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ONE DOLLAR



Dwight Caswell/For The Daily Astorian
Keith Clark conducts the Astoria Music Festival Orchestra in Philip Glass's Symphony No. 4, 'Heroes,' based on music by David Bowie in 2017.

Astoria Music Festival in jeopardy

The venerable event missed booking deadline

By ERICK BENDEL
The Daily Astorian

The Astoria Music Festival had until midnight Monday to book the Liberty Theatre for the classical series' 17th season.

The festival missed the deadline. "We held all the dates for them," said Jennifer Crockett, the theater's executive director, "and then they let the deadline pass and didn't reach out."

On Tuesday, the Liberty's board voted unanimously to fill some of the dates — June 15 and June 16, June 21 and June 22 — that would have belonged to the festival, which historically runs for three weeks at a handful of venues, of which the Liberty is the largest.

The festival now has until Friday to let the theater know whether it plans to rent the Liberty stage for the weekend of June 29 and June 30. If it doesn't,



Dwight Caswell/The Daily Astorian
Musicians at the Astoria Music Festival's performance of St. John's Passion in 2015.

those dates, too, will be reserved for other performances.

Keith Clark, the festival's artistic director, said he was "blindsided" by the Liberty's decision. He insisted the festival is going ahead this year and is, in fact, planning for concerts at the theater for the last weekend of June.

The festival will mount other performances at venues such as Clatsop

Community College's Performing Arts Center.

The festival has struggled with fundraising in the past year — and has been competing with the Liberty for donors — and wasn't ready to finalize plans for three weekends of concerts at the Liberty, Clark said.

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'THE ECONOMIC IMPACT ON OUR AREA BUSINESSES DURING THE FESTIVAL IS ABOUT \$80,000 IN FOOD, LODGING, AND PURCHASES EACH YEAR. NOT HAVING THE FESTIVAL ON OUR STAGE CREATES A LOSS OF ABOUT \$15,000 FOR THE LIBERTY IN MISSED CONCESSIONS SALES AND STAGE RENTAL FEES AT THE TAIL END OF OUR FISCAL YEAR.'

Jennifer Crockett | Liberty Theatre's executive director

Seaside man pleads not guilty to child porn charges

Hall allegedly posed as a teenager

By BRENNIA VISSER
The Daily Astorian

A Seaside man is facing more than 20 charges related to child pornography.

David Norman Stanley Hall, 50, was arrested after child pornography was found in his home during a search in March.

The search was prompted by a tip from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, which alerted local police that a computer in Clatsop County was uploading and downloading child pornography, District Attorney Ron Brown said.

Seaside police tracked the IP address — a numeric designation that identifies its location on the internet — back to Hall.

Hall would allegedly pose as a teenager online and solicit sexual images from children between the ages of 10 and 14 on social media. The victims appear to be from several different areas of the country.

To keep up the ploy, Hall would send explicit photos he had of either teenage girls or boys, depending on the victim, and then try to get the children to send their own sexually explicit images back, Brown said.

So far, the prosecution believes there are about 10 victims who are involved.



David Norman Stanley Hall

But as the state reviews the evidence, "this could be just the tip of the iceberg," Brown said.

"Child pornography is disturbing enough," he said. "But when you're actually making contact with someone's kid... that's pretty darned disturbing."

On Monday, Hall pleaded not guilty to 11 felony counts of using a child in display of sexually explicit conduct and 15 felony counts of encouraging child sex abuse. He is being held on \$1 million bail.

In 2000, Hall was convicted of second-degree sodomy, first-degree sexual abuse, delivery of a controlled substance to a minor and endangering the welfare of a minor. The victims were under 14.

Warming center sees an increase

Season ended in March

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
The Daily Astorian

The Astoria Warming Center reported an increase in the average number of homeless people it served this season.

Though things got off to a slow start in November, the warming center sheltered an average of 25 to 26 people a night, up from 23 people a night last season. Overall, the center saw an increase in stays from 161 people in the 2017-18 season to 174 this season. Total overnight stays jumped from 1,893 last season to 2,272.

For the warming center's board, this is important data as they look to renew the center's conditional use permit and as city leaders continue to consider long-term codes to regulate emergency homeless shelters.

The code amendments are on the back burner as city staff struggles to stay on schedule to address other major code changes, including rules that will guide waterfront development downtown.

'FILLED TO CAPACITY EVERY NIGHT.'

Annie Martin | warming center's board president said of final weeks

But the Planning Commission has discussed capping the number of people allowed per night at the warming center at 23 or 25, based on nightly averages recorded in past seasons.

Annie Martin, the warming center's board president, and others have pushed to remain at 35 people maximum, saying numbers can vary widely depending on the severity of the weather.

The higher numbers this season were due in large part to an unexpected cold snap at the end of February that lasted into March, after what had been a relatively mild winter. The warming center closed for the season on March 15, but was open every night during the final weeks as demand for a warm place to sleep surged.

"Filled to capacity every night," Martin said.

Before the start of the season in November, staff had worried that demand might overwhelm available beds. A similar warming center on the Long Beach Peninsula in Washington had announced its closure and a fledgling warming center in Warrenton was on uncertain ground.

But the mild winter meant lower demand for most of the season. When colder weather did hit, the warming center had enough days of operation left of the 90 allowed by state fire code to remain open nearly constantly.

"Yes, early this season was mild and, thankfully, left us with some days that we really needed," Martin said.

The hardest part was consistently finding volunteers, she said.

The warming center has a conditional use permit, which allows the shelter to operate out of the basement of First United Methodist Church on the corner of Franklin Avenue and 11th Street.

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Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

The warming center in Astoria prior to opening for the night.

