

## IN BRIEF

## Roley honored with emotional send-off

SEASIDE — Hundreds of well-wishers lined the road to the new middle and high school campus on Thursday to pay tribute to Seaside School District Superintendent Sheila Roley.

Roley will retire at the end of June after three decades with the school district as teacher, principal and superintendent.

Roley and assistant superintendent Susan Penrod, along with other administrators, attended a leadership meeting at Broadway Middle School when Penrod suggested they take a drive to the new campus.

“She didn’t really know until we drove right up before here and saw the police escorts pull up,” Penrod said.

Police were joined by the Seaside Fire Department, including the 100-foot tractor-drawn aerial quint.

“I had no clue,” Roley said as she stepped from the yellow Jeep to a crowd of well-wishers and supporters. “One-hundred percent. I am grateful beyond words to have had the opportunity to have had this team, do this work, to be in this community, for the untold blessings of being able to serve the families and the kids and the staff and the community members in Seaside and our larger Seaside community.

“No one could have it better.”

— *The Astorian*

## Oregon Supreme Court backs Brown on emergency orders

The Oregon Supreme Court ruled Friday against a group of churches and public officials from Eastern Oregon who challenged Gov. Kate Brown’s executive orders aimed at slowing the spread of COVID-19.

In their ruling, the justices ordered a Baker County Circuit Court judge to vacate his preliminary injunction dismantling emergency actions Brown has taken to address the pandemic, an order that the Supreme Court had put on hold. Despite that ruling, the case remains open.

The churches conceded Brown has sweeping authority to limit public gathering and business functions but argued that this authority was limited to a total of 28 days — meaning restrictions in place since March would no longer be valid.

— *Oregon Public Broadcasting*

## DEATHS

**June 11, 2020**  
NIKKILA, Norma M., 102, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Caldwell’s Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

**June 10, 2020**  
ANDERSON, Marilyn Jean, 85, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Caldwell’s Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

## MEMORIALS

**Wednesday, June 17**

ANDERSON, Marilyn Jean — Graveside service at 1 p.m., Ocean View Cemetery, 575 18th St. in Warrenton.

## ON THE RECORD

## Assault

• Claressa Rene Durfee, 28, of Astoria, was arraigned Tuesday for assault in the fourth degree and harassment and disorderly conduct in the second degree.

## Theft

• Andrew James Benson Oyler, 24, was arrested Thursday on Lief Erikson Drive in Astoria for theft in the third degree and giving false information to a police officer.

## Weapons

• Garthe Alexander Mische, 48, of Astoria, was arrested Thursday on Seventh Street in Astoria for unlawful pos-

session of a weapon with intent to use and reckless endangerment.

## Harassment

• Gerald Glen Lutcavich, 61, of Pendleton, was arrested Friday on Waluski Loop in Astoria for harassment.

## Criminal trespass

• Roy Douglas Hall, 44, of Astoria, was arrested Wednesday at Astoria Brewing Co. for criminal trespass in the second degree.

• Peyton Briar McDow, 21, of Astoria, was arrested Tuesday on 45th Street in Astoria for criminal trespass in the first degree.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

## MONDAY

**Knappa School District**, 5:30 p.m., budget session, (electronic meeting).

**Astoria City Council**, 7 p.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

## TUESDAY

**Union Health District of Clatsop County**, 8 a.m., Providence Seaside Hospital, Education Room A.

**Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District Board of Directors**, 5:15 p.m., (electronic meeting).

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

**Seaside School District Board of Directors**, 6 p.m., 1801 S. Franklin.

**Shoreline Sanitary District Board**, 7 p.m., Gearhart Herzig Station, 33496 West Lake Lane, Warrenton.

## 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

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## DRIVE-BY TRIBUTE



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Teachers and staff from the Astoria School District drove through neighborhoods on Wednesday — what would have been the last day of school — to say goodbye to students.

