

IN BRIEF

Hundreds protest stay-at-home order in Salem

SALEM — Hundreds of people turned out at the Oregon State Capitol on Saturday for a #ReOpenOregon rally. People came and went during the rain, lining both sides of the street in front of the Capitol, which has been closed to the public for several weeks as a public health precaution.

Demonstrators held signs and waved American flags as vehicles circled the Capitol, honking their support. Some participants wore masks and maintained social distances. Others gathered together.

A group calling itself Oregon Uniting for Liberty organized the Salem rally, which was endorsed by the Oregon Republican Party and other organizations.

Signs included “Fear is the virus,” “Freedom is bi-partisan,” “My freedom does not end where your fear begins,” “Unlock Oregon,” “Fire Gov. Brown, reopen Oregon,” “Boycott China” and “Gov. Brown, I went to church on Sunday. Please don’t arrest me.” Other signs supported President Donald Trump and Republican candidates.

“This isn’t a partisan political event, but instead a public rally to rescue our livelihoods and freedoms from being extinguished by a government that has forgotten that, in America, government must operate with the consent of the governed,” Bill Currier, the GOP chairman, said beforehand.

— Oregon Capital Bureau

Oregon wave energy project enters permitting phase

An innovative wave-energy project proposed for Oregon has entered a key stretch as it seeks the environmental approvals needed to move forward.

Oregon State University’s PacWave testing array would be located about 2 miles offshore. An underwater cable would connect the array to the electrical grid just north of Waldport on the state’s central coast.

The project is designed to help facilitate the development of technology that generates electricity using the movement of waves. The idea is to create a space for wave energy developers to test their designs in real-world conditions without having to go through individual environmental permitting processes, which take significant time and money.

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality is holding a public teleconference hearing on May 14 to address water quality concerns arising from the project.

— Oregon Public Broadcasting

Pacific Way Cafe to close after 32 years

Impact from coronavirus pandemic

By R.J. MARX
The Astorian

GEARHART — The Pacific Way Cafe at the southeast corner of Pacific Way and Cottage will close after serving as a gathering place and special occasion dining destination for 32 years.

After meeting with chef Geoff Gunn on Saturday, owners Lisa and John Allen told their 20 full-time and part-time employees that the cafe will permanently close because of financial impacts from the coronavirus pandemic.

“We all three knew this was insupportable,” Lisa Allen said. “We knew it would not be a viable business without revenue to supply employees and food cost. We cannot financially ruin ourselves to the point where we would sell our home and live on the street.”

“John and I agonized over this,” Lisa Allen said. “When this pandemic first hit, we were on a one-week break, a closure. Instead of going on vacation, we had the idea to renovate the dining rooms at the cafe. We repainted, we had brand-new cushions sewn for the chairs. We spent \$10,000. The dining room has never looked more beautiful — and now no one will ever sit in it.”

With social distancing



Pacific Way Cafe in Gearhart.

rules, the cafe — which is comprised of a collection of intimate dining areas — would cut the number of diners by 50%, she said. “You can’t make a living with that. I could not even bring back one cook. We could not financially sustain that.”

The Allens applied for the Small Business Administration disaster relief program without result. “We applied for the PPP (Paycheck Protection Program) and heard nothing back from our bank or from anyone,” Lisa Allen said.

Gov. Kate Brown’s extension through July 6 of Oregon’s state of emergency for COVID-19 was the final blow.

The Allens dreamed of opening a restaurant inspired by their own favorite dining experiences, from Portland to Paris.

When the building at 601 Pacific Way — formerly a restaurant called Eat Your Heart Out — became available, the couple jumped.

“I called John at home and said the building’s for sale, I want it,” Lisa Allen said. “I had always dreamt of having a place people could walk to and ride their bikes to, have dessert, have a meal.”

The Allens opened the cafe in 1988.

“We didn’t have table service in the beginning,” Lisa Allen said. “We had numbers people took and we delivered to the table. We had a 6-foot long dessert case, a deli case — the format was completely different.”

