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Hundreds of people gather in downtown Astoria for the Sunday market.

Photos by Colin Murphey

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SUNDAY MARKET OPENS IN ASTORIA

By COLIN MURPHEY
The Astorian

People gathering in downtown Astoria were treated to warm temperatures and sunny skies for the first Sunday market of the year. The Astoria Sunday Market is in its 20th year of operation downtown.

LEFT: Carter Olsen cooks a batch of popcorn. RIGHT: Vendors sell flowers.

People line the streets of downtown.

Fishing boat breaks up on the bar

Captain rescued by the Coast Guard

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

A Coast Guard helicopter crew rescued a fisherman from the Columbia River Bar on Monday as his boat broke up in the shallows north of Clatsop Spit.

On Sunday night, Eric Johnson, the captain of the 38-foot fishing boat Theron, radioed that he lost steering while attempting to cross the bar. The currents carried his boat toward the breakers and shallows north of Clatsop Spit.

The Coast Guard broadcast the man’s situation to other mariners and launched

The fishing vessel Theron broke up Monday in the shallows north of Clatsop Spit.

a 47-foot motor lifeboat and a 52-foot motor lifeboat from Station Cape Disappointment. Shortly after midnight

Monday, the captain of the Theron reported his vessel grounded on Clatsop Spit, the engine room filling with

water and his power failing from the flooding.

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Gearhart park eliminated as firehouse site

City zeroes in on two options

By R.J. MARX
The Astorian

GEARHART — The city park will remain a park.

A proposal that launched an emotionally charged debate and divided the community is off the table as Mayor Matt Brown formally took the site off the list of potential firehouse locations.

The current firehouse, built in 1958, is considered too limited to meet the needs of modern firefighters and a risk in an earthquake or tsunami.

Of all 947 surveys received, about 50% supported the High Point Station at 1376 North Marion as their No. 1 choice, followed by 38% who selected the current location at 670 Pacific Way.

Only 11% of respondents chose the Gearhart Park Station as their first choice.

“In trying to follow the public’s guidance in what they choose and don’t choose, I’d like to make a motion to take the park off the table,” Brown said, a move unanimously approved by the City Council.

After considering nine

locations, the fire station committee had recommended three concepts and locations to the public to help guide the decision-making process.

In narrowing down sites, the committee relied on state geologic data and scientific trends to prepare for a large tsunami, which encompasses 95% of the possible flood scenarios, consultant Tom Horning, of Horning Geosciences, said in an April letter.

After a town hall in January, residents heard merits and drawbacks of each site. Residents at the time showed little stomach to convert the park — donated by Lesley Miller as dedicated parkland in 1947 — into a public safety building.

Following the town hall, residents were invited to fill out a survey ranking each location.

Respondents ranked their preferred locations and provided feedback on their choices. Along with their preferred site, they were asked if they were supportive of a bond to fund the project, and if they favored private donations to help cover costs.

Of the 947 survey responses, 78% supported a new fire station, and 75% backed a bond to pay for construction. Sixty-one

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From homeless to university

Whitlock overcame many obstacles

By BRENNA VISSER
The Astorian

There are many emotions that come with hearing your 2-year-old daughter has been diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes.

But one that Cortnee Whitlock remembers most viscerally is the feeling of frustration. Appointment after appointment, she often

felt confused and dismissed by the people in charge of her daughter’s care.

When tests were run, the results were rarely explained in a way she could understand. As someone who dropped out of high school as a sophomore, comprehending medical and health insurance terminology was overwhelming and difficult.

“It was so frustrating feeling like there were no answers,” she said.

So Whitlock decided to join the quality improvement committee at her Portland-area hospital, hoping to offer feedback and help bridge the communication gap between patients and the medical community.

“I wanted to make a difference,” she said. “I already know what it’s like to be the mom with a kid with (a) chronic illness and not have support.”

Ten years later, Whitlock has transformed her passion of advocating for families and patients into a career as a patient experience coordinator at Columbia Memorial

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Brenna Visser/The Astorian
Cortnee Whitlock will pursue a master’s degree at Johns Hopkins University.

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