

## IN BRIEF

## Voters to decide on tax levy for county fairgrounds

The Clatsop County Board of Commissioners voted Wednesday to ask voters to adjust a tax levy for the county fairgrounds.

The current rate is 5 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value and expires in 2021. Voters approved a renewal of the tax levy in 2016 at a reduction from 7 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value.

The vote in May would be whether to go back to 7 cents per \$1,000 in 2021.

The county says the increase will help respond to a rise in operating and building maintenance costs and provide the opportunity for more events and programs.

## New tobacco retail fee goes into effect in February

A new tobacco retail license fee will go into effect Feb. 8.

County commissioners approved an ordinance in January which gives the county the authority to license and inspect tobacco retailers to ensure they follow Tobacco 21, which outlawed the sale of tobacco products to people under 21 years old.

The annual fee of \$350 will cover the costs associated with education and enforcement.

## County backs enterprise zone for Fort George Brewery

The Clatsop County Board of Commissioners voted Wednesday to approve an enterprise zone agreement with Fort George.

Fort George plans to invest about \$12.5 million to redevelop the former Astoria Warehousing property and applied for a 15-year tax abatement on investments to the property.

The Astoria City Council and Port of Astoria Commission approved the brewery's application earlier this month.

## County marks anniversary of big Cascadia earthquake

The Clatsop County Board of Commissioners declared Sunday Cascadia Earthquake Awareness Day.

The declaration is to encourage resilience planning for a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and tsunami.

Sunday is the anniversary of the last massive earthquake and tsunami along the zone in 1700.

— *The Astorian*

## DEATHS

Jan. 23, 2020

NOWAK, Delores E., 79, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Skyline Memorial Gardens Funeral Home in Portland is in charge of the arrangements.

Jan. 21, 2020

FLUES, Donna Jean, 79, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

Jan. 20, 2020

POWERS, James, 59, of Warrenton, died in

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

Jan. 17, 2020

MODUN-GROW, Yvonne Darlene, 82, of Warrenton, died in Warrenton. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

RIEKKOLA, Robin Edith, 65, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Ocean View Funeral & Cremation service of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

## BIRTH

Jan. 8, 2020

ALFARO-LURIEL, Rebecca and LURIEL, Jose, of Keizer, a girl, Luna Paige-Maria Luriel, born in Salem. Grandparents are Joni and Greg Alfaro, of Astoria, and Jose and Ana Luriel, of Stayton.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

## MONDAY

**Jewell School Board**, 6 p.m., Jewell School Library, 83874 state Highway 103.

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

## TUESDAY

**Seaside Community Center Commission**, 10 a.m., Bob Chisholm Community Center, 1225 Avenue A.

**Clatsop County Human Services Advisory Council**, 4 to 5:30 p.m., Room 430, 800 Exchange St., Astoria.

**Astoria Library Board**, 5:30 p.m., Flag Room, 450 10th St.

**Seaside Airport Advisory Committee**, 6 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

**Warrenton City Commission**, 6 p.m., City Hall, 225 S. Main Ave.

**Astoria Planning Commission**, 6:30 p.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

# Seaside aims to keep starfish lights bright

By R.J. MARX  
*Seaside Signal*

SEASIDE — Starfish need your help.

No, not just the ones in the ocean. We're talking about the sea star lighting along Broadway downtown.

The popular lights, which have proved a distinctive seasonal hallmark of the visitor experience, came to town in the late 1990s.

Members of the Seaside Downtown Development Association are seeking funds to maintain the bulbs and keep them shining bright.

Stephanie Stevenson, of the Cotton Club and Rascals, announced the fundraiser at Thursday's breakfast meeting of the downtown association.

On Feb. 5, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., 50% of the proceeds from any of the handcrafted drinks — coffee, tea, shakes — at Cafe Latte in the Seaside Carousel Mall, owned by Julie Jesse, will go to starfish bulb replacement.

The lighting is in place along Broadway and Holladay between the third week



Seaside Downtown Development Association

Starfish lights are an attraction in Seaside.

in September to the third week in May.

Along with the flower basket program, the starfish lighting is one of two beautification projects sponsored by the downtown development association.

"We've always done fundraisers for the flower baskets, but never the starfish," Stevenson said.

Keith Chandler, the gen-

eral manager of the Seaside Aquarium and the chairman of the downtown association, said the starfish idea first came to the city in 1998. The lights now need replacing. "They just burn out," he said. "When one loses more than one arm, I restring the whole thing."

Each string, which loops through the entire starfish, is 30-feet long.