Eventually, the cafe began serving lunch, dinner and hiring their first chef, Gretchen Day. “It just grew from there,” Lisa Allen said. “The community, the locals really loved it.”

The Allens made local headlines in the late 1980s and early ’90s when Gearhart’s City Council moved to shut the cafe down, citing zoning rules that prohibited eating and drinking establishments in the downtown

commercial district.

The Allens fought back in the courts and won, enabling the cafe to thrive for the next three decades. In those years, the cafe received write-ups in The Oregonian, Food & Wine, Saveur and other publications for their Pacific Northwest cuisine served with a French flair.

When the neighboring building, which housed the post office, became available, the Allens expanded and began serving pastries and coffee to crowds that would line up before 7 a.m. for freshly baked marionberry scones, apple turnovers and veggie tarts.

The cafe became a social headquarters for locals, with visitors and regulars alike engaged in conversation and issues of the day.

The pandemic brought all that to a halt.

The cafe’s business plan is no longer sustainable, John Allen said. “We’re in the same situation practically all other restaurateurs are in right now — and I don’t see anything that’s going to change that.”

The Allens plan on reopening the bakery in a different format, serving baked goods, sandwiches and grocery items on a take-out basis. They hope to reopen for business in June.

“It’s heartbreaking to see it end,” Lisa Allen said. “But it can’t go on.”

“This has been pretty tough,” John Allen said. “Thirty-two years and the whole thing disappeared overnight.”

DEATHS

May 3, 2020

THWING, Teresa, 64, of Warrenton, died in Warrenton. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements.

May 1, 2020

MILLER, John Frederick, 68, of North Bend, formerly of the Astoria area, died in Coos Bay. Coos Bay Chapel is in charge of the arrangements.

OWEN, Scott, 52, of Seaside, died in Seaside.

Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements.

April 30, 2020

BERGLUND, Jack S., 78, of Astoria, died in St. Helens. Groulx Family Mortuary of Rainier is in charge of the arrangements.

DENNING, Deborah Ann, 69, of Warrenton, died in Warrenton. Caldwell’s Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

Senators: ‘Pandemic has exacerbated an already fragile food supply chain’

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year, or \$75,000, whichever is lower, to help businesses with fewer than 50 employees and less than \$1 million in gross revenue.

Small business owners have complained they have largely missed out on the Paycheck Protection Program and Economic Injury Disaster Loan intended to help cover payroll and other expenses for businesses with fewer than 500 employees.

“I just think in all these packages, small business has really been the forgotten constituency, so I’ve really zeroed in on that,” Wyden said by phone Monday.

The Oregon Democrat’s proposal would help provide the liquidity many small businesses rely on to stay open, he said.

Merkley is asking Congress to buy \$2 billion in seafood as part of the next coronavirus relief bill.

The seafood industry received \$300 million from the first \$2 trillion coronavirus relief package passed in March. But Merkley said during the virtual town hall that the previous relief package isn’t enough for a seafood industry losing much of its domestic market with restaur-

rants shuttered and more people cooking at home and eating less fish.

“That translates to the prices our fishermen are paid, and the ability to sustain the entire coastal fishing economy,” the Oregon Democrat said.

His proposal will target the types of fish usually sold at restaurants. In addition to the seafood purchases, Merkley’s idea would pump \$1.5 billion into the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for targeted relief to damaged fisheries across the country.

Wyden said he hopes to have a lot of frozen seafood in a strategic food reserve he has asked the U.S. Department of Agriculture to support in Oregon.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated an already fragile food supply chain in Oregon and the nation,” Wyden wrote in a letter to Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue. “The farmers and agriculture producers who help feed my state have been hit hard by this pandemic and the need for a program that provides long-term stability in times of crisis, has never been more apparent.”

