

IN BRIEF

Astoria man dies in motorcycle crash

An Astoria man died after a crash Wednesday on Lewis and Clark Road.

Officials say Christopher Dunn, 49, was driving a motorcycle when he left the roadway. There are no known witnesses of the crash and police are unclear about what time it occurred.

After the crash was reported, emergency crews found Dunn dead upon arrival.

Manzanita man dies after crash on Highway 101

A Manzanita man died after a crash Wednesday on U.S. Highway 101 in Gearhart.

Officials say Matthew Elinsky, 53, was driving a Honda motorcycle when he crashed into the back of a Jeep Cherokee that stopped due to traffic up ahead.

Emergency responders arrived on scene after 7 p.m. The driver of the Jeep Cherokee was not injured.

County to distribute more free masks to help against virus

Clatsop County will distribute more free face masks to the public at multiple locations on Wednesday and Thursday.

More than 22,000 KN95 masks were given away at distribution events in June.

The Lower Columbia Hispanic Council will host two Spanish-language distribution events from 4 to 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday at CMH Field on Williamsport Road in Astoria and at Seaside High School.

Drive-thru handout events will be held between 4 and 7 p.m. on Thursday at Elsie-Vinemaple Fire Station, Seaside Fire Station, Gearhart Fire Station, Warrenton Fire Station, Lewis & Clark Fire Station, Astoria Aquatic Center, Cannon Beach City Hall, Knappa Fire Station and Westport Community Church.

County extends coronavirus emergency declaration

The Clatsop County Board of Commissioners voted Wednesday night to extend the county's coronavirus emergency declaration through at least Sept. 4.

The county's extension coincides with Gov. Kate Brown's emergency orders.

The main purpose of the local emergency declaration is to give the board flexibility to declare other emergency orders. It also makes the county eligible for reimbursements for virus-related expenditures.

Cannon Beach Farmers Market closed for season over virus

CANNON BEACH — The Cannon Beach Farmers Market is closed for the season over the coronavirus.

The farmers market was expected to open on July 21, but in light of new virus cases and the threat of additional spread, the farmers market committee decided to cancel the season.

"We look forward to safely restoring it to its traditional cheerful hustle and bustle — next year," the city said in a statement.

Merkley to hold virtual town hall for Clatsop County

U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley will hold a virtual and telephone town hall for Clatsop County constituents Tuesday.

"Hearing from Oregonians across the state is critical to doing my job," the Oregon Democrat said in a news release. "In these uncertain times, it's more important than ever to hear directly from folks, but it's also important to respect the health and safety of every member of our communities while there is still a very real risk of spreading COVID-19 through in-person gatherings."

Merkley has held an annual town hall in each of Oregon's 36 counties since joining the Senate in 2009. This will be his 426th. He will answer questions and give updates on his work in Washington.

The town hall will start at 5 p.m. Tuesday. It can be accessed on a computer, smartphone or tablet by going to tinyurl.com/merkleytownhall; or on the phone by calling 415-527-5035 and entering access code 199-922-7385.

— The Astorian

DEATH

July 9, 2020

COLE, Gary Allan, 77, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

MONDAY

Astoria School District Board of Directors, 5:30 p.m., special meeting on superintendent's contract, (electronic meeting).

Cannon Beach Rural Fire Department Board, 6 p.m., Fire-Rescue Main Station, 188 Sunset Ave.

Youngs River Lewis & Clark Water District Board, 6 p.m., 34583 U.S. Highway 101 Business.

Seaside City Council, 7 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

Port lays off several maintenance, marina staff

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

The Port of Astoria has laid off three maintenance workers and one marina staffer amid a massive loss in revenue because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The Port passed a \$15.7 million budget last month, including a \$75,000 reduction in contracted security officers because of fewer ships coming in, but no staff layoffs.

Will Isom, the Port's executive director, said he had remained optimistic that by being frugal, the agency could avoid laying people off. The Port has gone from the equivalent of more than 36 full-time employees to less than 30 over the past few years. He had assigned maintenance staff special projects, such as deconstructing the former Seafare Restaurant at the West Mooring Basin.

"When you're running tight on funds and you don't have a lot of revenue coming in, you also don't have the money to do some of those projects," Isom said. "We tried to keep them on for as long as we could, and we did a lot of work in terms of cleanup, like with the restaurant tear-down ... but we just got to the



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

The Port of Astoria laid off several maintenance workers and a marina staffer because of losses in revenue during the coronavirus pandemic.

point where we couldn't continue to operate at the payroll level we had been, with the amount of revenue loss we're experiencing."

The Port has projected more than \$1 million in operational losses in the coming year, including \$450,000 on the docks from a log export business felled by a trade war between the U.S. and China and a cruise ship season mostly wiped out by the coronavirus.

Staff projected another \$450,000 in losses from lease revenue, in part from the Astoria Riverwalk Inn being emptied by travel and lodging

restrictions meant to curb the spread of the virus. Another \$126,000 in losses was projected in fuel sales at the West Mooring Basin because of travel restrictions and a weak recreational fishing season.

Business Oregon, the state's economic development agency and a major lender to the Port, provided some relief, freezing loan payments and interest for a year. The freeze is projected to save the Port more than \$1 million.

The Port will save about \$400,000 in salary and benefits from cutting the four employees, Isom said, and its

maintenance staff has gone from six to three. He couldn't guarantee there wouldn't be more layoffs and said the Port is trying to forecast how much revenue it might bring in over the coming months.

