

IN BRIEF

Astoria man pleads guilty to sexual violence, sentenced to six months in jail

An Astoria man was sentenced Wednesday to six months in jail and five years of supervised probation for sexual violence.

Caleb Jeffrey Hale, 20, pleaded guilty to sodomy in the third degree and strangulation.

If Hale's probation is revoked he will serve five years in prison.

According to the prosecution, Hale forced a girl to perform oral sex on him in 2017 when he was 18 years old and she was 14 years old.

Hale's charges and sentence were reduced because of his guilty plea.

"If I believed for one second that you had no chance at change, I would not have gone along with this agreement," Judge Dawn McIntosh said during sentencing.

County receives \$19.6 million from Clatsop State Forest

Clatsop County received \$19.6 million in revenue from forestry last fiscal year, according to the Oregon Department of Forestry report.

Clatsop and Tillamook state forests are two of the largest forests managed by the state. Tillamook County and their local taxing districts received \$24.7 million in revenue.

Revenue also supports local service providers, including the Clatsop Care Health District, Clatsop Community College, Jewell School District, Rural Law Enforcement District and the Port of Astoria.

Sen. Wyden comes to Astoria on Jan. 2

U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden will hold a town hall at 1 p.m. on Jan. 2 at Clatsop Community College's Performing Arts Center in Astoria.

Wyden, who promised to visit each of Oregon's 36 counties once a year, has held 956 town halls since being elected to the Senate in 1996.

"I'm eager to begin 2020 in true 'Oregon Way' fashion — with eight open-to-all town halls that provide everybody the opportunity to share their ideas, questions and priorities directly with me," the Oregon Democrat said in a news release. "These town halls are hallmarks of democracy, and I look forward very much to hearing from Oregonians all over our state."

— The Astorian

DEATHS

Dec. 18, 2019

BERRY, Patti Jean, 82, of Cannon Beach, died in Seaside. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements.

NIVERSON, Betty Lou, 73, of Westport, formerly of Hammond, died

in Westport. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements.

Dec. 17, 2019

GRIFFEY, Gail, 72, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements.

BIRTH

Dec. 3, 2019

VAN VELSOR, Ciara, and **WOODCOCK**, Brendan, of Astoria, a boy, Brandt Van Woodcock, born in Portland. Older brother is Reginald (Reggie) Woodcock. Grandparents are Bill Van Velsor and Ava Van Velsor, of Neskowin, and Jerry Woodcock and Cathy Woodcock, of Portland.

ON THE RECORD

Sex abuse

• Joshua Blaze Best, 32, was indicted Thursday on two counts of sodomy in the first degree and two counts of sexual abuse in the first degree.

Assault

• Justin Robert Puckett, 40, of Warrenton, was arrested Thursday on N.E. Skipanon Drive in Warrenton for assault in the fourth degree, harassment and strangulation.

Theft

• Nova Amber Emo, 25, of Astoria, was indicted Friday on theft in the first degree, forgery in the first degree, identity theft and possession of forged instrument in the first degree.

Disorderly conduct

• Levi Trent Smith, 32,

was arrested Wednesday in the Warrenton Highlands shopping center parking lot for disorderly conduct in the second degree, resisting arrest and criminal mischief in the third degree.

Criminal trespass

• Jacob Martin Kitzman, 28, was arrested Wednesday in the Fred Meyer parking lot in Warrenton for criminal trespass in the second degree.

DUII

• Kevin Sean Maakstad, 40, was charged Wednesday with driving under the influence of intoxicants after driving his vehicle into a ditch near Walluski Loop and Youngs River Road in Astoria. His blood alcohol content was 0.27%.

PUBLIC MEETING

MONDAY

Seaside City Council, 7 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

the Astorian

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A sensory-friendly Christmas



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Charlotte Devos tells Santa Claus what is on her Christmas list at the eighth annual Autism Society of Oregon sensory-friendly Christmas Party on Monday night in Warrenton. Children and families gathered together to celebrate the Christmas season in a calmer, less-stimulating atmosphere. Attendees enjoyed pizza and crafts when not hanging out with Santa.

Pacific Northwest volcano forecast to erupt within next four years

By JES BURNS

Oregon Public Broadcasting

Scientists are forecasting that the Pacific Northwest's most active volcano will erupt sometime between 2020 and 2024.

The volcano isn't one you'll see driving along the Cascade Range, instead you'd have to look 1.5 miles deep in the ocean to find it. It's called the Axial Seamount and it's located about 300 miles due west of Astoria at the edge of the Juan de Fuca plate. If the volcano were on land, it would be one of the taller mountains in Oregon's Coast Range.

Oregon State University's Bill Chadwick made the eruption forecast at a scientific meeting this month. His forecast is based on measurements taken on the seafloor around the seamount.

"One of the ways that volcanoes are monitored around the world is to look for changes in their shape, like if the ground is being uplifted or subsiding," Chadwick said. "What you're interested in is (if magma moving in or moving out or is it just slumbering?)"

Axial Seamount has changed quite a bit over the last decades, with the surface gradually rising between eruptions, then suddenly

dropping back down.

"It's erupted three times in the last 21 years. That's more than Mount St. Helens and any of the volcanoes in our neighborhood. So it's gotten a lot of our attention and we're trying to learn as much from it as we can," he said.

An expansive seafloor monitoring network installed in 2014 has allowed Chadwick to monitor Axial Seamount in real time. Over the past few years, he's watched the volcano slowly grow.

