

# Salem woman memorializes COVID-19 dead

By Rachel Alexander

Salem Reporter via AP StoryShare

SALEM — With Halloween a week away, it's not hard to find gravestones adorning local lawns. But Amy Vandegrift's yard is more memorial than festive adornment.

The grass in front of her Salem home is nearly covered with more than 200 small white fragments of plastic signs, cut to look like headstones: one for every 1,000 people in the U.S. who have died from COVID-19 this year.

"I started because it's not a number — it's people. And it's families," she said.

At the current pace of U.S. deaths, she's adding one marker per day to the memorial. Oregon's toll as of Oct. 22 was 646 people dead, among the lowest death rates in the U.S. Official estimates for the U.S. count vary, with Johns Hopkins University recording



Amanda Loman/Salem Reporter via AP StoryShare

On the lawn of her Salem home, Amy Vandegrift has installed plastic headstones, one for every thousand American lives lost to COVID-19.

223,381 Americans dead to date.

Vandegrift, who's retired from a career in museums, said building the memorial has helped her make sense of the toll the pandemic has taken on American families.

Her home is tucked away in a cul-de-sac in the Morningside neighborhood, a

block that gets little through traffic. Some neighbors have asked about the installation, she said, but it's mostly a place for her to reflect.

She and her husband, originally from Ohio, have mostly lived in Salem since the 1970s, with a brief stint in Bloomington, Illinois in the 1990s. There, the local

history museum Vandegrift worked for hosted guided walks through a local cemetery, telling stories about some of the dead.

Fall has several holidays where families remember and celebrate the lives of loved ones, which got her thinking about a COVID-19 memorial. Those include the Mexican Day of the Dead, as well as All Saints Day, which Vandegrift usually celebrates by making a small altar with pictures of her relatives who have died.

Her COVID-19 memorial is simple — there is no text on any of the markers, no photos of some of those who have died from the disease. But her hope is to capture the scale of the pandemic's mark on the U.S. by reminding people that behind the growing counts of cases, hospitalizations and deaths, there are real people.

# Scientists remove 98 'murder hornets'

By Nicholas K. Geranios

Associated Press

SPOKANE — Scientists removed 98 so-called murder hornets from a nest near the Canadian border in Washington state over the weekend, including 13 captured live in a net, the state Department of Agriculture said Monday, Oct. 26.

The other 85 Asian giant hornets were vacuumed into a special container when the first nest discovered on U.S. soil was eradicated Saturday, the agency said.

"The eradication went very smoothly," managing entomologist Sven Spichiger said in a press release. "This is only the start of our work to hopefully prevent the Asian giant hornet from gaining a foothold in the Pacific Northwest.

"We suspect there may be more nests in Whatcom County," Spichiger said.

Saturday's operation began at about 5:30 a.m. with the team donning protective suits and setting up scaffolding around the tree so they could reach



Elaine Thompson/Associated Press

Sven Spichiger, Washington State Department of Agriculture managing entomologist, displays a canister of Asian giant hornets vacuumed from a nest in a tree behind him Saturday, Oct. 24, 2020, in Blaine, Washington.

the opening of the nest, which was about 10 feet high. The team stuffed dense foam padding into a crevice above and below the nest entrance and wrapped the tree with cellophane, leaving just a single opening. This is where the team inserted a vacuum hose to remove the hornets from the nest.

Team members used a wooden board to whack the tree to encourage hor-

nets to leave the nest, the agency said. When the hornets stopped coming out of the nest, the team pumped carbon dioxide into the tree to kill or anesthetize any remaining hornets. They then sealed the tree with spray foam, wrapped it again with cellophane, and finally placed traps nearby to catch any survivors or hornets who may have been away during the operation and returned to the tree.

# Investigation shows Oregon City mayor urged businesses to defy coronavirus order

By Kale Williams

The Oregonian/OregonLive via AP StoryShare

OREGON CITY — An independent investigation into Oregon City Mayor Dan Holladay, who is facing a recall election, found he likely encouraged businesses to open in defiance of Gov. Kate Brown's stay-home orders earlier this year.

While Holladay did not break any laws, the report said, he did violate rules of the city commission, which could sanction his behavior.

Holladay told The Oregonian/OregonLive he saw the report as vindication

and that he only encouraged business owners to open their doors during a brief time — between when a circuit judge in eastern Oregon ruled the governor's orders unlawful and when that judge's ruling was put on hold by a higher court later the same day, then later overturned.

"I see it as vindication," Holladay said. "I've been advocating for reasonable ways to control the virus without killing our small businesses."

The inquiry, conducted by Lori Watson of Watson Law Workplace Investigations, focused on two ques-

tions: whether the mayor encouraged businesses to defy the governor's orders and whether he solicited funds for a Fourth of July fireworks show that also would have violated the orders.

Watson interviewed Holladay, four city commissioners, five city employees and four other individuals, including Liz Hannum, director of the Downtown Oregon City Association.

Hannum told Watson she had received communications from Holladay instructing her to "tell businesses to open" and to "just have them open up."

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**\*\*\*NOTICE\*\*\* Island City Cemetery**

The Island City Cemetery Board of Directors is providing the following notice.

There are a number of Island City Cemetery plots designated reserved on the cemetery plat with no record of payment. If you believe that you have a reserved plot for which payment has been made, please provide the receipt of payment which you received at the time of payment or a canceled check designating the plot number(s) paid for with the check to Island City Hall by December 15, 2020. The documentation can be presented in person to Island City Hall, 10605 Island Ave, Island City, OR 97850, scanned and emailed to karen@islandcityhall.com or mailed to:

**Island City Cemetery, PO Box 844, Island city, OR 97850**

If documentation of payment or payment is not received by December 15, 2020, the plot's reserved status will change to available and be sold. You may call either Alan Keffer 541-910-4525 or Dave Johnson 541-910-1881 to verify the payment status of a plot that you believe to be reserved.

Sincerely, Island City Board of Directors.

**Thank you Dr. Joe!**

GRH wishes you all the best and sincerely thanks you for caring for our community for 46 years.



**Joseph L. Petrussek, MD, PC**  
Otorhinolaryngology — Maxillofacial Surgeon

Local physician Joseph Petrussek, MD, PC, retires November 12, 2020.

In August, he announced the news to his patients after 46 years of providing care to the people of Union County and beyond. Think of that — Forty-Six years of caring for the health and well-being of us all. That is dedication. On behalf of Grande Ronde Hospital and Clinics, we wish Dr. Joe and Cathy Petrussek the best as they enjoy traveling through retirement together. We also hope Dr. Joe gets to spend more time hunting, fishing and enjoying this special place we all call home.

**You've more than earned it!**

Dr. Petrussek is as passionate as we are about providing care here at home. So, we humbly thank him for graciously referring his patients to Dr. Steven Pinther, who recently completed a fellowship in allergy management and immunotherapy services. He joined Dr. Gerry Funk (ENT) at the GRH Specialty Clinic in July.



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