

the Astorian

Warrenton fire chief resigns amid probe

Demers served since 2013

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

Warrenton Fire Chief Tim Demers has resigned as the city faces a state investigation over unsafe firefighting practices. Demers, who led the Warrenton Fire Department since 2013, submitted a letter in September announcing his resignation effective Tuesday.



Tim Demers

Demers' resignation was not specifically related to the state investigation, said City Manager Linda Engbretson, who described it as a retirement. Demers could not immediately be reached for comment. The state Occupational Safety and Health Administration received an anonymous complaint about safety issues in the Warrenton Fire Department and opened an investigation in August, said Aaron Corvin, an agency spokesman.

The complaint alleges the fire department did not hold required safety meetings, maintain safety information or require proper training and equipment for firefighters.

"Firefighters are exposed to respiratory hazards because the fire chief requires firefighters to enter burning structures without the proper protective equipment, one of the allegations stated.

The complaint further alleges that Demers stored expired and turned-in prescription drugs in his office without locking up or otherwise controlling them.

Demers, who had more than three decades of experience in firefighting, had applied last year to be fire chief in Aurora, according to the Canby Herald.

"I can't tell you what Tim's issues are," Engbretson said. "There was a complaint filed with OSHA regarding some OSHA concerns, and we completed that process with the investigator."

Engbretson declined to comment further until the city receives the findings of the investigation, which she expects by the middle of November.

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Photos by Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Proposed codes for the Urban Core would restrict further development over the river.

River views, property rights compete in Urban Core



Steve Fick owns Fishhawk Fisheries and a historic building at the end of Fourth Street. He said his freedom to develop will be restricted under the proposed codes for Urban Core.

Last section of Riverfront Vision Plan

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

Astoria had nearly finished drafting code amendments for the Urban Core, the final section of the Riverfront Vision Plan guiding development along the Columbia River. But a heated debate over a proposed Fairfield Inn & Suites caused many to rethink development standards along the waterfront and put the downtown changes on ice.

Now the city, mostly finished with other portions of Riverfront Vision Plan, is brushing off guidelines for the Urban Core that try to strike a balance

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Hospital, nurses reach new contract

A federal mediator brokered deal

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

Nurses and administrators at Columbia Memorial Hospital have tentatively agreed to a new three-year contract, ending a monthslong labor dispute.

Hospital administrators and the Oregon Nurses Association, a union representing more than 130 nurses at the Astoria hospital, began negotiating seven months ago to replace a three-year contract that expired in May. The two sides struggled to reach an agreement, with significant disputes over pay, benefits, staffing and the docking of hours based on low patient counts.

Nurses held pickets, marches and other public events, claiming the hospital is stockpiling profits for a new campus amid dangerously low staffing

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Nicole Bales/The Astorian

State Rep. Tiffany Mitchell and David Nelson, the living donor coordinator for Legacy Transplant Services.

'It's an incredible feeling'

Rep. Mitchell donates a kidney

By NICOLE BALES
The Astorian

PORTLAND — State Rep. Tiffany Mitchell hopes the small risk she took donating a kidney will pay off in dividends for someone else.

"It's an incredible feeling to know that I saved another human being's life even though I may never know them," she said at a press conference Friday at Legacy Good Samaritan Medical Center.

Mitchell went into surgery Wednesday to remove a kidney that was flown across the country to the East Coast for a transplant.

And her recipient was not the only person who benefited from the donation.

Mitchell was part of a paired exchange that allows people to swap kidneys among pairs of people who want to donate but are incompatible with the person they want to help.

In this case, five people, who she will likely never meet, were matched to donors.

The donations went to people across the U.S. Two of the kidneys went to people on the East Coast, along with one to the Midwest, Texas and the Pacific Northwest, said David Nelson, the living donor coordinator for Legacy Transplant Services.

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Peter Pan owners find a buyer

Sale could close in November

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

Pat and Jim Radich, the owners of Peter Pan Market, have found a buyer.

Pat Radich said the prospective buyer is planning to keep the Peter Pan name and acquiring all the existing equipment. The couple have been liquidating groceries at the store and plan a future sale of memorabilia.

"We are expecting no problems with the deal, but we haven't closed yet," she said.

The Radiches did not confirm the identity of the buyer. The Astorian reached out separately to the buyer, who declined to comment until the deal closes Nov. 30.

The Radiches, both 71, recently announced they would retire, close and sell the venerable hilltop deli and grocery store on Niagara Avenue, citing medical issues and the inability to find others to help run the business. They purchased the store in 1981 from BernaDean and Gary Lenhard, who relocated to Bend.

Pat Radich ran the operation, adding a popular deli and catering service. She was joined by her husband after his retirement from the Georgia-Pacific Wauna Mill a decade ago.

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