## Big money bought the forests

Communities now paying the price

By TONY SCHICK  
*Oregon Public Broadcasting*  
By ROB DAVIS  
*The Oregonian*  
By LYLLA YOUNES  
*ProPublica*

FALLS CITY — A few hundred feet past this Oregon timber town, a curtain of Douglas fir trees opens to an expanse of skinny stumps.

The hillside has been clearcut, with thousands of trees leveled at once. Around the bend is another clearcut nearly twice its size, then another, patches of desert brown carved into the forest for miles.

Logging is booming around Falls City, a town of about 1,000 residents in the Oregon Coast Range. More trees are cut in the county today than decades ago when a sawmill hummed on Main Street and timber workers and their families filled the now-closed cafes, grocery stores and shops selling home appliances, sporting goods and feed for livestock.

But the jobs and services have dried up, and the town is going broke. The library closed two years ago. And as many as half of the families in Falls City live on weekly food deliveries from the Mountain Gospel Fellowship.

“You’re left still with these companies that have reaped these benefits, but those small cities that have supported them over the years are left in the dust,” Mac Corthell, the city manager, said.

For decades, politicians, suit-and-tie timber executives and caulk-booted tree fallers alike have blamed the federal government and urban environmental advocates for kneecapping the state’s most important industry.

Timber sales plummeted in the 1990s after the federal government dramatically reduced logging in national forests in response to protests and lawsuits to protect the northern spotted owl under the Endangered Species Act and other conservation laws. The drop left thousands of Oregonians without jobs, and counties lost hundreds of millions of dollars in annual revenue.

But the singularly focused



Beth Nakamura/The Oregonian

Top left: The Boondocks, a restaurant in Falls City; top right: Frink’s General Store, a market in town; bottom: a truck carrying logs rolls through Falls City.

narrative, the only one most Oregonians know, masked another devastating shift for towns like Falls City.

Wall Street real estate trusts and investment funds began gaining control over the state’s private forestlands. They profited at the expense of rural communities by logging more aggressively with fewer environmental protections than in neighboring states, while reaping the benefits of timber tax cuts that have cost counties at least \$3 billion in the past three decades, an investigation by Oregon Public Broadcasting, The Oregonian and ProPublica found.

Half of the 18 counties in Oregon’s timber-dominant region lost more money from tax cuts on private forests than from the reduction of logging on federal lands, the investigation shows.

Private timber owners used to pay what was known as a severance tax, which was based on the value of the trees they logged. But the tax, which helped fund schools and local governments, was eliminated for all but the smallest timber own-

ers, who can choose to pay it as a means to further reduce annual property taxes.

The total value of timber logged on private lands since 1991 is approximately \$67 billion when adjusted for inflation, according to an analysis of data from Oregon’s Department of Forestry. If the state’s severance tax had not been phased out, companies would have paid an estimated \$3 billion during the same period. Instead, cities and counties collected less than a third of that amount, or roughly \$871 million.

Polk County, home to Falls City, has lost approximately \$29 million in revenue from timber sales on federal land. By comparison, the elimination of the severance tax and lower property taxes for private timber companies have cost the county at least \$100 million.

“You have that tension between this industry that still employs people, but we’re losing some of the benefits of that relationship,” Falls City Mayor Jeremy Gordon said. “As those jobs diminish, there’s less and less support to subsidize that industry in the

community.”

## ‘A completely different business model’

Oregon’s connection to the timber industry is so tightly knit that casinos, high school mascots and coffee roasters take their names from mills, loggers and stumps. The state Capitol is domed by a golden pioneer carrying an ax, and its House chamber carpeting is adorned with trees. The mascot of the Portland Timbers, a Major League Soccer team, is a logger who revs a chainsaw and cuts a round off a Douglas fir tree after every home goal.

While the industry today still rakes in billions of dollars annually, it’s starkly different from the one that helped build and enrich the state.

Oregon lowered taxes and maintained weaker environmental protections on private forestlands than neighboring states in exchange for jobs and economic investment from the timber industry.

Despite such concessions, the country’s top lumber-producing state has fewer forest-sector jobs per acre and

See *Forests*, Page A3

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