

Respected teacher, art collector Foster dies

Fourth-generation Astorian an avid community volunteer

By ERICK BENGEL
The Daily Astorian

Michael Foster, a teacher, art lover and community booster who was nicknamed "Mr. Astoria" and left his imprint on city landmarks, was found dead Tuesday morning at Clatsop Care Center, where he had been living. He was 76.

The cause of death was not immediately available.

A fourth-generation Astorian, Foster played key roles in many local projects, such as the restorations of the Astoria Column, the Liberty Theater and the Flavel House Museum, and the acquisition of the old Astoria City Hall and its transformation into Clatsop County Historical Society's Heritage Museum.

"He loved Astoria, that community, like few others," Paul Benoit, a former Astoria city manager, said.

Foster served on several boards and raised money for many organizations. He was a former president of the Astoria-Warrenton Chamber of Commerce, the county historical society and the Astoria Rotary Club.

"He worked tirelessly to promote Astoria," Foster's friend, Brenda Penner, said.

Foster was also among the founders of

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The Daily Astorian/File Photo

Michael Foster jokes with the audience about his experiences restoring the Liberty Theater after receiving the Distinguished Service Award at the Lady Liberty Award lunch in 2014.

NEW DOCK ON DECK



Photos by Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

Bergerson Construction workers continue work on a new dock at Warrenton Marina on Monday.

Warrenton Marina nears final stretch of dock redo

By ERICK BENGEL
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — The docks in the Warrenton Marina take a lot of abuse. Season after season, year after year, the structures get rammed by boats, ravaged by coastal weather, worn out by time.

But F Dock on the north end of the basin, where about 28 boats get tied up during the year, is in the final stretch of an upgrade.

This fall, the city began work on a dock-replacement project scheduled to wrap up early next year, according to Interim Harbormaster Jane Sweet.

HLB Otak oversaw the design while Bergerson Construction picked up the construction bid for about \$1.4 million.

Initially budgeted at about \$2.1 million and funded by Urban Renewal Agency dollars, the undertaking also entails replacing a gangway that will connect the new F Dock to the pier and three additional gangways in the mooring basin.

The full project may come in under budget, Sweet said; whatever funds remain will go toward future improvement projects.

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Bergerson Construction workers load a vibratory hammer onto a barge in order to continue work on a new dock Monday at the Warrenton Marina.

Divided Port gives leader a pay raise

Knight recognized for his management ability

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

After a contentious, four-hour Port of Astoria Commission meeting, Executive Director Jim Knight walked away with a certificate of recognition and a raise.

The Port Commission, following a common pattern in controversial issues, voted 3-2 to grant Knight a 2.5 percent pay increase. Commissioners John Raichl, Robert Mushen and James Campbell voted "yes," with Bill Hunsinger and Stephen Fulton voting "no."

Campbell listed a long list of accomplishments, from improving the Port's image and finances to assembling a quality staff and addressing many outdated policies, he said warranted a raise for Knight.



Jim Knight

Hired in October 2014 on a three-year contract, Knight started at \$150,000. Fulton said he received an approximately 5 percent raise last year after a positive review by the commission. Mushen, who said Knight received a 4 out of 5 average score on his most recent evaluation this year, estimated the director's new raise at between \$3,000 and \$4,000, which would bring his salary above \$160,000.

Hunsinger, who has been critical of Knight on most issues, argued that his pay is out of line with other regional port directors, claiming Knight would make more than the manager of the Port of Longview, Washington, and be paid second regionally to Bill Wyatt, executive director of the Port of Portland.

The Daily News in Longview reported that when Port of Longview CEO Geir-Eilif Kalhagen was fired in January after three years, he was making \$187,000. His replacement, former interim CEO Norm Krehbiel, started at \$160,000. Wyatt's salary was listed at \$394,440 last year. Julianna Marler, interim CEO of the Port of Vancouver, started at \$180,000 in May, according to The Columbian. Her predecessor, Todd Coleman, made \$212,000.

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'He let me call him grandpa,' girl says of abuser

Astoria man gets more than five years for sex abuse

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

A 70-year-old Astoria man was sentenced Tuesday to more than five years in prison for the sexual abuse of a 12-year-old girl who trusted him like a grandfather.

William Schuster, who was arrested in March by the Astoria Police Department, pleaded no contest to five of the nine charges he faced, including attempted first-degree sex abuse, attempted second-degree sodomy, attempted sexual penetration and



William Schuster

attempted rape. In a no contest plea, the defendant neither admits to nor disputes a charge.

Charges of first-degree sex abuse, second-degree sodomy, second-degree rape and private indecency were dismissed.

Schuster lived near the girl and her mother in Pier 38 RV Park. Deputy District Attorney Beau Peterson, the lead prosecutor for the state, said Schuster specifically targeted the family because the father was already in jail. He lured the girl with pets such as a bunny, Peterson said, groomed her and pounced when the time was right, sometime during spring break.

"I cannot be convinced that this is

his first victim," Peterson said. "I don't think this is his first victim. I hope this will be his last."

Betrayed trust

The girl and her mother, who now live in Nevada, traveled to Astoria to testify during sentencing.

"I trusted him as a grandpa," the victim said. "He let me call him grandpa." The girl said Schuster should be in jail, and should get the death penalty.

Her mother said, "You took advantage of my daughter, and I'm very hurt and very, very angry."

She said Schuster had told her daughter how he had touched and manipulated other girls. She said Schuster had even taken advantage of her daughter when she went to the hospital for a mental break related to the

suicide of a cousin, adding that her daughter is still in counseling and on medication because of his actions.

Schuster made no comments during sentencing. His attorney, James McIntyre, said his client acknowledges what happened, but has real mental issues related to post-traumatic stress disorder from his military service in Vietnam.

"That doesn't take away from what he did," McIntyre said, offering the information instead as a reason for giving a lighter sentence.

Saving others

"By saying something about it, you saved other people," Circuit Court Judge Cindee Matyas said to the victim. "I'm convinced of that."

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