

Octogenarian process server was a local legend

Williams known for her loyalty, quick wits

By **NATALIE ST. JOHN**
Chinook Observer

SURFSIDE, Wash. — Marjorie Williams, the tiny, pistol-packing 83-year-old process server who died in January, was known for her loyalty, her quick wits and the legendary grit that, on one occasion, led her to pull a gun on a man who was abusing his girlfriend, and on another, helped her find a missing woman.

A longtime stalwart of the local legal community, Williams, who died on Jan. 4 after a decadelong illness, was said to possess an intuition so acute that some believed she had a sixth sense.

“She was larger than life by anyone’s estimation,” her friend Laurie Buchanan said.

Originally from Nebraska, Williams and her husband, Jim Williams, moved to Ocean Park in the early 1980s.

After following them to the peninsula, one of the couple’s three sons started working as a process server — someone who delivers legal documents for attorneys.

Eventually, Jim, previously a long-haul trucker, took over the process-serving business. In the early days, Marjorie would help him. After Jim died in 2009, she started working alone.

Process serving can be dangerous because it involves delivering bad news, often to people with messy lives. Servers deliver eviction notices, summonses, divorce papers, restraining orders and subpoenas.

As a result, they have to fend off aggressive dogs, endure insults and threats and visit wife-beaters, child-abusers and drug dealers. Some have even been killed on the job.

Williams put up with a lot of verbal abuse but avoided more serious incidents, her friend Colleen Smith said. However, she did find herself in some very strange situations. While trying to serve papers in Naselle one blustery day, “She got bit on the butt by a goose,” Smith recalled.

Don’t get shot by the messenger

Williams didn’t take any chances — she got herself a concealed weapons permit.

“She packed her gun like she needed to,” Superior

‘MARGIE WAS A REALLY POWERFUL INDIVIDUAL. SHE WIELDED A LOT OF POSITIVE ENERGY. SHE NEVER GAVE UP FOR ANYTHING.’

Laurie Buchanan

Court Clerk Virginia Leach said. Williams never had to pull her gun while serving papers, but she was fully prepared to use it.

Once, she saw a man beating on his girlfriend on the side of the road, Williams’ daughter-in-law, Diane Sorensen, of Ocean Park, said. She stopped the car, got out and drew her pistol. With it squarely trained on the shirtless man, she called the woman over to her car.

“She said a few choice words to the gentleman. He told her he was gonna kill her. Mom says, ‘I don’t think you’ll make it,’” Sorensen said. “She loved telling that story.”

Attorney Nathan Needham, of Guy Glenn Law Firm, which regularly hired Williams for about 15 years, heard a slightly different version of the story.

“He began to threaten Marjorie. That was probably the wrong thing to do,” Needham said, laughing.

her friends, she also enjoyed the thrill of the chase.

“She was tenacious, and for those that didn’t want to answer the door, she would hang out and wait,” attorney Guy Glenn said.

That tenacity helped her solve a missing persons case in late 2017.

A devoted member of the Eagles Auxiliary, Williams was part of a tight-knit group of lady Eagles who called themselves “The Widows’ Group.” Sheriff’s deputies, friends and Eagles spent hours searching the peninsula when one of the widows, Audrey Davis, vanished after going to the grocery store.

After a week of fruitless searching, Williams began to suspect Davis had vanished closer to home. One morning, she noticed a wooded lot, set well back from the road near Davis’ home. There was a “no trespassing” sign, but she drove right past it. She found Davis, who had died of natural causes after getting lost.

A sixth sense

Despite her tough persona, Williams was a deeply empathetic, spiritual person, her loved ones said. Leach, the no-nonsense court clerk, is one of many people who believed Williams had

unique talents.

“If she stood there and held your hand, she could see things. She could tell you things,” Leach said. “She did that often. Or she’d make phone calls and say, ‘Hey, beware of this.’”

Colleen Smith remembered how word of Williams’ apparent gifts spread around town.

People who believed they were dealing with unwanted spiritual presences — or just tough personal dilemmas — sought her out.

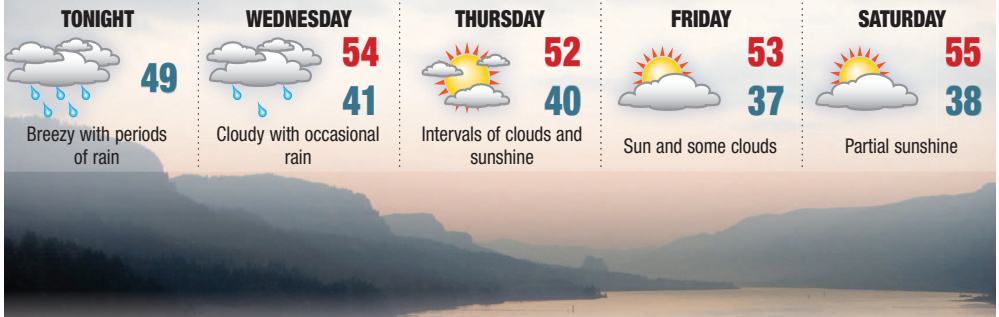
“It was something she didn’t need to proclaim. She didn’t want people to think she was crazy,” Smith said. “She would never take money, but people kept coming and asking.”

