

IN BRIEF

Emergency test set for Wednesday

A test of the ClatsopALERTS! emergency notification system will take place on Wednesday. The test will send messages to residential and business landline phones, cellphones, email addresses and social media sites registered with the system. Clatsop County plans to have quarterly tests. The message will ask recipients to acknowledge receipt, but not to call 911.

Road to Indian Beach closed

The segment of Ecola State Park Road that leads to Indian Beach will be closed through Thursday. Crews are removing trees that are at risk of falling into the roadway during stormy weather. The section of road leading to the Ecola viewpoint and the day-use parking area will remain open. — The Astorian

Earthquakes strike off the Oregon Coast

BROOKINGS — Two earthquakes hit within 45 minutes of each other off the coast of the Oregon-California border. KOIN reported the first of the earthquakes hit west of Brookings around 4 a.m. Monday. It had a 4.9 magnitude. The second occurred about 45 minutes later, west of Gold Beach. It had a magnitude of 3.6. Both earthquakes were roughly 75 miles west of the coast.

Lone Oregon Republican in Congress will retire

U.S. Rep. Greg Walden, the lone Republican in Oregon’s congressional delegation, won’t seek reelection to a 12th term, throwing a huge district covering a conservative part of the state up for grabs. With less than seven months to go before the 2020 primaries, Walden’s videotaped announcement on Monday sets up further changes in the U.S. House of Representatives, which Democrats regained control of in the 2018 midterm elections. Walden is the 19th House Republican to announce he or she will not seek reelection. Three other GOP lawmakers have resigned. Walden is a former chairman of the powerful House Energy and Commerce Committee and now serves as the top Republican on the energy panel. He was a key player in GOP efforts to replace President Barack Obama’s health care law but was considered a moderate by many. — Associated Press

DEATHS

Oct. 25, 2019

MALCOLM, Ned Irwin, 92, of Seaside, died in Seaside. Caldwell’s Funeral & Cremation Arrangement Center of Seaside is in charge of the arrangements.

MEMORIALS

Saturday, Nov. 2
SIMONSON, Jasmine — Celebration of life at 2 p.m., Pier 39 banquet room, 100 39th St.
SKIPPER, Violet Grove — Memorial at 11 a.m., Crossroads Community Church, 40618 Old Highway 30 in Svensen. Reception follows in the fellowship hall. Committal at 3:30 p.m., Greenwood Cemetery, 91569 Oregon Highway 202 in Astoria.
Sunday, Nov. 3
WALKER, Darald Lynn — Potluck at noon, Alderbrook Grange Hall, 5995 Alderbrook Road in Tillamook.

ON THE RECORD


Harassment
• Johnathan Lance Kvale, 26, was arrested Friday at Ninth and Astor Street in Astoria for harassment and disorderly conduct in the second degree.
DUII
• Tyla Allynn Little, 20, of Warrenton, was arrested Sunday on Jetty Road in Fort Stevens State Park for driving under the influence of intoxicants.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

TUESDAY
Seaside Planning Commission, 7 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.
WEDNESDAY
Clatsop County Board of Commissioners, 5 p.m., Judge Guy Boyington Building, 857 Commercial St., Astoria.
Gearhart Planning Commission and City Council, 6:30 p.m., work session, 698 Pacific Way.
THURSDAY
Clatsop County Recreational Lands Planning and Advisory Committee, 1 to 3 p.m., fourth floor, 800 Exchange St., Astoria.

the Astorian

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SPLAT!



The aftermath of a pumpkin drop in Seaside.

Jeff Ter Har/For The Astorian

A 900-pound pumpkin drops in Seaside

By R.J. MARX
The Astorian

SEASIDE — Seventy-three feet, 4 inches. For those who turned out to the “Big Pumpkin Drop” on Sunday in Seaside, that’s how far a more than 900-pound pumpkin will shatter from 40 feet.

This year’s drop attracted a crowd to the public parking lot by the Seaside Civic and Convention Center, eager to see how much damage a pumpkin dropped from a great height can make.

Motivated by Boomer Barbosa of 94.9 The Bridge and Celeste Kenneally of the Seaside Downtown Development Association, “The Big Pumpkin Drop” returned for the first time since 2009.

The drop was part of a weekend of events presented by local businesses and the downtown association. “The weather was perfect,” Kenneally said. “Everyone seemed really happy, the activities went really well and Trunk or Treat was a huge success for the first



R.J. Marx/The Astorian

The pumpkin is raised in the air.



Jeff Ter Har/For The Astorian

The pumpkin is dropped.

year. Everything’s been running really smoothly.”

This was Barbosa’s second pumpkin drop, having presided over one in Orangevale, California.

“We’re doing the big pumpkin drop for charity and for the violence of it,” Barbosa said. “I have been involved with pumpkin drops before, but they have been gutted pumpkins.”

