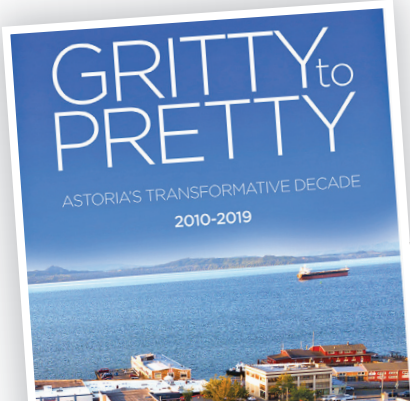




»INSIDE

Astorian

147TH YEAR, NO. 79

DailyAstorian.com // TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2019

\$1.50



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Fort George Brewery agreed to purchase the former Astoria Warehousing property.

YEAR IN REVIEW

A time of renewal on the North Coast

The Astorian

As 2019 comes to a close, The Astorian looks back at some of the top stories of the year.

Fort George Brewery

Fort George Brewery purchased Astoria Warehousing for \$8 million after the former salmon-canning and labor operation moved to the Seattle area.

The brewery, formed in 2006 by Jack Harris and Chris Nemlowill, has quickly become one of the Pacific Northwest's most renowned and has outgrown its main campus on Duane Street. The new warehouse will be used for most of Fort George's brewing, canning and distribution.

Fort George used a \$12 million loan of federal

New Markets Tax Credits from regional lender Craft3 to finance the purchase. The company also received a \$1 million grant from Business Oregon to clean up historical petroleum pollution around the site.

Fort George's project will likely become the first to take advantage of the Clatsop Enterprise Zone, which provides certain investments a property tax break. The company promised to invest at least \$12.5 million and create at least 35 full-time jobs that, by the fifth year, would have to earn 130% of the Clatsop County's average annual wage. In exchange, Fort George would receive a property tax break on new equipment worth an estimated \$617,000.

See 2019, Page A5

City parks director under investigation

Allegations of sexual harassment

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
The Astorian

Tim Williams, the director of the Astoria Parks and Recreation Department, is under investigation by the city for sexual harassment.

Documents provided to The Astorian show that a woman who works with Williams told the city in November that his behavior was inappropriate and upsetting. The woman described how Williams, her supervisor, hugged her in a sexually suggestive manner and tried to discuss his pornography problem and fetishes with her.

Before the city could interview Williams, he requested leave under the Oregon Family Leave Act. The investigation is on pause while Williams is on leave, but the city wants to question him.

City Manager Brett Estes declined to comment on the substance of the investigation. But he said in a statement that the city takes prompt remedial action when interpersonal issues arise among staff.

"In Mr. Williams' case,

further investigation was initiated and when Mr. Williams was asked to participate in a scheduled interview he took protected leave and declined to do so," Estes said.

"The city cannot legally compel his cooperation during protected leave. As soon as he is off protected leave, Mr. Williams will be required to answer questions needed to conclude the investigation. At that point the city will be fully informed and able to make fair and appropriate decisions.

"Until then, on advice of the city's lawyers, we can say nothing further."

Mayor Bruce Jones said in a statement that the "city believes all employees deserve a respectful, professional work environment, and takes complaints of unprofessional behavior and harassment seriously. We act swiftly to investigate and, if warranted, take appropriate measures calculated to be effective and ensure professionalism at the city.

"When these efforts are not successful, employees who fail to meet the city's standards of professionalism are terminated."

Williams could not be reached for comment.

See Parks director, Page A3



Tim Williams



Nicole Bales/The Astorian

Chelsey Adams at her Warrenton salon.

Young woman makes the leap into business

Took ownership of a beauty salon

By NICOLE BALES
The Astorian

EVERYDAY
people

WARRENTON — Chelsey Adams has worked at Casual Elegance Salon for over two years. When the opportunity arose to take over the business, she hesitated.

After discussing it with her husband, she thought, "Well, why not?"

"This opportunity is falling into place for us, why don't we just take it," Adams remembers telling her husband. "And so that's what we decided to do."

Adams, 26, said at first the idea was daunting because she is raising two children — ages 2 and 10 months — and her husband travels often for work. However, her husband and parents' support ultimately convinced her to take the leap.

"At first, I was like, 'How am I going to do this?' But I think that everything happens for a reason. And I feel like it's

See Adams, Page A3

Pier Pressure Productions dissolves

New theater will take its place

By JONATHAN WILLIAMS
The Astorian

Pier Pressure Productions, the newly renovated black box theater downtown, is dissolving, according to Susi Brown, the theater's artistic director.

The theater opened officially in September with sold-out performances of "Henceforward."

Daric Moore, who renovated the space into a theater with Brown, will helm the new Ten Fifteen Theater, the space's new name, as owner and director.

Brown said the decision was made so there would be a "clean break" at the end of the year. Brown has been the leader of Pier Pressure in its multiple runs as a theater company over the past 11 years. Brown wants to focus on directing shows and acting instead of running a theater.

She said "there was nothing negative between Daric and me at all. That was not the case at all."

"From the beginning it was both of us who got it going but it was my push to say, 'I can build things because I have the skills to do it and I'd like to do it because I'm an actor and I want to see theater in this town and we'd been waiting for it,'" Moore said.

Moore said running a nonprofit is difficult and time-consuming and Brown and the board agreed that it



The entrance to Pier Pressure Productions, now The Ten Fifteen Theater, on Commercial Street.

would make more sense to start a new company.

"At some point she had this sense that she was losing her joy in doing theater and wanted to step away," Moore said.

"Her joy is to direct and do shows when they come up but not to be the behind-the-scenes person that makes a theater go," Moore added.

Brown said she wants the 100-plus volunteers who helped construct the theater to know that "the mission was to create a theater for the community and we did that and that is the plan that

it will continue in that vein."

Brown didn't rule out that Pier Pressure could come back in some way, but said she is focusing on taking a break and stepping back for now.

Pier Pressure was able to raise \$34,000 to renovate the space, Moore said. He and Brown also put a lot of their own money into the project.

"I'm really thrilled that we were able to in a year — in a calendar year — create this really wonderful space that Daric has built and the volunteers have come forward to help on and support

and I really want them to understand that it will continue. Just because it's not called Pier Pressure Productions anymore doesn't mean that the plans and promises have been broken."

Moore said he felt like the theater would run smoother if it was just one person making the decisions.

Moore said he doesn't see the theater as being any different than as it was before.

"To me, it's the same space. It has the exact same reason for being," he said.

He said the only noticeable difference is that donations won't be tax deductible since the theater is no longer a nonprofit.

Moore said he will likely need to do some fundraising for lights and other equipment needed for the theater.

He chose Ten Fifteen Theater for the name for the address — 1015 Commercial St. — and for the monthly shows the theater had been putting on when they were building the space.

The new theater will kick off with "Flight," the premiere show of the new Sparrow Dance Co. led by Julia Gingerich. The shows take place Jan. 10 and Jan. 11 at 7:15 p.m.

Later in the month, Moore and other actors will restage "Betrayal," which was first performed locally as a reader's theater event in

See Theater, Page A3

