



CORONAVIRUS



The Knappa Community Helping Hands donation box sits on the counter at Country Market.

Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

In Knappa, 'a community labor of love' during the pandemic

Volunteers deliver meals to families

By NICOLE BALES
The Astorian

When Gov. Kate Brown ordered schools to close in March due to the coronavirus, Jacqueline Whitten, who works at the Knappa School District, knew that more than half of the students rely on the district's free and reduced lunch program.

For many, it's their primary meal of the day.

Through Whitten's roles as a bus driver, leadership adviser and Key Club adviser, she has gotten to know students and their families. "We had to do something to make sure that families who needed it, had the extra support," she said.

Whitten saw that Courtney Bangs, a local parent and preschool teacher, had created a Facebook group — Knappa Community Helping Hands —

for families living in Knappa, Svensen and Brownsmead to support one another.

Within hours after Bangs created the group, Whitten called her and said she wanted to help make sure children are fed.

The two partnered and began organizing volunteers to deliver food and necessities to students and their families during spring break.

After the school district started delivering meals to students daily, Whitten and Bangs decided to focus their efforts on a larger quantity of groceries and necessities once a week to make sure more than 60 families have what they needed.

"When you work in the public school system, you look around and you see that not everybody is in the same boat," said Bangs, who is running for the Clatsop

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Dennis and Judy Rund are two of the delivery volunteers who bring goods to local families in Knappa, Svensen, Brownsmead and other local communities.

'WHEN YOU WORK IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM, YOU LOOK AROUND AND YOU SEE THAT NOT EVERYBODY IS IN THE SAME BOAT. AND NOT EVERYBODY HAS THE SAME RESOURCES, NOT EVERYBODY HAS THE SAME FAMILY DYNAMICS ... YOU IMMEDIATELY REALIZE, 'WHAT ARE THESE KIDS GOING TO DO?'

Courtney Bangs | local parent and preschool teacher

GOONIES

Stay home, you guys!

A 35th anniversary party canceled

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

The Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce has canceled the 35th anniversary celebration of "The Goonies" because of concerns over the coronavirus pandemic.

The celebration of the iconic 1985 film was scheduled from June 4 to June 7. The chamber organizes larger celebrations for movie fans every five years, with an estimated 12,000 people coming to Astoria for the 30th anniversary in 2015.

The chamber had already canceled its largest annual event, the Crab, Seafood & Wine Festival, scheduled for last weekend. The 53rd annual Astoria Scandinavian Midsummer Festival scheduled for June

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Debbie
Boothe-Schmidt



George
Kiepke



Vineeta
Lower



Suzanne
Weber

Favorites emerge for state House

Boothe-Schmidt, Weber have fundraising edge

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

Even amid a campaign driven mostly online and over the phone by the coronavirus pandemic, favorites have emerged in the Democratic and Republican primaries to replace state Rep. Tiffany Mitchell.

The Astoria Democrat announced just before the filing deadline in March that she would not run for a second term, moving to Washington state because of her husband's new job with Pacific Power.

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Teacher juggles students, children

At home during the pandemic

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
The Astorian

When people tell Kenna Walker, a teacher used to juggling a classroom of more than 20 fourth graders, "You're probably having a great time because you know what to do," she thinks about the ducklings.

There are three of them. Recently purchased. Novel, tiny and adorable. Will the raising of



them give her three daughters some hands-on educational experience while they're all stuck at home and schools are closed because of the coronavirus? Yes, absolutely. Are they also a little bit of a bribe? Yes, absolutely.

Her children earn time with them: Read for 10 minutes, then you can play with your ducks.

Walker is a teacher at Heights Elementary School in Seaside. With schools closed through the

end of the school year, her classroom is virtual and based out of her home in Gearhart. Her kids are right there with her. Life has become a different sort of juggling act.

She lets her daughters sleep in because it gives her a little bit of quiet time in the mornings to work. Her husband is able to take over parenting duties for a couple of hours each day — "COVID leave" he gets from his job. Her 11-year-old daughter helps teach the younger two.

But the system of rewards and consequences so familiar in a classroom looks very different at home. Walker's kids don't listen to her like her students do.



Kenna Walker, a fourth grade teacher at Heights Elementary School in Seaside, works from an RV parked next to her house with her three daughters.

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