

IN BRIEF

Warrenton man dies after arrest

A Warrenton man died in the Clatsop County Jail after having a medical emergency, officials said.

Alexander Jimenez, 34, was arrested Friday evening by Warrenton police for disorderly conduct and resisting arrest.

Officials said officers took Jimenez to Columbia Memorial Hospital in Astoria for medical clearance prior to bringing him to the jail.

After Jimenez arrived at the jail, officials said he experienced a medical emergency in the sally port and medical staff and deputies tried to save him. He was taken to Columbia Memorial, where he later died.

The major crimes team and the county medical examiner are investigating.

— *The Astorian*

Two coronavirus cases reported in Pacific County

LONG BEACH, Wash. — Two locally confirmed cases of the coronavirus in Pacific County were announced on Saturday and Sunday.

Both people were isolated at home, the county said in press releases. No other details were provided.

“Pacific County public health nurses are conducting a thorough investigation to identify potential exposures and notify close contacts. Contact investigations are critical to track and prevent the spread of disease,” the county said.

Another person who listed Pacific County as a residence tested positive for the virus in another state.

— *Chinook Observer*

Unemployment claims near 2,500 in county

Another 605 people in Clatsop County applied for unemployment insurance over the past week, part of 53,800 more claims statewide.

Nearly 2,500 people in the county have applied for unemployment over the past month since President Donald Trump declared a national emergency over the coronavirus, part of around 22 million claims nationwide and nearly 300,000 in Oregon.

More than half of the claims in the county have come from the accommodations and food services industries. More than 300 retail workers have filed for unemployment in the county with the economic slowdown, along with more than 220 health care workers as hospitals and clinics restrict nonemergency procedures.

— *The Astorian*

Popular osprey cam is off

SEASIDE — The osprey cam at Broadway Park will not be running this year.

The camera appears to have been damaged sometime over the last year and isn't functioning, Angie Reseland, the executive director of the Necanicum Watershed Council, said.

— *The Astorian*

CORRECTION

Number incorrect — The Warrenton-Hammond School District has loaned out over 150 computers to help students during the coronavirus pandemic. A story on A1 on Saturday incorrectly said the district had loaned out over 500.

ON THE RECORD

DUII

• Kiley Kristine Holdiman, 20, of Warrenton, was arrested Sunday on Olney Avenue in Astoria for driving under the influence of intoxicants. Her blood alcohol content was 0.16%.

• Eva Puckett, 40, of Warrenton, was arrested Friday on N.E. Skipanon Drive in Warrenton for DUII and two counts of reckless endangerment. Her blood alcohol content was 0.16%.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

TUESDAY

Union Health District of Clatsop County Board, 8 a.m., (teleconference).

Port of Astoria Commission, 4 p.m., workshop, 10 Pier 1, Suite 209, (Zoom teleconference).

Astoria Historic Landmarks Commission, 5:15 p.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District Board of Directors, 5:15 p.m., regular meeting; 6 p.m., budget meeting, Bob Chisholm Community Center, 1225 Avenue A, Seaside.

Seaside School District Board of Directors, 6 p.m., budget committee meeting immediately followed by regular meeting (Zoom teleconference).

WEDNESDAY

Clatsop County Board of Commissioners, 5 p.m., work session; 6 p.m., meeting, (teleconference).

THURSDAY

Sunset Empire Transportation District Board, 9 a.m., (teleconference).

Climate has changed farming in the Northwest

By GEORGE PAVEN
Capital Press

Pat Dudley and her husband, Ted Casteel, began growing wine grapes more than 40 years ago in the Eola-Amity Hills of Oregon's lush Willamette Valley.

About 50 miles southwest of Portland, their vineyard lies in the direct path of the Van Duzer Corridor — a low point in the Coast Range where cool winds from the

Pacific Ocean travel inland, creating the perfect climate for producing pinot noir grapes.

While most grapes used to make red wine varieties prefer warmer weather, pinot noir is a notable exception. Lower nighttime temperatures in the Eola-Amity Hills help to keep the fruit fresh, imparting higher acidity and lower alcohol content by comparison.