"You can never say never through this stuff, I guess," Isom said. "The hope would be that we can remain steady where we're at, and then as things start to improve, start increasing that count again."

The Port has looked at all manner of potential revenue, from bringing in new tenants like a seafood shop and storing things on its piers to trying to lay up idled cruise ships. After an outbreak of the virus at Bornstein Seafoods, local officials nixed a plan by the Port to bring in two mostly empty cruise ships that needed storage. Isom had said the opportunity could have made the agency about \$15,000 a day.

"My goal through all this, as we get through this pandemic, is just to hold our ground as much as we can and not take too many steps backward, so that when we get to the back end, we're in a position to really start to move things forward," he said. "Really, that's the best you can hope for at this point."

New bake shop and market opens in Astoria

By MORGAN GRINDY
The Astorian

Gathered Bakeshop and Market has opened in Astoria, offering a variety of groceries, locally based produce and a selection of baked goods.

After a soft opening last week, owners Sarah Woods and Andy Eddy officially opened the market at 12th and Exchange streets on Wednesday. They have hopes of doing a grand opening celebration sometime in the fall.

The store's shelves are stocked with essential grocery items, along with some hand-picked favorites, like their tea selection. Their produce items come from Spring Up Farm, Kingfisher Farms and Lana's Conscious Farm.

Downtown needed a new grocery store after the Astoria Co-op moved to the Mill Pond neighborhood, the owners said.

They began building the store in late January, hoping for a mid-May opening, but their timeline was pushed back because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Previously a baker in Bellingham, Washington, Woods offers a menu of cakes, dessert bars and pastries made from organic and locally sourced ingredients. Many of the sweets are decorated with edible flowers from 46 North



Morgan Grindy/The Astorian

Owners Sarah Woods and Andy Eddy of Gathered Bakeshop in Astoria.

Farm.

Half of the baked goods are gluten free, with some vegan options available.

The flour in Woods' macarons is made from organic hazelnuts grown in Multnomah County, rather than almond flour, which is traditionally used for macarons.

For customers with dietary requirements other than gluten free or dairy free, they offer personalized orders for items such as cakes.

The store is open Wednesday through Sunday. Seating inside is very limited because of virus restrictions and precautions.

Rep. Bonamici announces new climate action plan

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
The Astorian

Neither the coronavirus pandemic nor a national discussion of racism and inequality can stop climate change.

On Wednesday, U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici held a virtual kickoff to introduce a proposed congressional action plan to address climate change. The goal is to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions in the United States by 37% below 2010 levels in 2030 and 88% below 2010 levels by 2050.

"This is not an easy time to discuss forward-looking policy," Bonamici acknowledged. "We're experiencing an unprecedented moment in our nation's history."

But, the Oregon Democrat added, "even in this moment in history when our communities are struggling and inequalities seem more apparent than ever, the climate crisis continues. It's not taking a break."

The new action plan outlines a number of policies, some more ambitious than others, to address issues like public health, clean technologies and economic resiliency and to invest in communities that are disproportionately affected by climate change.

The congresswoman

called the plan a "road map" for Congress that included more specific actions than the proposed Green New Deal, which also outlines plans for tackling climate change.

Bonamici is the only member of the House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis from the Pacific Northwest. Climate change is already impacting the region, she said.

"Confronting the climate crises requires action across sectors and at all levels of government," the action plan concludes, adding, "The climate crises is inextricably linked to the social, economic and environmental challenges that afflict the nation and world today."

The Pacific Northwest in particular is already feeling the effects of climate change, noted George Waldbusser, a marine ecologist with Oregon State University, who joined Bonamici on the call.

The fallout of shifting climate is evident in recent marine heatwaves that reduce food sources for some marine animals and have contributed to harmful algal blooms off the West Coast, which in turn impact commercial and recreational fishing and crabbing.

"The cost of inaction will almost certainly be more expensive than the cost of action," Waldbusser said.

Tractor Supply to open in Warrenton in late July

The Astorian

WARRENTON — Tractor Supply Co. will open a Warrenton store July 27.

The rural lifestyle retail chain, founded in 1938 and based in Tennessee, does not sell tractors, but rather products to maintain farms, ranches, homes and animals. The company is publicly traded on the stock exchange and has more than 1,700 locations throughout the U.S.

In 2018, the company

announced plans to open a store in Warrenton near the intersection of U.S. Highway 101 Business and King Avenue on land owned by Warrenton Fiber. After getting approval from the Warrenton Planning Commission, developer Keith Corp. built the site out and is leasing it to Tractor Supply.

"At Tractor Supply, we understand the value of providing essential needs like pet food, animal feed and home supplies to our customers in the Warrenton community," Jeremy Gor-

don, manager of the Warrenton store, said in a news release. "Our team members live the same lifestyle as our customers, and we're excited to supply them with the tools, information and resources they need to live life on their own terms."

Tractor Supply touted its safety measures during the coronavirus pandemic, including increased cleaning, floor decals to promote social distancing, a larger supply of essential products, hiring more

employees to promote safety in stores, adding greeters to promote social distancing, adding a dedicated shopping hour at 8 a.m. on Wednesdays for customers older than 60, no-contact payment options and curbside pickup.

The company is supporting local animal shelters, 4-H clubs and Future Farmers of America chapters.

During the pandemic, the Warrenton store will open from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.

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