

Virus cases tied to community spread

By NICOLE BALES
The Astorian

Clatsop County reported Thursday that a woman living in the southern part of the county has tested positive for the coronavirus. The woman is in her 30s and was reportedly convalescing at home. A presumptive case reported on Monday involv-

ing a man in his 20s living in the northern part of the county was also confirmed as positive. He was convalescing at home. The other presumptive case announced on Monday — also a man in his 20s living in the northern part of the county — is still presumptive. Presumptive cases involve people who are close or household contacts

of confirmed cases who are showing symptoms of the virus, but have not been tested or are awaiting test results. The county has reported 54 confirmed cases and one presumptive case since March 23. Forty-eight have reportedly recovered and the others are convalescing at home. The Oregon Health

Authority reported 11,454 cases and 232 deaths from the virus statewide as of Friday morning. The health authority tracked 2,748 test results in Clatsop County, including the 55 confirmed and presumptive cases. Michael McNickle, the county’s public health director, told the county Board of Commissioners during

a work session Wednesday night that the last several cases have been a result of community spread. He said they are not related to Pacific Seafood in Warrenton, which disclosed July 3 that a worker tested positive for the virus, prompting concern about another outbreak. “There’s community spread going on now and

we’re going to be seeing probably more and more cases now that it’s getting out and people are out, and the weather’s good,” McNickle said. McNickle, who tested positive for the virus last month, said he was lucky not to experience symptoms and went back to work Monday after self-isolating for two weeks.

Mandate: Businesses hear some grumbles over mask rule

Continued from Page A1

Warnings
Astoria police received “a fair amount of calls” about people not wearing masks in businesses ahead of July 1, Police Chief Geoff Spalding said. But since July 1? Crickets. Police have told business owners to go through a series of steps if a customer enters without a mask. First, ask them to put on a mask. If they don’t comply, and there’s no medical reason for why they shouldn’t wear a mask, you can ask them to leave. If they refuse to leave, the police might become involved. Police are following the governor’s direction to try to educate and warn people before issuing citations. “To date, we have not done that yet, nor do we hope to,” Spalding said. Locally, there has been some grumbling about the mask rule, but it has not led to any tense interactions for bartender Zach Tuter at the Chart Room. “But I’m a pretty big guy,” he said, “so that usually keeps stuff from happening.” He knows some of his female co-workers dealt with pushback from customers ahead of the state mandate, though.



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Hostess Louise Redburn wears a mask and gloves and waits for customers at the entrance to Reach Break Brewing.

The Chart Room, a tiny bar sandwiched between Vintage Hardware and Astoria Brewing Co., is very much a local spot. In pre-coronavirus days, it was a place people might go after they finished a restaurant or bar shift. Now, there are dividers between booths and people aren’t allowed to go up to the bar except to order their drink. Wearing a mask for a shift and interacting with customers who are also wearing

masks is uncomfortable and occasionally awkward, Tuter admitted. There are perks, though. Bars like the Chart Room often collected a crowd and a bartender working alone or with a small support staff would have to hustle to keep up with orders and conversations. “Honestly, it’s a little bit quieter,” Tuter said. “You have more time to think.”

Precautions
But even the best precau-

tions have not prevailed. Eleventh Street Barber temporarily closed after a customer called to let owner Sarah Jane Bardy know the customer had been contacted about a possible exposure elsewhere to someone with coronavirus. The shop had taken numerous precautions, including the installation of a rope barrier at the entrance. Bardy limited the number of people allowed inside at one time. Even ahead of the

‘IT’S UNFORTUNATE THAT THE BURDEN WAS PLACED ON THE BUSINESSES AND THEIR EMPLOYEES FOR SO LONG. AS SOON AS THE MANDATE WENT INTO EFFECT, I NOTICED AN IMMEDIATE DIFFERENCE IN THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WALKING AROUND WEARING MASKS.’

Sarah Jane Bardy | owner of Eleventh Street Barber

state’s mask mandate, she required everyone to wear a mask. The barbers became adept at directing clients to fold their masks over slightly so they could trim around an ear. Barbers changed their shirts between haircuts and sanitized often. The closure now is an abundance of caution in response to a situation several degrees removed from the shop, Bardy said, but it’s a decision she stands by. She checked with her insurance. If someone who had recently been in the shop tested positive for coronavirus — whether they caught it there or not and despite all the precautions Bardy has put in place — she fears a situation where she may be on the hook for covering

medical bills. The other barbers who work as independent contractors out of the shop have had issues securing unemployment benefits. The shop did not receive any small business bailout money. “I’m torn as to what to do,” Bardy said. “We have to open to keep the business afloat and keep the barbers paid.” If anything, she wishes the mask requirement had happened earlier. “It’s unfortunate that the burden was placed on the businesses and their employees for so long,” she said. “As soon as the mandate went into effect, I noticed an immediate difference in the number of people walking around wearing masks.”





URGENTCARE NW - ASTORIA

a smartER alternative

WE'RE OPEN
AND HERE
FOR YOU!

COVID-19 TESTING AVAILABLE!

We are currently serving
walk-in patients, same
day appointments and
telehealth appointments



Kenyon Solecki, PA-C
habla español



Mark Tabor, PA-C



Sally Baker, PA-C



Keith Klatt, MD

503-325-0333 or Visit www.urgentcarenwastoria.com

We observe the following holidays & are closed on July 4th, Thanksgiving, Christmas & New Year's Day.

HOURS: MON-FRI 7AM-7PM • SAT-SUN 9AM-7PM

2120 Exchange Street • Suite 111 • Astoria, Oregon

*Life happens...
That's why we're here!*

Express Healthcare for Busy Lifestyles