

Henrikson tapped as new county community development director

Hansen left in November

By JACK HEFFERNAN
The Daily Astorian

Clatsop County will have a new community development director soon after the calendar turns.

Gail Henrikson will fill the position on Jan. 8. Heather Hansen left in November after three years and has accepted a senior planner position in North Port, Florida, where she had worked previously.

Henrikson, 50, of Astoria, has a master's degree in urban and regional planning from the University of Wisconsin, Madison and more than 13 years of planning experience. After moving to Astoria in 2015, she most recently has worked as an ad designer at The Daily Astorian.

"I miss a lot of the complexities and challenges of public service," Henrikson said. "You get to build a lot of relationships in the community, and that's something I really miss."

Henrikson's experience working for a coastal community in Florida stood out from the roughly dozen applications for the job, County Manager Cameron Moore said. The county Planning Department must often find balances between development and environmental or historical preservation.



Gail Henrikson

Henrikson's most immediate challenge involves filling a staff that, when complete, includes five full-time employees and one part-time employee. Another employee left the department around the same time as Hansen. Those departures, plus temporary absences due to illness and family emergencies, forced the department to shave its hours in December, Moore said.

"We just had a lot of things hit us all at the same time," he said.

The department issues permits for land use development in unincorporated areas, updates the county's comprehensive land use plan and ensures compliance with building codes.

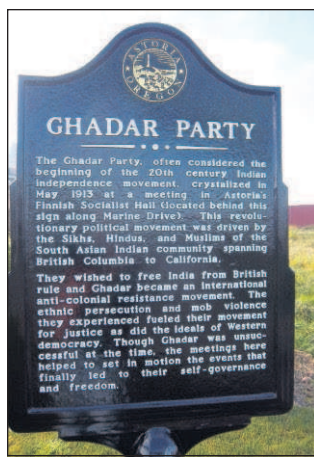
Local donors pitch in to replace vanished Ghadar Party sign

Memorial has been missing since October

The Daily Astorian

Local politicians and business owners have donated money to replace a missing historical marker memorializing an early 20th century Indian independence group that met in Astoria.

The weighty bronze metal sign attached to a metal pole at Maritime Memorial Park, which recognizes the Ghadar Party, went missing in October and has yet to be found. State Sen. Betsy Johnson, D-Scappoose, former Astoria Mayor Willis Van Dusen,



Clatsop County Historical Society The Ghadar Party plaque.

Lovekesh Kumar — owner of Super Mart in Warrenton — and Bahadur Singh — Kumar's brother — have donated \$1,670 to replace

the monument. It is scheduled to be replaced by February, according to the Astoria Parks and Recreation Department press release.

The sign memorializes founders of the Indian liberation movement who came to Astoria from eastern India in 1913 and became mill workers. They met in May 1913 at the former site of the Finnish Socialist Hall. Driven by Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims along the West Coast, the movement eventually led to India's and Pakistan's independence from Britain.

"Having the means to help recognize the workers that inspired my country's independence is a great honor," Singh said. "Immigrants sacrifice much to be

able to live freely and me and my family are grateful to live in a community that recognizes that."

A pair of historians approached the city with the story one year ahead of the movement's centennial anniversary. The sign was installed during a 2013 ceremony.

"I am deeply disappointed that someone would go through the efforts of removing a sign that symbolizes the sacrifices that these Indian immigrants made to embark on the noble cause of freedom and liberty," Van Dusen said. "The history of these laborers that contributed greatly to the American economy and for the rights of their people back home deserve to be recognized."

Nehalem ranch praised for conservation work

The Daily Astorian

A Nehalem ranch has been praised for its work around wildlife conservation.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife recognized Karen Kuntz and her Foley Peak Angus cattle operation with the Riley Freeman award during the Oregon Cattlemen's Association and Oregon Cattlemen's Convention and Tradeshow earlier this month in Bend.

Kuntz has worked with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Tillamook Soil and Conservation District to put a resource management system in place and encourage diverse habitat across her ranch, located in the Nehalem River watershed.

Foley Peak Angus employs techniques like rotational grazing to maintain good field conditions and to reduce sediment and manure runoff into Tomlin-

son Creek, a tributary of Foley Creek and the Nehalem River. The ranch also maintains buffer strips along waterways, providing good canopy and habitat for wildlife and keeping temperatures cooler for fish.

The planting of native trees and shrubs across the ranch has improved wildlife habitat and provides escape cover, thermal protection and rearing and roost areas for native birds, according to the state.

Fire engulfs Seaside home

The Daily Astorian

SEASIDE — An adult and a child evacuated a fire that engulfed a house Wednesday afternoon at 719 Avenue S in Seaside.

The fire started around 1:30 p.m. and burned through all of the two-story house. Prior to evacuating the home, the adult noticed smoke coming from the main

floor. She attempted to contain the initial flames, but when the fire moved to a nearby wall the two left the home immediately.

The cause is still being investigated.

"Judging by what we are seeing right now, this house will probably be a total loss without going inside," Seaside Fire Division Chief David Rankin said.

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