

Singing in the holidays



Santa Claus, played by Russ House, helps kick off the holiday season atop a double-decker bus with the caroling members of the North Coast Chorale. The procession added a bit of magic Saturday at downtown Astoria's Christmas lighting Saturday in front of the Liberty Theater.

Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

Central School housing on hold

Developer calls timeout as neighbors debate options

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

Developer Richard Krueger has called a timeout on his proposed housing project at the former Central School site.

"I don't think he's walking away completely," said Don Hanson, a planner with Portland design firm Otak representing Krueger. "He just wants to put it on pause."

Hanson said the meeting he planned for Wednesday to gather people's thoughts on development at the Central School site has been canceled. But neighbors around the

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Seaside lights up with Festival of Trees

Foundation raises funds for new surgical equipment

By KATHERINE LACAZE
EO Media Group

SEASIDE — The Providence Seaside Foundation hopes to dazzle, delight and raise funds for new surgical equipment during the 2015 Festival of Trees, an annual tradition.

The festival will ring in the holiday season for the 18th year, Dec. 5, with a free public open house from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and a gala dinner and auction starting at 5 p.m. Both events will take place at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center.

The festival "is sort of the premier event of the holiday season," helping put people in the holiday spirit, executive director Kimberly Ward said. "People have really embraced it and come to anticipate it."

Seaside resident Bob Perkel, who has attended the festival gala with his wife, author Honey Perkel, three times, agreed the event is a special affair. The couple like "dressing up, enjoying the festivities," and "one of the best things is spending time with our friends," Perkel said. It is a good opportunity to wear nice attire, since opportunities to dress up at



Justin Grafton Studios/Submitted Photo

Attendees join in for Christmas carols during the gala at last year's Festival of Trees, an annual fundraiser put on by the Providence Seaside Foundation. Local organizations, businesses and individuals sponsor and decorate trees, auctioned off during the live auction.

IF YOU GO

Tickets to the gala are \$100 per person; \$65 is tax-deductible. For reservations, call the foundation at 503-717-7604.

the beach "are so minimal," he said.

From the beautiful trees and holiday-themed lighting and decorations to the good food, talented musicians and lively auction, Perkel said the event is enjoyable and has become a holiday tradition for the couple.

During the public open house, families can visit Santa Claus, enjoy refreshments, decorate cookies, do crafts and face-painting and

view the display of decorated trees.

That evening, the gala starts with a champagne reception and a silent auction. Acústica World Music provides music. Silent auction items donated by the community include wreaths, vacation getaways, gift baskets, gift certificates, artwork and more.

"It's going to be a great variety; something for everyone," Ward said.

Magical trees, beautiful art

Dinner and the live auction for the trees begins about 6:30 p.m. The 22 trees are the highlight of the event, Ward said. They are sponsored by local organizations, businesses and individuals. Several hospital staff members participate, and this year, three trees are from the staff of the hospital's surgical department, the event's beneficiary.

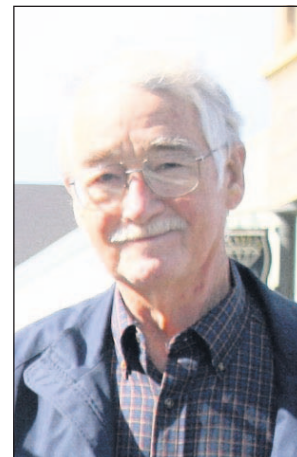
"The trees are so beautiful and all of the donors and the designers just put their heart and soul into creating them," Ward said. "It's just magical."

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Astoria's unsung hero Mitchum dies at age 73

Volunteer, property owner involved in many areas

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian



Mitch Mitchum

William "Mitch" Mitchum, former Astoria public works director, local property developer and prolific volunteer, died Saturday in Portland. Mitchum, 73, is survived by wife Toni Mitchum, five children and 10 grandchildren.

Mitch Mitchum, who spent 38 years in the U.S. Navy and retired as a captain, had been a civil engineer at the Naval Facilities Engineering Command in Norfolk, Virginia, said Toni Mitchum. She met her husband while she was also in the Navy, working at the command center.

"He was retiring from the Navy, and he was really in great demand on the East Coast," she said.

But thumbing through a headhunter magazine one day, she said, he happened upon an advertisement for the public works director position in Astoria.

"We came out to the interview and just fell in love with the town," she said.

"He started taking The Daily Astorian and having it delivered to Washington, D.C."

The Mitchums moved to Astoria in 1994, and Mitch Mitchum was public works director for the next 11 years.

After leaving the city, Mitchum remained a prolific volunteer until shortly before his death. He helped with a dizzying number of local efforts, including for the Astoria Riverfront Trolley, Clatsop Cruise Hosts, Clatsop Care Center Health District, Astoria Downtown Historic District Association and the Clatsop County Historical Society. He was the president of the Astoria Sunday Market Board, played an integral role in starting the trolley and was an active

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At 90, Lois Harriman finds joy, purpose in working

Deals Only worker says work ethic keeps her young



At 90 years old, Lois Harriman doesn't need to work, but she chooses to work. "I think it's what keeps me going," she said.

For a decade, the Astoria resident has been an employee at Deals Only, a discount liquidation store in Astoria where Harriman works as a cashier and shelf-stacker. And it's where she finds great delight in playing the game of

merchandising — boosting the saleability of products by making their presentation more appealing.

"It's fun for me to see if it works," she said, "and sometimes it does and sometimes it doesn't."

Merchandising — prettying up the items and subtly arranging them to catch customers' eyes — is a kind of creative outlet for Harriman.

"I don't even know if the

store knows I do this," she added with a laugh. "They're very patient with me, and I think they let me do things like that sometimes."

Harriman, who worked at U.S. Bank in downtown Portland for 43 years, had been retired nearly 20 years when she and her late husband, Gene, bought a charming, rinky-dink house above Uniontown.

"And one day, I said, 'You know, I'd like to go back to work again.' And I knew that Deals Only had an opening, but I didn't have the nerve to ask," she said. "And he says, 'Well, if you're serious, I'll ask for you.'"

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Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Lois Harriman at Deals Only.