Partly out of necessity, partly out of love for her work and partly out of sheer stubbornness, Williams worked regularly through 10 years of sometimes debilitating illness.

Even as she lived out her final few days in the hospital, she called upon friends to help serve the last of her papers.

“Margie was a really powerful individual,” Buchanan said. “She wielded a lot of positive energy. She never gave up for anything.”

FIVE-DAY FORECAST FOR ASTORIA AccuWeather DOWNLOAD THE FREE APP



ALMANAC

Astoria through Monday.

Temperatures

High/low	51°/34°
Normal high/low	50°/38°
Record high	61° in 1981
Record low	14° in 1962

Precipitation

Monday	0.03"
Month to date	3.82"
Normal month to date	7.21"
Year to date	3.82"
Normal year to date	7.21"

SUN AND MOON

Sunset tonight	5:05 p.m.
Sunrise Wednesday	7:48 a.m.
Moonrise today	7:20 p.m.
Moonsset today	9:04 a.m.

Last New First Full

Jan 27 Feb 4 Feb 12 Feb 19

UNDER THE SKY

Tonight’s Sky: The Little Dipper stands in the north tonight and every night. The star at the tip of its handle is Polaris, the north star.

Source: Jim Todd, OMSI

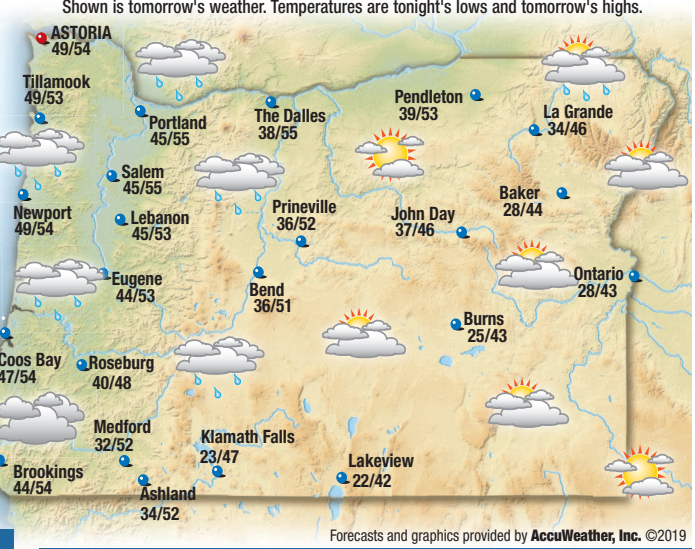
TOMORROW’S TIDES

Astoria / Port Docks	High	Low
3:11 a.m.	8.9 ft.	8:52 a.m.
2:38 p.m.	10.0 ft.	9:30 p.m.

NATIONAL CITIES

City	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Allanta	46	40	pc	61	40	r
Boston	28	19	s	45	44	c
Chicago	34	31	sn	32	14	sn
Denver	31	14	sn	42	21	pc
Des Moines	31	11	sn	21	13	c
Detroit	29	28	sn	42	23	r
El Paso	54	28	pc	55	31	s
Fairbanks	-1	-7	pc	18	6	pc
Honolulu	84	67	s	84	68	s
Indianapolis	39	37	c	43	20	r
Kansas City	41	17	i	32	24	pc
Las Vegas	54	36	r	57	40	s
Los Angeles	66	44	s	69	50	s
Memphis	50	46	r	47	26	r
Miami	75	68	pc	79	71	pc
Nashville	51	46	pc	56	25	r
New Orleans	71	61	c	67	36	r
New York	29	26	s	42	39	r
Oklahoma City	52	23	r	44	27	s
Philadelphia	29	26	s	45	43	r
St. Louis	44	30	r	31	22	c
Salt Lake City	30	20	pc	36	30	c
San Francisco	59	46	s	60	47	s
Seattle	48	46	r	53	44	r
Washington, DC	34	30	s	50	47	r

