

New events coordinator at Chamber of Commerce

Kelsey Balensifer joined the Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce Dec. 8 as its new events coordinator. She replaces Alana Kujala, who recently became the new volunteer coordinator at Providence Seaside Hospital.

Balensifer said Kujala reached out to her, after which she applied, was interviewed by the entire chamber staff and hired Dec. 5. Balensifer is married to Warrenton City Commissioner Henry Balensifer. Her predecessor Kujala is married to Skipanon Brand Seafoods co-owner, former Warrenton City Commissioner and current Warrenton Mayor Mark Kujala.

Before moving to Warrenton in May, Kelsey Balensifer lived in Washington, D.C., working as a reporter and editor at various publications, including Red Alert Politics, The Washington Examiner and Street Sense. Before Washington, she interned at Presbyterian Homes & Services in Roseville, Minn., and media firm Tiger Oak Publications in Minneapolis. She graduated magna cum laude with a degree in journalism from Biola University in La Mirada, Calif., and chosen in 2012 as Outstanding Journalism Student of the Year.

"This has been a big change," she said of the cross country move. "But it's been a good change."

Most of her time now, she said, is spent preparing for the chamber's annual meeting and awards banquet, at which the George and Richard Ford awards for community service in Astoria and Warrenton, re-



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Kelsey Balensifer recently started as the new events coordinator at the Astoria-Warrenton Chamber of Commerce.

spectively, will be announced. Registration for vendors at the Crab, Seafood and Wine Festival starting April 24 ended Dec. 31, she said, and now it's panic mode for vendors who missed the deadline and are still trying to get in. Also coming this summer is the 30th anniversary of "The Goonies," which she said the Chamber is going all out for.

"While Kelsey does not have years of event experience, we strongly feel that she has the necessary skills, desire, talent and commitment to make this transition very quickly," wrote Chamber Ex-

ecutive Director Skip Hauke in his report late last month about the change in personnel.

Balensifer works at the chamber office, 111 W. Marine Drive in Astoria.

Kujala to Providence

Alana Kujala, also marketing director for her family's business Skipanon Brand Seafoods, started as events coordinator at the chamber in August 2010. Like her replacement, she has a background in journalism, graduating in 2002 from Miami University in Ohio with a broadcast journalism degree. She was a

field reporter at Portland CBS affiliate KOIN 6 from 2006 to 2010, and at northern Nevada ABC affiliate KOLO 8 from 2005 to 2006.

"As the event coordinator for the Astoria-Warrenton Chamber, Alana had no equal," said Hauke. "Every event she was responsible for seems to be 'new and improved' on every level."

Kujala, already working at Providence, has remained part time at the chamber, helping train Balensifer and ensure the success of the annual banquet Saturday. There, Kujala will get her official goodbye.



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Aza Cody runs Pet Companion, traveling from Seaside to service the area's pet owners.

Making the Dollar

INTERVIEWS WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES BY EDWARD STRATTON

Aza Cody, owner
Pet Companion
Seaside
503-453-2577 or
companioncompany@gmail.com

Aza Cody wants to help your pets. She's a licensed and insured pet's companion, walking, feeding, sitting and otherwise caring for the animals of locals and visitors since moving to Seaside two years ago from Nevada, where she provided similar services. She operates by appointment from Astoria to Manzanita.

What do you do?

"I offer a number of different services involving the care and feeding of dogs and cats to residents and to visitors. It starts off as simply as dog-walking, exercise and poop patrol. And it becomes as complicated as developing diets for animals who can be assisted by change of diet for some sort of health-related issue. I also do in-facility sitting, for tourists and so on, in hotels and motels and other properties. And I do also longer-term pet-sitting for vacationers and residents."

How did you get started in this business?

"When I came to Seaside two years ago, I wanted to involve myself in all aspects of food — food security, hunger alleviation and so on. Because my specificity of my art is working with animals, I wanted to be able to include that in some of the things that are going on. I recognized that there was also a need for the residents who in the summertime sometimes have two jobs and cannot always take their babies out for a few minutes, to have somebody that was reliable and responsible and a member of the community to assist them in a way that worked within their budget. And then of course tourists, almost all of the hotels and motels will not allow animals in the rooms unattended, unless they're crated. This really allows for a custom sitting job, because I take care of the animals where they feel comfortable, which is in the room with all their stuff."

Who is your regular clientele?

"I would say it's split fairly evenly (between locals and tourists) right at the moment, because I get a lot of tourists at the hotels in Cannon Beach, as well. I have a big area; I do from Astoria to Manzanita. Most of my dog-walking is in Seaside, because it's easy, and I do give discounts for Seaside residents, because it's here and it's easy for me to do that. But the pet-sitting ... and so on is spread all through a 40-mile radius."

What are some of the quirks of running your business?

"I think that there are a lot of people that want to help in this area. But in order to be a professional, as far as taking care of somebody's pet, it's like taking care of somebody's child. You need to be organized; you need to be legitimate; you need to be a public face, so that people recognize who you are, because you're going into people's homes and you're taking their animals out. For my business, that's why I decided to become licensed and insured. I do a lot of care and caution. I ask my clients what type of socialization these animals are used to, if they're comfortable walking, and peculiarities that I need to know about so I can be ready. And also, I like to meet them if possible before we make a decision that we're a good mix."

'Intro to Facebook for Business' classes set

Clatsop Economic Development Resources (CEDR) holds two workshops at Clatsop Community College Jan. 20, "Intro to Facebook for Business," teaching business owners how to use social media to their advantage.

