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CORONAVIRUS

BACK TO THE BEACH



Photos by Morgan Grindy/The Astorian

TOP: Ecola State Park in Cannon Beach has reopened to the public after road repairs. **ABOVE:** A sweeping view of the shore. **BELOW:** Surfers at Indian Beach.



ASTORIA SUNDAY MARKET

Director to step down

Mudge has guided the market since 2008

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
The Astorian

Cyndi Mudge, the longtime director of the Astoria Sunday Market, is stepping down from the job after the market season ends in October.

She told The Astorian a number of personal issues, including health concerns and the desire to be geographically closer to her elderly father, led to the decision. But the coronavirus pandemic, which has completely reshaped how the 20-year-old market must operate this year, is also a factor.



Cyndi Mudge

“It’s been a struggle working on the market this year and this year is COVID year,” Mudge said. “I’m relearning everything I know about a successful market and relearning a whole new way of doing business.”

She recently completed a college degree and planned to retire from the market in five years, build up freelance work that she could do remotely and figure out where to retire. With high taxes in Astoria, she did not think it would be feasible to retire here. She planned to move eventually.

But, as the year progressed, she realized she needed to revise that timeline.

“I’m on God’s timeline, not mine,” she said. “Sometimes you just have to kind of let it go and it took a long time for me to let it go.”

Lewis and Clark

Mudge moved to Astoria in 2003 to work as the executive director of the Lewis

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Special education students get priority

State guidelines for in-person instruction

By MORGAN GRINDY
The Astorian

Sara Rehnert never thought distance learning would make her son’s life any easier.

But after a few months of working from home during the coronavirus pandemic to finish sixth grade at Warrenton Grade School, Rehnert found that Cael, who is on the autism spectrum, was more successful.

Cael’s biggest obstacle in school is social interaction. Being in a more intimate setting with his siblings took away his social anxiety and made school seem easier.

“For him, he needed to be home to be able to thrive,” Rehnert said.

Rehnert’s family is among many who are anxiously preparing for the new school year with children who require special education. Schools on the North Coast are planning a mix of in-person and distance learning as a precaution against the spread of the virus.

Under new guidelines released last week from the Oregon Department of Education, special education students will be prioritized for in-person instruction if their school has no virus cases for 14 days.

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Liberty will reopen for movies

First phase of renovations complete

By ALYSSA EVANS
The Astorian

The Liberty Theatre will reopen Friday for a showing of “A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood,” the theater’s first event since closing in March because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The movie, starring Tom Hanks as Fred Rogers, is the first in a series. Attendance will be limited to 50 people.

“We chose five films to start because licensing agencies have really reduced fees for theaters that are reopening,” Jennifer Crockett, the theater’s executive director, said.

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MOVIE TICKETS

Tickets for movies at the Liberty Theatre are available at libertyastoria.org.

Census count lags as deadline approaches

County’s response rate at 53%

By NICOLE BALES
The Astorian

The 2020 census deadline is approaching and only about half of Clatsop County households have responded.

The coronavirus pandemic has complicated the population count and created additional hurdles to reaching what the U.S. Census Bureau calls hard-to-count

communities. People who live in rural areas, seniors, immigrants, renters, the homeless and families with young children can be hard to track.

Oregon’s top leaders say the Census Bureau’s decision earlier this month to move the completion date to the end of September — instead of the end of October — will make it even more difficult to get an accurate count.

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Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

The census needs to be completed by the end of September.



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