

the Astorian

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WHALE VISION

ABOVE: A humpback whale was spotted in the Columbia River near the Astoria Bridge on Tuesday afternoon. Humpbacks migrate north in late summer and fall and often swim up the river to feed. LEFT: A humpback passes beneath the Astoria Bridge, heading for the ocean.



Photos by Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

State probes Fishhawk Lake draining

Reports of a fish die-off
By **EDWARD STRATTON**
The Astorian

The Oregon State Police and other agencies are investigating after the 100-acre, man-made Fishhawk Lake in northeastern Clatsop County was drained to fix an underground pipe, possibly killing thousands of fish. The lake was created along Fishhawk Creek north of Birkenfeld in the 1960s as part of a private community overseen by the Fishhawk Lake Reserve and Community. Several creeks

feed into the lake, which then drains down to Fishhawk Creek and into the Nehalem River. Capt. Timothy Fox, a spokesman for the state police, said the agency was notified Aug. 22 that the lake had been draining for a week. Police began an investigation into potential water quality violations “that may have contributed to a fish kill in the stream adjacent to the lake.” Representatives from the Department of State Lands, the Department of Environmental Quality and the Department of



Clatsop County

The Fishhawk Lake Reserve and Community recently drained the 100-acre private lake to repair a drain pipe, drawing state scrutiny over a fish die-off.

See Lake, Page A7

Lawsuit dropped in Seaside drowning

Mother brought claim against city

By **R.J. MARX**
The Astorian

SEASIDE — The mother of a 14-year-old Oklahoma boy who drowned while swimming in the ocean in Seaside in 2016 plans to drop a lawsuit claiming her son and his cousin were not warned about dangerous conditions.

L. Nicole Moore had sought \$691,200. The move comes days before a scheduled phone conference between the city and the family.

“I intend to dismiss my suit against the city,” Moore said in an email. “The suit was my way of fulfilling an obligation I felt to Conner. The last act I could do for him, defend his character and try to ensure this did not happen to anyone else.”

The teenagers were visiting the North Coast for a family reunion in July 2016.

Conner Moore and his cousin were in the ocean at the foot of Broadway when lifeguards saw the teenagers struggling. After a rescue attempt, Conner Moore was pronounced dead at Providence Seaside Hospital. His cousin survived.

The lawsuit, filed in July 2018, alleged the teens were swimming in waters next to an area that is “particularly dangerous and this extremely hazardous condition was not obvious to an ordinary person.”

The city asked the Circuit Court to dismiss the lawsuit, arguing that Conner Moore should have exercised care in avoiding harm from an “activity that creates a hazardous condition.”

The case, which had entered the discovery phase, had been tentatively scheduled for trial in 2020.

See Lawsuit, Page A6

Maritime museum’s pond faces delays

A place for model boats

By **KATIE FRANKOWICZ**
The Astorian

A pond for sailing model boats hit construction delays this summer, but the Columbia River Maritime Museum now plans to open the attraction near the end of October.

The delayed opening will give the museum time to get to know the pond during the winter ahead of spring and summer programs next year, said Bruce Jones, deputy director of the museum and Astoria’s mayor. The museum had originally hoped the grand opening of the pond and park on the site of the former



Petty Officer Steve Strohmaier

Coast Guard Chief Warrant Officer Tom O'Brien checks the light characteristics for the buoy.

Coast Guard repairs key buoy

Guide at the mouth of the river

By **NICOLE BALES**
The Astorian

Like drivers need stoplights or street signs, mariners rely on navigation aids like buoys and lighthouses to get to their destinations safely.

The red-and-white striped buoy that sits near the mouth of the Columbia River is the

first sign that signals the entrance.

At 18,500 pounds, 35-feet tall and 9-feet wide, the buoy guides ships to safe waters as they cross one of the most dangerous river bars in the world.

The radio transmitter beacon on the buoy, which produces a signal on radar so ships can find it, was repaired this month after being out since early April.

See Buoy, Page A6

TRAVEL BACK TO 1863 AND EXPERIENCE THE HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

CIVIL WAR REENACTMENT

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MORE INSIDE

Uniontown Reborn heads to City Council
Page A6