Learn how to create a Facebook account, set sharing preferences and add friends to your network. Create a business page that is entirely separate from your personal presence. Learn what it means for customers to "like" a page and how to engage them.

The instructor is Jane Francis of Personal Computer Training. The first workshop takes place

from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. Jan. 20 in CCC South County Campus' computer lab, located at 1455 N. Roosevelt Drive in Seaside. The second takes place from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Jan. 20 in Towler Hall Room 105 on CCC's main campus, 1651 Lexington Ave. in Astoria.

Preregistration is required for the workshop, and space is limited. Email SBDC@clatsopcc.edu for a registration link, or call 503-338-2402. Each workshop costs \$15, payable at class by check or credit card. The classes are funded in part by a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration.

CEDR seeks new members

Clatsop Economic Development Resources' (CEDR's) sole purpose is economic development in Clatsop County, with a mission of delivering business-driven economic development services to create, grow and retain Clatsop County businesses, with a focus on retention and growth of existing businesses.

Over the past year, CEDR and Clatsop Community College's Small Business Development Center (SBDC) have:

- Served more than 270 business clients over the past year and a half, providing free and confidential business advising.
- Contributed to more than 67 new and retained jobs, 11 new business starts, more than \$1.4 million in financing assistance with local businesses.
- Held 77 workforce training workshops with more than 780 attendees.
- Overseen the official CCC and SBDC Small Business Management program, serving 29 businesses in the program that has been part of CCC since 1979.

New efforts

CEDR is in the midst of a membership campaign and con-

tinues to focus on the free and confidential advising for the business community; workforce training; and business development and retention. It focuses on the key employment sectors in Clatsop County of hospitality; tourism; retail trade; health care; forestry and wood products; marine, maritime and fishing; manufacturing; entrepreneurs; historic preservation; and arts and culture clusters.

Membership levels start at \$50 for an individual and \$100 for a business. This membership investment in CEDR goes directly to fund the free and confidential advising offered to any business in Clatsop County and helps to build a stronger economy, one business at a time. It also goes to financially support the many training workshops and workforce development projects CEDR is involved with on an ongoing basis.

Contact Executive Director Kevin Leahy at kleahy@clatsopcc.edu or 503-338-2342 for a membership application, member benefits or any other information. Visit www.clatsoped.com to learn more about CEDR and the SBDC.

Brokers find niche in Nehalem, Manzanita

TILLAMOOK — After 20 years as Coldwell Banker Evergreen Realty in Tillamook, the brokerage is relocating to the Bayside Gardens between Nehalem and Manzanita and rebranding itself as Coast Real Estate Professionals.

"The old, canned, cookie-cutter marketing methods of major franchises don't take into consideration that the Oregon Coast is a very specific market with very specific needs," said Margaret Page, principal broker of Coast Real Estate Professionals. Page, who has been a broker in Tillamook County for 25 years believes that those needs are best met by real estate brokers who have acute knowledge of the area and its specific challenges such as flood mapping and water rights, and in having a deep network of professionals for every need a buyer or seller may have.

To be more accessible to clients, she's formed a real estate team with Tillamook County native and fellow broker, Adam Schwend.

"The concept of a real estate team is the best possible set-up not only for our clients, but for us," said Schwend. "One of us is always accessible, one of us can take a day off knowing that our clients have access to us seven days a week. Margaret and I work together for every single one of our clients."

Coast Real Estate Professionals is located at 36505 N. U.S. Highway 101 in between Nehalem and Manzanita.

Page has been a broker in Tillamook County since she began in real estate 25 years ago. She has served in numerous positions in the Tillamook Board of Realtors and the Oregon Association of Realtors (OAR), including serving on the OAR Executive Board of Directors. Along with her career in real estate, she is also a singer and actress, performing with the Coaster Theater, Tillamook Association for the Performing Arts and the Cannon Beach Chorus, among others.

Schwend has been a private real estate investor for several years. Along with a career in business, he is also a professional baritone, voice teacher and choral conductor. He conducts several ensembles in the area and also regularly travels to perform. In the community, Adam serves as a member of the Tillamook Planning Commission, the Tillamook Urban Renewal Agency Budget Committee and the Tillamook County Board of Property Tax Appeals. He is also a member of the Rotary Club of Tillamook and is president of the Monday Musical Club of Tillamook.



Margaret Page



Adam Schwend

Clatsop County Property Transactions

Seller: Fred Meyer Stores Inc.

Buyer: Kroger Management — NMTC Warrenton I, LLC

Address: 695 U.S. Highway 101, Warrenton

Price: \$29.37 million

Seller: Westlake Ranch, LLC

Buyer: Westlake Acres, LLC

Address: Vacant Land, Reed Ranch, Warrenton

Price: \$900,000

Sellers: John C. Navrock and Laura A. Navrock

Buyer: Karen Y. Tye

Address: 1479 S. Hemlock St., Cannon Beach

Price: \$433,000

Sellers: Christine L. Hammond and Sylvia A. Zelnys

Buyer: Donn C. Bauske

Address: 810 Broadway, Seaside

Price: \$400,000

Seller: Keith Karanen

Buyer: Ingrid Klaaborg

Address: Vacant Land on U.S. Highway 26, Seaside

Price: \$335,000

Seller: North Coast Classic Homes Inc.

Buyers: Roger Ray Jaime and Candace M. Jaime

Address: 1650 Westwind Circle, Hammond

Price: \$259,900