



Photos by Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Wildlife photographer Rob Curtis searches Haystack Rock for puffins and other birds.

Donations fund puffin research at Haystack Rock

Study will be first on the coast

By **BRENNA VISSER**
The Daily Astorian

CANNON BEACH — Tufted puffins have been on the decline at Haystack Rock for decades, and no one really understands why.

This summer, a \$15,000 donation from the Friends of Haystack Rock will enable the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to study what factors are keeping puffin populations low.

The research will be the first of its kind on the Oregon Coast.

"We really need to collect more data and it has taken a long time for us to do that," said Shawn Stephensen, a wildlife biologist with the Oregon Coast National Wildlife Refuge Complex. "This gives us the opportunity to do that."

More than half of the research money can be attributed to the "Protect our Puffins" sweatshirt campaign started last summer by John Underwood, a Friends of Haystack Rock board member and longtime Cannon Beach homeowner.

It started with Underwood questioning why, every summer when he came back to visit Cannon Beach, there



From left, Magdalena, Owen and Zaria Goward scan Haystack Rock with binoculars looking for birds.

were fewer and fewer puffins flocking around the rock. He partnered with the awareness program to design and donate a few dozen sweatshirts to sell around the community, with the hope profits would eventually go toward education and research.

A year later, the idea raised more than \$9,000.

"I was hoping it would do well, but I didn't know what to expect," Underwood said. "I'm happy people care."

While Haystack Rock is still home to Oregon's largest tufted puffin colony,

along the Oregon Coast the species has steadily declined from about 5,000 birds nesting 20 years ago to just a few hundred today.

Researchers have theorized factors such as rising ocean temperatures and lack of accessible prey could be causing the die-off, but haven't had resources to test it.

The donations will purchase five transmitters, which will be attached to puffins and track where exactly the

See **RESEARCH**, Page 5A

PAC formed to stump for Astoria school bond

Voters asked to back \$70 million plan

By **EDWARD STRATTON**
The Daily Astorian

Astoria school boosters have formed a political action committee to stump for a \$70 million bond package in November to improve schools.

While school district employees can provide objective information, they cannot advocate for a bond measure. Yes for Astoria Kids is led by David Oser, an Astoria School Board member who recently retired from non-profit lender Craft3, and Skip Hauke, a former business owner who recently retired from the Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce.

A bond voters passed in 2000 to build Lewis and Clark Elementary School and improve three other campuses is set to expire in 2020. In anticipation of another bond, the school district has spent the past year studying options.

See **PAC**, Page 5A



David Oser



Skip Hauke

State warns Astoria on bridge load

Violations spotted near the waterfront

By **KATIE FRANKOWICZ**
The Daily Astorian

Six waterfront bridges in Astoria slated to be replaced over the next two years could close to vehicle traffic immediately if load limits continue to be ignored.

Inspectors hired by the Oregon Department of Transportation saw multiple vehicles that exceeded the 3-ton load limit drive over the bridges during a recent annual inspection. Under the load limit — 6,000 pounds — anything much bigger than an SUV would likely be too heavy, according to the Astoria Public Works Department.

The bridges sit at the bases of Sixth Street to 11th Street.

If the city can't enforce the load limit, the state will recommend the bridges be closed

See **BRIDGES**, Page 5A

'I was concerned for my own family'

Hero pastor has local ties

Chinook Observer

TUMWATER, Wash. — David George, an Oakville pastor who was a longtime leader of the New Life Assembly of God Church in Ilwaco, spoke in public for the first time Wednesday about his role in stopping a deadly attack outside a Walmart in Tumwater.

George, who has a concealed-carry firearms permit and was trained as a volunteer firefighter to respond to active-shooter situations, shot and killed Tim O. Day, 44, of

McCleary, who was shooting at people Sunday while attempting to hijack cars.

"I am grieved that the shooter's reckless actions endangered numerous individuals and demanded he be stopped before doing more harm," George said in an emotional statement broadcast on television news stations.

After stopping the shooter, George, an emergency medical technician, provided first aid to a gunshot victim in the parking lot.

George was deeply involved in the Long Beach Peninsula community from about 2003 through 2013. In addition to his role at New Life

Assembly of God, he served as president of the Rotary Club.

George teared up as he described how a family trip to Walmart to make an exchange ended up with him having to fatally shoot the armed attacker.

He said he immediately recognized the gunshots and responded in accordance with his training.

"I was concerned for my own family and I sought to find them and exit the building," he said. "My daughter, recognizing the gunshots, also gathered her daughter quickly to exit the building. I did not see my

See **PASTOR**, Page 5A



KING5

David George, a longtime Ilwaco pastor, spoke in public for the first time Wednesday about intervening to stop an armed attack Sunday at the Tumwater Walmart.

