oregon reported their teachers being available to help them when needed and that they believed their teachers expected them to do well. But a higher percentage of fourth graders who had the highest scores in math reported feeling comfortable

talking with their teachers than students in the lowest 25th percentile.

“We all need to come together as partners to catch these students up and improve achievement,” Carr said. “And these results, as sobering as they are, show that once you unpack them, there is hope.”

<https://oregoncapitalchronicle.com/2025/01/29/national-assessment-shows-oregon-students-falling-behind-in-key-subjects/>

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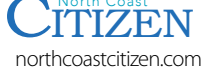
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