A banner across the intersection of Broadway and Holladay displays the fish, the starfish and the bubbles.

As for real starfish, they are indeed at risk, Chandler said. "There are not a lot," he said. "You can find them in the Cove at low tide. Right now, there's a starfish wasting disease, so there's less starfish and sea stars than there used to be."

# Cyberattacks hit local county, city governments

## Tillamook County, St. Helens were targets for disruption

By ANDREW SELSKY  
*Associated Press*

Tillamook County was struggling to get its computer and telephone systems running again after it was hit by a cyberattack, a week after a nearby city lost data and computer programs in another apparent attack.

"All computer systems are offline at this time, our website is down and the phones are working intermittently," Tillamook County officials announced in a statement on Thursday. At a meeting Wednesday, the day the attack was noticed, county officials referred to it as a ransomware attack, according to Laura Swanson, a local reporter who was present.

"The county will be operating 'old school' for a few days," County Commissioner Mary Faith Bell told Swanson, a reporter from the Tillamook County Pioneer online news site. "No credit cards, and we'll have to come up with workarounds to take care of county business."

Ransomware is malicious software that encrypts a system, effectively locking out its users. The attacker promises to decrypt the information if paid.

County officials said in a statement there is no indication that the personal infor-



Andrew Selsky/AP Photo

The Tillamook County Board of Commissioners heard final testimony in January on the application by tech giant Facebook to use an oceanfront lot as a landing spot for a submarine fiber-optic cable.

mation of employees or residents has been accessed or misused. But experts said it may be too soon to tell.

St. Helens, in Columbia County, experienced a disruption in computers, emails and telephones starting on Jan. 14. The disruption is still ongoing, though some of it has been overcome, city spokeswoman Crystal King said Thursday.

The city government said in a statement Wednesday that its phones and some emails and computers were still offline, affecting all departments, including City Hall, the library, public works and police. Emergency 911 phone number and nonemergency dispatch lines were unaffected.

King said in an email Thursday that St. Helens engaged cybersecurity experts to help investigate "the suspicious activity and to help restore access to pro-

grams and data within our network."

Columbia County has reported no intrusions.

In 2019, 113 state and municipal governments and agencies, 764 health care providers, and 89 universities, colleges and school districts in the United States were hit by ransomware attacks, said Brett Callow, threat analyst at Emsisoft, a company that produces software to protect computers against attacks. The numbers came from a compilation of press reports and help requests the company received, Callow said.

Among victims of recent cyberattacks were city governments in Las Vegas, New Orleans and Pensacola, Florida.

Tillamook County began experiencing difficulties with several computer systems on Wednesday. The information technology

department determined it was a malware attack.

"Tillamook takes the security of the information entrusted to us very seriously. We are taking steps to prevent a similar event from occurring in the future, including strengthening security measures," the statement said.

County officials said they would work with law enforcement and hire an independent computer forensics provider and legal experts to help in the investigation. The FBI office in Portland, which has a cyber-crime task force, has offered to help, spokeswoman Beth Anne Steele said.

The attack has disrupted county business, including delaying mailing out notifications of the county commission's Jan. 9 decision to grant Facebook permission to build a landing spot for an undersea fiber-optic cable connecting America with Asia on a community's residential lot.

Residents of the tiny beachside community of Tierra del Mar vociferously opposed the plan, which they said will subject the village to drilling that could damage home foundations and septic systems and open the door for other similar projects.

Residents intend to appeal the decision to the state Land Use Board of Appeals. The 21-day clock for appeals will not start until the notifications are mailed out, said Lynnae Ruttledge, a Tierra del Mar homeowner.

# Jordan Cove withdraws application for key Oregon permit

By LIAM MORIARTY  
*Jefferson Public Radio*

The Jordan Cove Energy Project has abruptly withdrawn its application for a key permit from the state.

In a letter dated Thursday, project developers told

the Oregon Department of State Lands that the company was withdrawing the application effective Friday.

No reason was given, but earlier this week, the department had denied Jordan Cove's request for a fifth deadline extension for

the application.

It's not immediately clear what the withdrawal means for the Jordan Cove project.

Pembina — the Canadian company behind the project — wants to build a 229 mile-long pipeline to a new liquefied natural gas export terminal in Coos Bay.

The company needs the removal-fill permit for dredging in Coos Bay, as

well as for the pipeline's hundreds of waterway and wetland crossings.

But the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, or FERC, is expected to make a final determination on the project next month.

If FERC gives Jordan Cove a green light, the company may argue that federal laws override Oregon's laws. In that case, the outcome may ultimately lie with the courts.

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