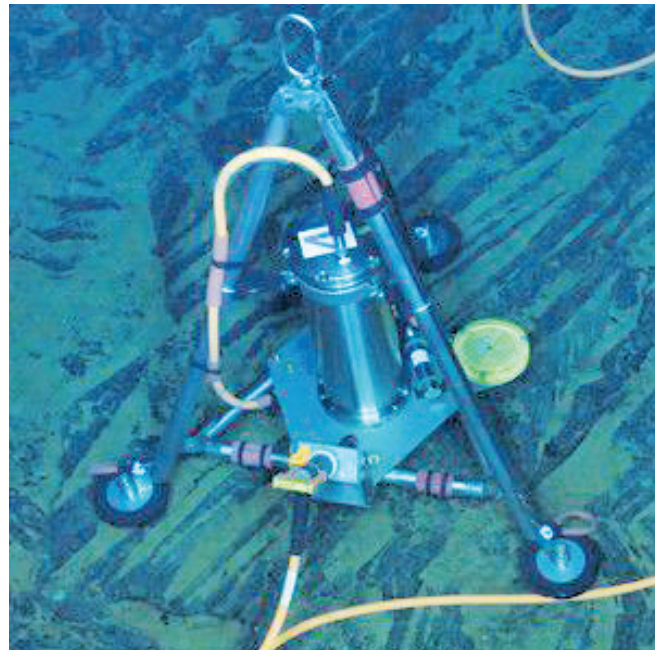
"We're using that repeated pattern of inflation and deflation to try to anticipate when the next eruption might be," he said.

Chadwick says making such a straightforward and public forecast is its own kind of experiment.

"We're just kind of doing this forecasting ... to see if it works. In my mind it's more honest and more of a test to see if it's really useful to do it before something happens, because it's easy to kind of fool yourself in hindsight or spin it a certain way," he said.

Other scientists in the Pacific Northwest are also monitoring the seamount for signals of eruption.

University of Washington's William Wilcock studies earthquakes at Axial Seamount. The seismic



University of Washington

A bottom pressure/tilt instrument is used to measure change in the ocean floor around the Axial Seamount.

activity gives indications of what's happening inside the volcano.

"Immediately after an eruption, there are very few earthquakes and then the number of earthquakes steadily increases as the volcano inflates," he said. "So after the eruption in 2015, the number of earthquakes that we recorded went down to just a handful and it's now up to maybe 50 a day."

Wilcock says he believes that Bill Chadwick's forecast is in the right ballpark.

"My personal view is it's probably more likely in 2022 to 2024. But I think there's some uncertainty," he said.

Unlike the eruption of a land-based volcano, like Mount St. Helens, the eruption of the Axial Seamount won't cause any problems for humans.

"For the size of eruptions we've seen in the last 20 years ... if you were on

top of it on a boat, you would never know it," Oregon State's Chadwick said.

But the forecast eruption does provide a unique opportunity scientifically.

"There's a lot of interest in trying to set up experiments, to basically observe more of (the volcanic processes) as it's happening," Wilcock said.

Chadwick says the Axial Seamount is a relatively simple volcano in terms of where it occurs and how it behaves. And being able to study the volcano at such close range as it erupts could provide insight to the behavior and forecasting of volcanoes on land.

"I think in that way we have an opportunity to understand a relatively simple system. And hopefully the lessons we learn there would have applications to forecasting eruptions and other more complicated settings."

Offices around region to close for Christmas

The Astorian

In observance of Christmas Day on Wednesday, all federal and state offices are closed. Clatsop County offices close at noon Tuesday, and are closed Wednesday.

For city offices and services: Astoria closes at noon Tuesday, and is closed Wednesday; Cannon Beach is closed Monday, Tuesday

and Wednesday; Warrenton and Gearhart are closed Tuesday and Wednesday; and Seaside is closed on Wednesday only.

The Port of Astoria administrative offices are closed Tuesday and Wednesday.

All U.S. post offices are closed Wednesday, and there is no mail delivery.

Astoria, Jewell, Knappa, Warrenton/Hammond and

Seaside (including Cannon Beach and Gearhart) school district schools, and Clatsop Community College, are closed for winter break.

The Astoria Library and Seaside Library are closed Wednesday; the Warrenton Library is closed Tuesday and Wednesday.

Garbage collection through Recology Western Oregon is one day late for customers whose normal service day is Wednesday, Thursday or Friday; the Astoria Transfer Station closes at 2 p.m. Tuesday and is closed Wednesday.

City of Warrenton garbage collection customers whose normal service day is Wednesday will have their garbage picked up on Thursday.

The Sunset Pool in

Seaside and the Astoria Aquatic Center are closed Wednesday.

The Clatsop County Heritage Museum, Oregon Film Museum, Flavel House and Carriage House are closed Tuesday and Wednesday. The Uppertown Firefighters' Museum is closed for the winter.

Lil' Sprouts is closed Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Fort Clatsop closes at 2 p.m. Tuesday, and is closed Wednesday. The Columbia River Maritime Museum is closed Wednesday. The Seaside Museum is closed Tuesday and Wednesday.

Sunset Empire Transportation ("The Bus") is not running on Wednesday.

The Astorian offices are closed Wednesday.

VOLUNTEER
PICK OF THE WEEK
Shannon
young female Red Tabby

Christmas is not as much about opening our gifts as opening our hearts.

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