But climate change poses a new challenge for Oregon winemakers and their \$200 million industry. Dudley, president of Bethel Heights Vineyard and a former member of the state Board of Agriculture, said the delicate balance of growing conditions may be at risk.

“Everybody is talking about it,” she said. “People are starting to make difficult choices.”

Rising average temperatures are affecting farmers and ranchers across the Northwest, altering growing seasons, threatening water supplies and, in some cases, prompting farmers to change crops or fallow land.

According to the latest census by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the average age of farmers is now 58. Over their lifetime, scientific data reveals a warming trend correlated to an increase in greenhouse gases. Studies are now showing how that will affect everything from precipitation to pest and disease pressure.

Snowpack declines

Perhaps the biggest consequence of climate change for Western agriculture is decreasing mountain snowpack, which acts as a natural reservoir for streams and rivers that provide fish and wildlife habitat, as well as irrigation for crops and livestock.

Philip Mote, who until recently served as director of the Oregon Climate Change Research Institute at Oregon State University, has published several studies charting snow levels at nearly 700 monitoring stations across the West.

The most recent study published in 2018 shows that, compared to 1955, 90% of sites had a snowpack decline. Of those, 1 in 3 sites saw significant declines. The biggest drops were measured during the spring in parts of West Coast states with typically mild winters.

To put that in perspective, Mote said the volume of water lost by April 1 each year is comparable to the West's largest reservoir, Lake Mead, which can hold more than 26 million acre-feet of water.

“It was a much larger impact than I expected,” Mote said. “It jumped off the page.”

At the same time, global temperatures have generally risen between 1 and 1.5 degrees Fahrenheit since 1980 and worldwide carbon dioxide emissions from fossil fuels and cement production



Andrea Johnson

Workers harvest wine grapes at Bethel Heights Vineyard in Oregon, makers of pinot noir, chardonnay and other varieties.

are up 143.2% since 1970.

Mote is quick to acknowledge that Earth's climate is naturally variable, though scientific consensus is clear that the current trend is human-caused.

For example, Mote compared the year 2015 — which saw record low snowpacks at 80% of his monitoring sites — to 1934, a similarly warm year in the Northwest. Both years were hotter than average, Mote said, due partly to natural variability. However, 2015 was an additional 2 degrees warmer, a phenomenon Mote attributes to more heat-trapping greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

“The last few decades, (trends have) clearly emerged to the point where we can now distinguish nonnatural climatic changes from natural climatic changes,” he said. “We'll continue to see reduced spring snowpack and lower summer stream flow.”

‘EVERYBODY IS TALKING ABOUT IT. PEOPLE ARE STARTING TO MAKE DIFFICULT CHOICES.’

Water supply

Drier, warmer winters in the mountains affect runoff and irrigation supplies in many of the Northwest's most productive agricultural regions.

Irrigation means everything to Owyhee Produce, a sprawling operation straddling the arid Oregon-Idaho state line where farms typically receive less than 7 inches of rain per year.

Owyhee Produce is the packing and marketing arm of Froerer Farms, a third-generation farm based in Nyssa. Shay Myers serves as CEO of the operation, growing 4,200 acres of onions, asparagus, beans, corn, mint, wheat, alfalfa and hemp.

“Everything grown is dependent on irrigation,” Myers said, pointing to the desert climate. Here, summer high temperatures can reach 95 degrees. Without the intricate network of irrigation ditches and canals, productive farms become nothing more than sun-baked sand and sage.

Froerer Farms gets its water from the Owyhee Irrigation District, which includes Owyhee Reservoir. The 13,900-acre reservoir provides water to more than 167,000 acres of farmland. At full allotment, farmers receive 4 acre-feet of water per acre of farmland.

However, Myers said lower spring runoff over the past decade has meant less water from the reservoir.

For the first time since his grandfather started the farm in the late 1950s, Myers said, the farm had to leave several hundred acres fallow in 2015 and 2016, at a cost of about \$400 per acre. Canals that would normally carry water through September instead went dry in August.