Wyden asked for emer-

gency food supplies to fill a 70% increase in demand food banks have experienced and said the USDA could support farms and ranches with loans, purchases, payments and other operations; buying and donating food to domestic relief agencies; and developing new domestic markets for agricultural commodities.

“I ask the USDA to use its capacity to support the current hunger needs in Oregon and an Oregon-specific program that identifies immediate availability of food that is in oversupply and at risk of being dumped due to market disruption,” Wyden wrote to Purdue. “It can also work with and pay Oregon processors to freeze, aseptically pack, dry and create shelf-life for their product to go into storage.”

Wyden, who helped create the law expanding federal unemployment benefits through July, including the \$600 weekly payments, said he is also negotiating a trigger that would extend the expansion longer if employment hasn’t recovered.

“At the end of July, if the economy has come back, it’s not an issue,” he said. “But if, say, there’s a lot of continued economic hurt, you could have a trigger to ensure

the extra benefits were tied to labor conditions on the ground.”

Wyden and Merkley, along with 31 other legislators, have also pushed for more funding for local, state and tribal governments to receive flexible funding in the next coronavirus relief bill.

Democrats have proposed more than \$500 billion in such aid, with U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi recently suggesting around \$1 trillion. Cities around the U.S. are facing massive budget shortfalls, including those on the North Coast losing lodging tax revenue to government restrictions over the virus.

“Not only are these public servants on the front line of the immediate response effort, they are also major employers navigating unprecedented declines in revenue just as the need for their services hits an all-time high,” the senators wrote in a letter to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, a Kentucky Republican, and Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin. “We can and we must work together to get this essential funding to our local partners as quickly as possible.”

ON THE RECORD

Assault

• Mark Edward Warren, 34, was arrested Sunday behind Goodwill in Warrenton for assault in the second degree, menacing and possession of methamphetamine.

Theft

• Christine Cook, 28, of Rosburg, Washing-

ton, was arrested Friday at Walmart in Warrenton for theft in the second degree.

DUII

• Cindy J. Brown, 62, of Roseburg, Oregon, was arrested Thursday on W. Marine Drive in Astoria for driving under the influence of intoxicants.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

TUESDAY

Clatsop County Board of Commissioners, noon, work session (electronic meeting).

Port of Astoria Commission, 4 p.m., (electronic meeting).

Seaside Library Board, 4:30 p.m., (electronic meeting).

Clatsop Care Health District Board, 5 p.m., (electronic meeting).

Miles Crossing Sanitary Sewer District Board, 6 p.m., 34583 U.S. Highway 101 Business.

Seaside Planning Commission, 6 p.m., (electronic meeting).

WEDNESDAY

Seaside Urban Renewal District, 6 p.m., budget meeting (electronic meeting).

Seaside Road District, 6:30 p.m., budget meeting (electronic meeting).

Gearhart City Council, 7 p.m., (electronic meeting).

THURSDAY

Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District, 3 p.m., (electronic meeting).

the Astorian

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“And that’s what they’re doing,” he said. “We all make mistakes, and in life it’s how we deal with them.”

In 2018, County Clerk Tracie Krevanko sent out an updated county commission district map with ballots for the May election after the county voters’ pamphlet contained outdated district boundaries.

Maeve Kennedy Grimes

was fired as county clerk in 2014 over her decision to issue supplemental ballots in the November election when errors were discovered in descriptions of a Clatsop Community College bond measure and an at-large Cannon Beach City Council race.

Scott Somers, the county manager at the time, claimed the clerk was insubordinate for not consulting him before pursuing a directive by the secretary of state to issue cor-

rected ballots.

A jury awarded Kennedy Grimes more than \$400,000 in 2016 after she filed a lawsuit over her dismissal.

In 2014, Kennedy Grimes pressed for a special election in the District 5 race for county commission between

Lianne Thompson and Dale Barrett after hundreds of voters were placed in the wrong districts in the May election.

Thompson, who had led Barrett by 81 votes in the May election, prevailed by a larger margin in the special election in September.

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