

Halloween in Alderbrook



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

A trick or treater walks past a home on Cedar Street in the Alderbrook neighborhood of Astoria that was elaborately decorated for Halloween Tuesday.

Roadkill: Treated with lime

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Across Oregon, that means edible meat will be donated to local food banks when possible. In Clatsop County, it also means some carcasses may end up on a small parcel of land owned by the state near Perkins Lane in Warrenton. Neighbors have seen a number of deer and elk end up here, and at least one horse. In the past, the bodies would be covered with dirt and sand, but now Department of Transportation employees treat them with lime.

Lou Torres, a Department of Transportation spokesman, said they monitor the site to make sure there are no contamination issues and "that nature is 'helping' us do the composting."

"Without rendering plants, we don't have much of a choice in most areas of the state," he said.

The department does have a few actual roadkill composting facilities, mostly

located in Eastern Oregon. The facilities must meet stringent criteria, be located away from homes and businesses, and have a source of water. The local Department of Transportation offices must have equipment on hand to turn the roadkill as it breaks down.

Getting the equipment is easy, Torres said. The other siting requirements are more difficult.

The highest density of wildlife versus vehicle incidents in Clatsop County occurs on the western border, along U.S. Highway 101, according to a map by the transportation department which shows the average number of wildlife collision incidents per mile. On the section of Highway 104 and Highway 101 between Warrenton and Cannon Beach, there have been anywhere from 13 to more than 35 incidents per mile from September 2009 through June 2017.

Collisions between wildlife and vehicles peak in

October and November as daylight hours decrease and as deer and elk cross major highways to move from higher-elevation summer habitats to lower-elevation winter habitats, according to Fish and Wildlife. Deer are also going through their annual "rut," or breeding season, at this time.

Last October the Department of Transportation recorded 1,052 wildlife-vehicle collisions, and 1,160 such collisions in November.

Vegetation growing close to a road and curves can hide wildlife from view, cautioned Oregon State Police Capt. Bill Fugate in a statement.

"Drivers who see an animal near the roadway should try to reduce their speed and be aware that other animals will often be crossing, too," he said.

He also advises drivers to stay in their lane if possible, adding that "serious crashes involving wildlife are often due to drivers swerving to avoid hitting an animal."

Food bank: Changes will come in terms of hours, items offered

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Gann, an unpaid volunteer, had served since 2013.

On Tuesday, Gooch declined to address specifics of the incident.

"Anytime that people choose to part ways, there will always be some fallout, and we anticipated that," Gooch said. "It's never easy to sever a relationship with people and our silence about it was out of respect for those parties. To me, it's not something that should be shared in the media."

Gooch and other members of the board said there would be no gaps in service to clients. During the temporary closure, patrons may use food banks in Gearhart and Cannon Beach. Any perishable items were used for meals at Helping Hands Re-entry Program in Seaside.

More than 90 percent of the pantry's regular clientele had already been served for the month of October, leaving less than 10 percent to have to turn to one of the area's other three pantries for their food boxes, Gooch said.

Changes at the food bank will come in terms of hours, items offered to clients and special Christmas boxes with food and gifts.

Boxes delivered in years past will no longer be offered, he said, as they require additional donations of food and money.

Gooch said it could be "heartbreaking" for those left out if distributed on a first-come, first-served basis.

The new service model among food pantries is to add holiday items to every client's regular food box for the months of November and December, Gooch said.

"It's a much more equitable way to ensure that everybody who walks through our doors gets a holiday meal," he said.

The board plans to eliminate a clothing and household



R.J. Marx/The Daily Astorian

The South County Community Food Bank remains closed until Nov. 7.

goods aisle, which is considered outside of the mission of providing money or products that "go directly to someone's dinner table."

The food bank's primary mission is to provide a three-to five-day supply of emergency food to members of the community in need, he added.

The food bank will reopen on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1 to 4 p.m., a reduction from two hours of service four days a week. Volunteers and board members will staff the facility as needed, Gooch said.

Community split

Meanwhile, residents and supporters of the food bank offered a variety of responses to the management shift. "You owe our community an explanation," Seaside resident and food bank donor Christina Buck said in an email to board members. "If there are problems at the food bank, why did it come to a point where it is so bad it forces a closure? ... Your actions do not just affect those in need, but also those who choose to give by volunteering, donating and supporting this organization."

Volunteer and patron Jennifer Barrett said she was "madder than hell."

Board members don't have a finger on the "pulse of the poor," she said.

"I have enjoyed so much

what Karla (Gann) has done," Barrett said. "There are needy among us that are what we call the deserving poor. Maybe I am naïve, but I am one of the deserving poor and it's been a tough road to hoe."

Seaside's Sylvia Herrley, whose father Harry Miller volunteered as manager of the food bank for 25 years, said attempts should have been made to fix problems before the decision to remove Gann was made.

"It was a huge slap in the face to all the hardworking volunteers of the food bank," Herrley said in a letter to The Daily Astorian. "I have no doubt Ms. Gann is correct when she says 90 percent of the staff will not be back. My heart breaks not only for the people who need help, but all the volunteers who can no longer help them."

Seaside's Nadine Brien regretted that the board and Gann could not come to agreement. "I am sorry this happened, and wish something could have been worked out so that the community would still benefit from her management," Brien said in a letter.

Call for civility

Seaside Mayor Jay Barber weighed in with a call for civility and trust for the board. "I know the people who are in leadership of the board of directors," Barber said. "These are leaders in our community who have given generously of their time and resources to bring the food bank to the place it is today. I have confidence in them and firmly believe that their decisions over the past week were made with careful thought and deliberation."

Barber also asked the community to take a measured response.

"Let's step back, take a deep breath and support our food bank as they continue to serve our region as they have for many years and many years to come," Barber said.

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