

IN BRIEF

Woman rescued after being swept into sea

A 19-year-old woman was flown to a Portland area hospital on Tuesday after being swept into the ocean in Cannon Beach.

A Cannon Beach Rural Fire Protection District rescue swimmer recovered the woman and she was taken to Providence Seaside Hospital before being flown to Portland.

The water rescue is the second in Cannon Beach this month. A teenage girl who was swept into the ocean near Haystack Rock earlier this month has reportedly recovered.

Community virus testing goes to two days a week

Clatsop County’s drive-thru community testing for the coronavirus will be reduced to two days a week on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Testing is open to people age 15 or older and takes place at the county’s household hazardous waste facility on Williamsport Road, next to the Recology waste transfer station in Astoria.

People must call the Public Health Department at 503-325-8500 to make an appointment. For more information, visit the county’s website.

The county has also scaled back its information hotline, which will no longer process caller complaints on local business operations.

Sunset Pool to reopen

SEASIDE — Swimmers, make a reservation.

The Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District responded to the state’s phase two reopening plan to schedule the reopening of Sunset Pool. The pool, which closed in March due to the coronavirus pandemic, will return for patrons on Monday.

“We’ve been preparing for the reopening process,” Skyler Archibald, the park and rec district’s executive director, said at Tuesday’s meeting of the board.

At the start, lap swimmers only will be permitted in the pool after scheduling a time. They will be assigned a 45-minute swim period, after which staff will sanitize the pool before the next group of swimmers.

— *The Astorian*

Pacific County OK’d for phase three reopening

LONG BEACH, Wash. — Gatherings of up to 50 people and nonessential travel are once again allowed in Pacific County after it was approved to move to phase three of Gov. Jay Inslee’s Safe Start Plan amid the coronavirus pandemic.

The announcement came from Washington state Health Secretary John Wiesman on Tuesday. Pacific County Board of Commissioners voted to apply for the variance on Saturday at a special board meeting.

Long Beach Mayor Jerry Phillips said he was glad about reduced restrictions for the county. He said the city, county and state parks are working together on a plan for the three-day Fourth of July weekend, when a significant upsurge in visitors is likely.

Beach approaches are expected to be open for the holiday weekend and the city granted permits to two private firework stands. The city isn’t encouraging people to come down for the weekend, but if they choose to come, Phillips wants them to have the ability to spread out on the beach.

— *Chinook Observer*

DEATHS

June 15, 2020

LEDFOORD, Eleanor Winifred, 87, of Warrenton, died in Portland. Ocean View Funeral & Cremation Service of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

SMOTHERMAN, Scott Andrew, 61, of Warrenton, died in Portland. Ocean View Funeral & Cremation Service of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

ON THE RECORD

Burglary

- Gabino Luna Swearingin, 34, of Astoria, was arrested Monday on Svensen Market Road in Astoria for violation of a release agreement, criminal mischief in the second degree, burglary in the second degree and resisting arrest.

Criminal trespass

- Gerald Glen Lutcavich, 61, of Seaside, was arrested Monday near the Astoria Small Stop for criminal trespass in the second degree, criminal mischief in the third degree and resisting arrest.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

THURSDAY

Seaside Transportation Advisory Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.



Bethany Vineyard

A curious elk toys with a traffic cone in Hammond.

Legal battle over Neacoxie Barn

Property cited for commercial use

By **R.J. MARX**
The Astorian

GEARHART — A legal battle between representatives of U.S. Bank Trust, Gearhart and others potentially having an interest in Neacoxie Barn — a property under the microscope for improper commercial use — is underway.

The bank, through its legal representative, McCarthy Holthus LLP in Portland, asked the Clatsop County Circuit Court in May to declare the bank’s interest as senior to that of all other parties, including the city, state, numerous local residents and professional credit service agencies.

Since Gearhart received a 2016 court judgment related to fees, taxes and fines stemming from violations at the barn, the city believes its lien should be given priority and paid out of any sale or foreclosure proceedings, City Attorney Peter Watts said.

The liens amount to



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The Neacoxie Barn is the subject of a legal dispute.

“just over \$25,000” from an unpaid water bill and several administrative penalties, City Administrator Chad Sweet said.

In July 2007, Gearhart residents Shannon Smith and Martha Strickland signed and delivered a promissory note purchasing the property for \$625,000 from owners Jerry and Bonnie Eller.

A subsequent lending document, filed in August 2007 for \$417,000 with Wells Fargo, includes only Strickland’s name.

In a May filing, U.S. Bank Trust alleges that whether due to “mistake,

senior to any other creditor, including U.S. Bank Trust, “should not be harmed.”

“We believe that filing an answer was a necessary step to protect our lien,” Watts said.

Since 2012, the barn’s owners have been fined for renting out the property for weddings and other public functions without a valid certificate of occupancy.

The first \$5,000 fine was reduced by the City Council to \$1 after owners said they would follow city rules prohibiting commercial events.

Subsequent fines followed as commercial use continued until a Circuit Court judge issued an injunction in 2016 prohibiting commercial events.

In February 2017, a foreclosure auction was canceled and a refinance was in process, Smith said at the time.

Neacoxie Barn is not on the market, according to the real estate website Zillow, which places a \$397,000 value on the property.

Smith and representatives of U.S. Bank Trust did not return requests for comment.

Cannon Beach: Safety is constantly being reinforced

Continued from Page A1

to set an example,” Risley said. “And I’m hoping that we can figure out a way to have it be trendy to wear a mask.”

Emergency Manager Rick Hudson said creating a culture of safety is the method for success. He said he and the city’s police chief, Jason Schermerhorn, periodically visit businesses and ask how the city can help.

“And every time we go down there, you see them wearing masks, you see the signs that are in their windows. And so they’re creating a great culture of society right now. And I believe it’s pretty good,” Hudson said.

He said it may become a challenge to maintain the safety precautions over time. He has already noticed some restaurants become more relaxed.

However, he said safety is constantly being reinforced through signs posted around the city featuring elk and bunnies wearing masks.

Hudson said the city is also getting thousands of masks from Clatsop County. The city will pass the masks out for free to businesses this week and to residents at the end of the month.

“We’re keeping the businesses running the city working,” he said. “So



Nicole Bales/The Astorian

Safety is being reinforced through signs posted around the city featuring elk and bunnies wearing masks.

we’re pretty happy with maintaining those practices and we’re constantly trying to reinvent the next way to figure it out.”

Patrick Nofield, the president of Escape Lodging in Cannon Beach, has noticed a lack of safety measures being taken by tourists. But he said guests, for the most part, appreciate the precautions being taken by the lodging industry and value hotels and restaurants that have health and safety at the top of mind.

Escape Lodging manages a number of hotels in Seaside and Cannon Beach, as

well as restaurants, including the Driftwood Restaurant & Lounge and Tom’s Fish & Chips. Although the hotels are operating at full capacity, Nofield said revenue is down by 20% from this time last year.

“All we need to do is see a spike and it’s going to ruin it. It’s going to just shut us down again, and we’re doing everything we can to avoid that and be respectful of our community,” he said.

Nofield said hotels have limited services to protect the safety of guests and employees.

Employees try to set the tone by wearing masks and cleaning and disinfecting high touch areas throughout the day.

“Some of the guests come here and they’re thinking, ‘I’m away from my reality.’ And they’re in Cannon Beach and they kind of let loose a little bit. And I don’t know how to keep top of mind for them,” he said.

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