

THE DAILY ASTORIAN

144TH YEAR, NO. 131

WEEKEND EDITION // FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2016

ONE DOLLAR

Judge Nelson steps down from the bench

Long-serving arbiter lauded for service

By **KATIE FRANKOWICZ**
For The Daily Astorian

The man pleaded “No contest” to the charges against him. He stood up. “Thank you, judge,” he said politely, nodding his head at Clatsop County District Court Judge Phil Nelson. “Enjoy your retirement.”

As two deputies escorted the man out of Courtroom 200 Thursday afternoon, Nelson watched with a sort of bemused, half-smile on his face. He leaned back in the vast brown chair, a piece of furniture that his judicial assistant Paula Hovden estimates has comfortably supported one judge or another for the last 40 years. Then he moved on to the next case.

Judge Nelson officially retires on Jan. 2 after 23 years on the bench, making him one of the longest running elected Clatsop County officials to date,

almost beating the 24-year-run of Astoria’s former mayor Willis Van Dusen.

Busy tenure

During his time as judge, Nelson oversaw numerous cases and started a successful drug court program that has seen 192 graduates since 2001. In 2013, Nelson was a deciding voice in a complex and controversial liquefied natural gas project. He ruled in favor of a

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Judge Phillip Nelson visits with guests during his retirement party on Thursday at Clatsop County Circuit Court in Astoria.

Danny Miller
The Daily Astorian

SO LONG, 2016

THE NORTH COAST’S TOP STORIES OF THE YEAR



Hundreds gathered to remember and honor fallen officer Jason Goodding at Broadway Field on Feb. 7 in Seaside.

Joshua Bessex
The Daily Astorian



Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

A man battles weather conditions walking past storm damage along Laneda Avenue after a tornado touched down Oct. 14 in Manzanita.

The Daily Astorian

Today we mark the closing of the year in news. The stories and images that shaped our lives run the gamut from Sgt. Jason Goodding’s tragic death to Oregon LNG’s demise to the struggle for affordable housing. We have new leadership, Walmart is breaking ground and the governor is proposing closing the Oregon Youth Authority.

READ ABOUT ALL THESE AND MORE AND SEE THE TOP PHOTOS FROM THE YEAR IN WEEKEND BREAK, 1C-5C



Danny Miller / The Daily Astorian

Confederate soldiers practice forming ranks before the start of battle during the Fort Stevens annual Civil War Re-enactment on Sept. 3 at Fort Stevens Historic Area in Warrenton.

Midwife a nurturer by nature

New arrival is former farmer and activist

By **ERICK BENDEL**
The Daily Astorian

Ever since she was a little girl, Corinne Almquist wanted to be a midwife, a health care provider who assists women during childbirth.

But Almquist, who moved to Astoria from Vermont in November, got sidetracked by



HIGHLIGHTING PEOPLE WHO ARE NEW TO THE COMMUNITY

farming and environmental activism, she said. After working as a doula — a childbirth assistant — for a number of years, helping with home and hospital births, she decided to return to school.

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Corinne Almquist, a certified nurse midwife at Columbia Memorial Hospital, moved to Astoria in November.

Erick Bengel/The Daily Astorian



A final goodbye

Roll call of some public figures who died in 2016

By **BERNARD MCGHEE**
Associated Press

Death claimed transcendent political figures in 2016, including Cuba’s revolutionary leader and Thailand’s longtime king, but also took away royals of a different sort: kings of pop music, from Prince and David

Bowie to George Michael. Embracing Soviet-style communism, Fidel Castro, who died in November, overcame imprisonment and exile to become leader of Cuba and defy the power of the United States at every turn during his half-century rule. Perhaps befitting the controversial leader, his death elicited both tears and cheers across the Western Hemisphere.

However, shock, grief and nostalgia greeted the deaths of several giants of pop music. David Bowie, who broke musical

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