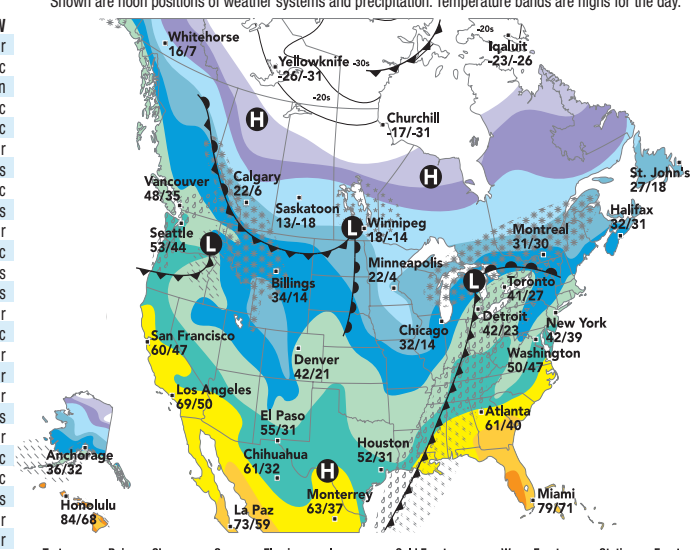
REGIONAL WEATHER



REGIONAL CITIES

City	Today	Wed.	City	Today	Wed.
Baker City	37 28 c	44 30 r	Olympia	45 44 r	54 39 r
Bend	42 36 c	51 30 c	Pendleton	43 39 r	53 37 pc
Brookings	53 44 pc	54 42 r	Portland	47 45 r	55 42 r
Eugene	49 44 r	53 41 r	Roseburg	48 40 c	48 41 sh
Ilwaco	53 50 r	52 43 r	Salem	48 45 r	55 41 r
Klamath Falls	42 23 pc	47 27 pc	Seaside	53 50 r	53 42 r
Medford	48 32 pc	52 37 sh	Spokane	35 33 sn	39 24 sh
Newberg	46 44 r	54 42 r	Springfield	48 45 r	52 43 r
Newport	50 49 r	54 42 r	Vancouver	46 44 r	54 42 r
North Bend	53 48 r	55 45 r	Yakima	40 34 sh	52 28 pc

TOMORROW’S NATIONAL WEATHER



Coastal flood advisory remains in effect

The Daily Astorian

A coastal flood advisory remains in effect for the North Coast and southwest Washington until 4 p.m. today.

to a combination of elevated river levels and high astronomical tides, according to the National Weather Service. Low-lying roads could close due to high water.

Raymond and South Beach are still most at risk for flooding in Washington state. For the North Coast, flooding risk remains high along Fraser Road in Tillamook County.

Coastal and inland flooding is expected in low-elevation areas due

Bays and sloughs, U.S. Highway 6 and U.S. Highway 101 and the towns of

The coastal flood advisory has been in effect since Saturday.

ON THE RECORD

DUI

• At 4:25 p.m. on Monday, Edward John Osterman, 48, of Long Beach,

Washington, was arrested by Warrenton police at the Fred Meyer in Warrenton and charged with driv-

ing under the influence of intoxicants. His blood alcohol content was 0.09 percent.

DEATH

Jan. 22, 2019

CADE, Edmund Ross, 88, of Gearhart, died in Gearhart. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary & Crematory in Seaside is in charge of the arrangements.

MEMORIAL

Friday, Jan. 25

DOTY, Gilbert Bennett — Graveside service at 2 p.m., Fort Stevens Cemetery, 1198 Russell Drive in Hammond.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Clatsop County Human Services Advisory Council , 4 to 5:30 p.m., 800 Exchange St., Room 430.	Astoria Parks Advisory Board , 6:45 a.m., City Hall,
Astoria Library Board , 5:30 p.m., Flag Room, 450 10th St.	Astoria City Council , 7 p.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.
Warrenton City Commission , 6 p.m., City Hall, 225 S. Main	Clatsop County Board of Commissioners , 6 p.m., Judge Guy Boyington Building, 857 Commercial St., Astoria.
1095 Duane St.	Warrenton-Hammond School Board , 6 p.m., special session, Warrenton High School library, 1700 S. Main Ave.

LOTTERIES

OREGON	WASHINGTON
Monday’s Pick 4: 1 p.m.: 0-1-8-6 4 p.m.: 0-0-2-5 7 p.m.: 9-1-7-4 10 p.m.: 9-9-2-1	Monday’s Megabucks: 5-18-24-26-36-40 Estimated jackpot: \$7.2 million
Monday’s Lucky Lines: 4-5-11-15-19-23-27-31 Estimated jackpot: \$24,000	Monday’s Daily Game: 3-4-2 Monday’s Hit 5: 10-14-21-22-35 Estimated jackpot: \$3.3 million

OBITUARY POLICY

The Daily Astorian publishes paid obituaries. The obituary can include a small photo and, for veterans, a flag symbol at no charge. The deadline for all obituaries is 9 a.m. the business day prior.

Obituaries may be edited for spelling, proper punctuation and style. Death notices and upcoming services will be published at no charge. Notices must be submitted by 9 a.m. the day of publication.

Obituaries and notices may be submitted online at DailyAstorian.com/forms/obits, by email at ewilson@dailyastorian.com, placed via the funeral home or in person at The Daily Astorian office, 949 Exchange St. in Astoria.

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