The difference then, he said, was the pumpkin was hollowed out. “This pumpkin is full of all of its goo and all of its seeds. It will be a lot messier for sure. I’m not sure how that will play out.”

Hundreds of onlookers stood by as the pumpkin was slowly raised in the air and the countdown began. Ten ... nine ... eight ... seven ... six ... five ... four ... three ... two ...

one. Splat.

Half of the pot went to the Warrenton High School cheerleaders club, the first time they’ve had a cheerleaders club. The other half went to the winners, Emily and Ricky Fish, of Seaside. The family was only 4 inches off the mark, guessing a distance of 73 feet for the piece of pumpkin that landed the farthest from the center.

Oregon strike teams assigned to fires in California

The Astorian
and wire reports

Fifteen Oregon strike teams arrived in California on Sunday to help fight two wildfires.

One group will assist in fighting the Burris Fire, a 250-acre blaze in Mendocino County. Another group will assist in the Kincaid Fire in Sonoma County.

A total of 271 personnel have been deployed to the fires, including three from Seaside Fire and Rescue.

This is the third year in a row that the Oregon State Fire Marshal has mobilized strike teams through the mutual aid system to fight fires in California.

Firefighters battled destructive wildfires in Northern California’s wine country and on the wealthy west side of Los Angeles on Monday, trying to beat back flames that forced tens of thousands to flee their homes.

California’s biggest utility, Pacific Gas & Electric, cut off power to an estimated 2.5 million people in the northern part of the state over the weekend in yet another round of blackouts aimed at preventing wind-blown electrical equipment from sparking more fires. And more shut-offs are possible in the next few days.

The blaze that broke out last week amid Sonoma County’s vineyards and wineries north of San Francisco exploded to at least 103 square miles, destroying 96 buildings, including at least 40 homes, and threatening 80,000 more structures, authorities said. Nearly 200,000 people were under



Marcio Jose Sanchez/AP Photo

A helicopter drops water as the Getty Fire burns on Mandeville Canyon on Monday in Los Angeles.

evacuation orders, mostly from Santa Rosa.

In Southern California, the Los Angeles fire erupted before dawn Monday and roared up slopes into well-to-do neighborhoods, threatening thousands of homes. Tens of thousands of people were ordered to clear out.

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti said that the fire had grown to 500 acres and that he had seen five burned homes. Fire Chief Ralph Terrazas said he expects the number to climb.

Los Angeles Lakers star LeBron James tweeted that he and his family had to evacuate their home in the city’s exclusive Brentwood section. There was no immediate word on its fate.

“I pray for all the families in the area that could be affected,” he tweeted.

“Pretty please get to safety ASAP.”

The fire was burning in the upper elevations of the Brentwood area. The evacuation area extended westward through Pacific Palisades down to the Pacific Coast Highway, encompassing some of the most exclusive real estate in California, where celebrities and executives live in mountain and ridgetop retreats that cost tens of millions of dollars but are surrounded by tinder-dry vegetation.

David Boyle, 78, said he awoke at 3 a.m. to his doorbell ringing and police officers pounding on the front door. They warned him the wildfire was advancing toward his Brentwood home near the Getty Center arts complex.

“They said, ‘You need to evacuate.’ I’m like, ‘When?’ They said, ‘Now,’” Doyle said. He grabbed dog food and his wife’s jewelry and hustled his dogs out the door. They went to a recreation center. “It’s a fact of life when

you live in this area,” he said. “Every place has some problem with disasters. People talk about earthquakes here, but I don’t think it’s as bad as hurricane season.”

Night-flying helicopters made water drops before daybreak, and airplanes unleashing loads of water and bright pink fire retardant joined the battle after the sun came up.

The Getty, with its collection of priceless art, was built with special fire protection features, and Los Angeles fire Capt. Erik Scott said it was not threatened.

But Mount St. Mary’s University evacuated 450 students from its Chalon campus nearby. And the University of California, Los Angeles, in the city’s Westwood section canceled classes — not because of any direct threat from the fire but because of road closings and evacuations affecting people on their way to UCLA.

Similarly in Northern California, some 40 school districts in Sonoma County canceled classes. And the University of California, Berkeley, called off classes because of the power outages there.

Fire conditions statewide have made California a “tinderbox,” said Jonathan Cox, a spokesman for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. Of the state’s 58 counties, 43 were under warnings for high fire danger Sunday, with flames driven by gusts that reached more than 102 mph.

Gov. Gavin Newsom declared a state of emergency over the weekend.

The biggest evacuation was in Sonoma County, where some people who were packing up and fleeing Sunday had done so two years ago, when devastating wildfires swept through Sonoma, Napa and neighboring counties, killing 44 people.

WANTED
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