



Tiny bits of plastic litter the sand at a beach in Ecola State Park near Cannon Beach.

Katie Frankowicz/The Astorian

## Domino's coming to Astoria

Space at the former Life in the Slow Lane

By EDWARD STRATTON  
The Astorian

Domino's is coming to Astoria.

Pat Farmer's family, including his father, Jeff, and brother, Chris, owns nearly 30 Domino's locations across the Pacific Northwest. They plan to open an Astoria location in the spring inside the former Life in the Slow Lane building at 16th Street and Marine Drive.

They recently purchased the sky blue building on the edge of downtown from Tracy and Donna Black. The couple spent more than two years tearing down a former laundromat, cleaning the property and having the structure built for their short-lived, old-timey hot dog, soda and gelato restaurant.

Pat and Chris Farmer grew up in Hoquiam, Washington. The family has been quickly expanding on the coast, opening locations in Newport, Seaside and at the North Coast Retail Center in Warrenton in 2018.

"We went into Warrenton thinking we could service both communities well," Pat Farmer said. "But we've come to the realization that going over the bridge is just too long of a drive."

The company was delivering as far east as 39th Street, but going farther meant going outside of the 18 to 22 minutes for delivery time they target, he said. The company also has a contract to deliver pizzas to the Astoria School District's food service program.

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## Former Jewell coach faces harassment charge

Samuelson claims the complaint was retaliation

By NICOLE BALES  
The Astorian

A former boys basketball coach at Jewell School is facing a harassment charge for allegedly touching a former coach for the middle school's girls team.

Prosecutors filed the misdemeanor against David Samuelson in October after the woman alleged Samuelson touched her inappropriately on her buttocks over her clothes in January 2019.

In a motion filed in Circuit Court by Samuelson's attorney, Samuelson claims the woman came forward with the sexual harassment allegation after he approached the school superintendent about her conduct with a parent. The filing also claims that the woman's boundaries with a high school student were "problematic."

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## Researchers examine impacts of plastic fiber on mole crabs

Health of crabs an important indicator

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ  
The Astorian

While North Coast residents are increasingly aware that microplastics are a problem, what the pollution means for wildlife isn't always clear.

But a type of plastic fiber now commonly found on Oregon's beaches may have a big impact on the life cycle of Pacific sand crabs, according to a recent study.

The study found that adult Pacific sand crabs, also called mole crabs, exposed in a lab to pieces of plastic fiber died sooner than those that were not exposed. If a crab was carrying a clutch of eggs when exposed, it released the eggs prematurely. For embryos, exposure to the plastic either sped up their development or slowed it down, depending on when they were exposed.

Small, numerous and, at first glance, unremarkable, mole crabs are a "bright, blinking light" for whether or not there's a problem in an area, said Dorothy Horn, lead author of the study and a doctoral candidate in Portland State University's earth, environment and society program.

Horn collected sand samples from 19 beaches in Oregon and mole crabs in Newport. Each sand sample contained some amount of microplastic fibers and particles. Though research-



Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

A new study finds Pacific sand crabs, also known as mole crabs, are impacted by microplastics in the sand.

ers exposed the crabs in the lab to a specific type of plastic fiber commonly found in marine environments and ingested by a variety of animals, Horn says it is safe to assume the crabs were already dealing with, and eating, a variety of plastic out on the beach.

Mole crabs are a sort of indicator species, whose presence or absence can tell researchers a lot about conditions in an area. They have been used to look for the presence of domoic acid, a naturally occurring marine toxin that can shut down popular razor clam fish-

eries and lucrative Dungeness fisheries if levels spike too high.

"I think people forget the beach is alive in a lot of ways," Horn said. "It's not just a pile of sand."

Mole crabs, she says, remind us there is a whole ecosystem alive between the rocks and the crashing ocean.

Despite the findings documented in the study, how much of a problem plastics are for mole crabs ultimately remains to be seen.

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*'I THINK PEOPLE FORGET THE BEACH IS ALIVE IN A LOT OF WAYS. IT'S NOT JUST A PILE OF SAND.'*

Dorothy Horn | lead author of the study

## Astoria man develops passion for carving

A dedication to ducks

By NICOLE BALES  
The Astorian

After retiring from a career as an educator in 2013, Rick Pass has spent the past several years developing a craft of carving and sculpting ducks from wood.

Pass, 66, of Astoria, spent 35 years as a high school teacher, principal and superintendent at



the Knappa, Ilwaco and Naselle schools districts.

Before retiring, he decided to take a carving class at Clatsop Community College, where he was exposed to the art of carving waterfowl.

His home and studio in Svensen sit along the Columbia River, where ducks congregate and serve

as inspiration for his work.

Although he found it frustrating to learn in the beginning, Pass kept coming back, and eventually became deeply committed to the craft. He bought books, took classes and sought out the best duck carvers in the world.

"I didn't realize there was this whole world out there of duck carving," he said. "In order to get good, I have to find the best and then I go to them."

He reached out to a duck carver in North Carolina and spent 10 days with him learning the basics.



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Rick Pass holds a finished mallard duck he hand carved and painted in his shop at his home in Svensen.

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