“We've had less consistent filling of our reservoir, and more fallowing of our ground,” Myers said. “It's been more exaggerated over the last 5 to 10 years.”

Myers said he expects water supply volatility to continue across the region. In response, he said some farmers have drilled wells as a backup water supply, and switched from flood irrigation to drip irrigation to conserve water.

Over 90% of the onion crop is now drip-irrigated compared to just 10 to 20% 15 years ago, Myers said.

The warming climate has not been entirely negative for

potentially cause more crop damage.

“You can look at almost any measure of climate — warming, drying, less cold — and find something that could be detrimental,” he said.

A 2019 survey of more than 1,700 wine industry members showed that half of those represented expect climate change will have a strong or very strong effect on their businesses. Jones said growers are especially concerned about water scarcity, lower yields and higher demand for products like pesticides and herbicides.

Bethel Heights Vineyard has about 50 acres of grapevines, primarily pinot noir and chardonnay. Dudley said harvest has typically taken place during October in the Willamette Valley.

In hotter years, Dudley said harvest has been pushed forward to August to avoid the wines becoming too “jammy,” referring to wine with a cooked berry sweetness. But that, too, poses a predicament, as picking early might not give grapes enough time for their flavor and acidity to come into balance.

If earlier harvests become more commonplace, Dudley said the farm is considering planting more warm-weather grape varieties such as syrah to adjust.

“Every grape has its own preferences,” she said. “It's all dependent on the climate.”

While agriculture is on the front lines of climate change, growers are also in a unique position to mitigate its effects through farming practices that sequester carbon and build the soil.

“When we speak to policymakers and legislators, that is certainly part of the story we're telling,” said Chris Schreiner, executive director of Oregon Tilth, a nonprofit organization that certifies organic farms and ranches in 49 states.

Schreiner, whose family also runs a 200-acre commercial iris garden north of Salem, said practices like reducing tillage, planting cover crops and pasture-based livestock grazing can help to reduce erosion and improve water retention on the soil, thus making farms more resilient to a warmer climate.

A study published in 2017 by the National Soil Project at Northeastern University in Boston found that soils from organic farms had 26% more potential for long-term carbon storage and 13% more organic matter than soils from nonorganic farms, based on over 1,000 soil samples taken from nearly all 50 states.

“Some of those organic practices that are used by organic farmers and required by organic standards have been incorporated on non-organic farms,” Schreiner added. “Nonorganic farms can also contribute to climate solutions by selective adoption of organic practices.”

the Astorian

Established July 1, 1873
(USPS 035-000)

Published Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday by EO Media Group, 949 Exchange St., PO Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103 Telephone 503-325-3211, 800-781-3211 or Fax 503-325-6573. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Astorian, PO Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103-0210

DailyAstorian.com
MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
MEMBER CERTIFIED AUDIT OF CIRCULATIONS, INC.

Circulation phone number:
503-325-3211

Periodicals postage paid at Astoria, OR
ADVERTISING OWNERSHIP
All advertising copy and illustrations prepared by The Astorian become the property of The Astorian and may not be reproduced for any use without explicit prior approval.

COPYRIGHT ©
Entire contents © Copyright,
2020 by The Astorian.

Printed on recycled paper

Subscription rates
Effective May 1, 2019
MAIL (IN COUNTY)

EZpay (per month)\$11.25
13 weeks in advance\$37.00
26 weeks in advance\$71.00
52 weeks in advance\$135.00

Out of County Rates available at 800-781-3214

DIGITAL

EZpay (per month)\$8.00

Call Anytime

Free Fast Estimates

Jeff Hale Painting

- Residential
- Commercial
- Cedar Roof Treatments
- Exterior Repaint Specialist

Over 25 years local experience

503-440-2169

Jeff Hale, Contractor

LICENSED PAINTER
INSURED
CB#179131

WANTED

Alder and Maple Saw Logs & Standing Timber

Northwest Hardwoods • Longview, WA

Contact: John Anderson • 360-269-2500