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Quarantined cruise ship will miss Astoria stop

‘There’s just no way the ship’s coming in,’ Port official says

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

Cruise ship managers have agreed there is no way for the Grand Princess to embark on a

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Authorities struggle to contain coronavirus.
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cruise up the West Coast later this month, including a visit to Astoria on March 31.

Bruce Conner, the Port of Astoria’s cruise ship manager, said he spoke over the weekend with other West Coast ports scheduled for a visit by the Grand Princess about timelines for quarantine and deep cleaning of the vessel.
“There’s just no way the ship’s coming in, and that’s based on our consensus,” he said.
The Grand Princess was sup-

posed to be the first of more than 35 cruise ships set to stop in Astoria this year.
The cruise ship, carrying more than 3,500 people from 54 countries, has become a flashpoint since a former passenger became California’s first confirmed death from the novel coronavirus COVID-19. Twenty-one people on board have tested positive for the virus.

The Grand Princess docked in Oakland, California, on Monday.
Last week, Princess Cruises canceled a visit to Ensenada, Mexico, to sail toward San Francisco, and has since canceled a cruise to Hawaii. Company representatives were not immediately available for comment.
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Hammond man guilty of sex abuse

Sentenced to 25 years in prison

By NICOLE BALES
The Astorian

A Hammond man was sentenced to 25 years in prison on Friday for sexually abusing a child when she was 8 years old.

In February, a jury found Mark Paiz Jr. guilty on two counts of sodomy in the first degree and sex abuse in the first degree.

Paiz was living in an RV next to the victim’s home in 2013 when the abuse took place.

Paiz has been convicted of numerous felonies. He was sentenced in March 2019 to nearly 19 years in prison for raping a disabled woman in 2017 and sexually abusing a woman with dementia in 2016.

His new prison sentence will run consecutively to the one for his other sex crimes.

During his trial, Paiz denied abusing the victim and denied having previous felony convictions. During sentencing, he refused to wear headphones to help him hear his translator.

Chief Deputy District Attorney Dawn Buzzard, who prosecuted the case, told the court she believed Paiz does not have as much hearing loss as he lets on. She also said prosecutors know “Paiz” is not his real last name and that his reported age — 63 — is questionable as well.

“My experience with Mr. Paiz confirms my belief that he’s a predator,” Judge Cindee Matyas said prior to sentencing.

“He takes advantage of people who are small, that are dependent upon him, or maybe don’t have the skills or knowledge to protect themselves fully. I have some compassion for him in that his prospects for his future look pretty bleak. I don’t believe we can do anything other than incarcerate Mr. Paiz, and need to do so to keep people safe,” she said.

Paiz’s daughter attended the sentencing and shared with the Circuit Court what she described as her own abuse from her father when she was a child.

She said when she left home she thought she would never see him again. She said she tried to forget and move on, until one day he knocked on her door.

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Photos by Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

The Rubik’s Cube Club scrambles the cubes in preparation for a speed solve.

Solving the Rubik’s Cube as a team

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
The Astorian

WARRENTON — When 10 middle schoolers set out to solve 25 Rubik’s cubes in under three minutes, the room goes silent.

Each student on the Warrenton Middle School Rubik’s Cube team can solve the 3D puzzle in an average of 30 or 40 seconds. One student, Ian McCormick, the fastest member of the team, recently won a solo competition with a time of 18 seconds. No big deal.

As the team works through the cubes during a practice session in their math classroom, the only sounds are the clicks of cube layers being flipped into place. Then there is the hushed “clunk” of solved cubes landing on the table. The students’ fingers move so quickly it can seem like the Rubik’s Cube is changing colors on its own in their hands, a sort of souped-up chameleon running through its paces.

“Your fingers only cramp when you look at the timer,” said Austin Palmer, a seventh grader.

Led by eighth grade math teacher CC Travers, they are the top team in the state in their division and ranked 14th in the nation thanks to a first-place finish



Members of the Rubik’s Cube Club stand over the 25 cubes they solved in under three minutes.

MORE ONLINE

Watch a video of a speed solve at DailyAstorian.com

at the 2020 Oregon Rubik’s Cube Challenge in February. Their winning time: 25 Rubik’s cubes in two minutes and

38 seconds. Twenty-two seconds faster than last year’s winning team.

Travers first purchased a set of Rubik’s cubes for the classroom five years ago, the same year she started teaching at the middle school. She wanted to give her students something fun to look forward to in math class, but

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Nicole Bales/The Astorian
Ronnie Wilson opened a drain cleaning business after recovering from an accident.

Warrenton man overcomes odds

Wilson recovered after an accident

By NICOLE BALES
The Astorian

WARRENTON — Ronnie Wilson’s life has taken a lot of twists and turns. But he said he never gave up, even after a car crash that left him severely disabled.

About a decade ago, Wilson, 52, of Warrenton, woke up from a coma. He said he was told he crashed into the back of a semitruck and had to be extracted and flown to a Portland-area hospital.

“When I woke up, they didn’t expect me to wake up,” he said.



“They were having my family come up to say goodbye. And I just woke up.”

Wilson was in the hospital for more than two months and then spent a couple of weeks in an assisted living facility. He said he wasn’t expected to walk again, but doctors managed to save his leg. Through physical therapy and daily walks, he managed to heal.

During the time Wilson was healing, he was unable to work,

so he lived off of disability benefits. He was living in the Portland area at the time and could no longer afford the cost of living, so he bought a boat to live in Astoria.

He was familiar with Clatsop County from the times he used to visit his grandfather. It was while living in Astoria that he started walking across the New Youngs Bay Bridge daily to regain strength.

Eventually, he felt ready to return to work and school. He was

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