

IN BRIEF

Health advisory lifted for beach in Seaside

The Oregon Health Authority on Wednesday lifted a public health advisory for higher-than-normal levels of bacteria in ocean waters at Seaside.

The advisory, issued Tuesday, was lifted after results from samples taken by the state Department of Environmental Quality showed lower bacteria levels. Officials still recommended staying out of large pools that are frequented by birds, as well as runoff from the pools.

Officials say increased pathogen and fecal bacteria levels in ocean waters can come from both shore and inland sources, including stormwater runoff, sewer overflows, failing septic systems and animal waste.

Fishery managers change bag limit for Chinook

Anglers fishing on the Columbia River will now get to keep up to two adult Chinook salmon beginning Thursday.

Oregon and Washington state fishery managers announced a more liberal bag limit Wednesday. The change applies to ongoing recreational fisheries on the Columbia River from Buoy 10 to the Highway 395 Bridge near Pasco, Washington, through Dec. 31.

Other regulations remain in effect and all coho salmon retained downstream of the Hood River Bridge must be hatchery fish.

The Astorian wins journalism awards

Journalists at The Astorian were honored this week with six awards in the Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association annual journalism competition.

The Astorian won second place in general excellence, with the East Oregonian, an EO Media Group sister newspaper, winning first place and the Grants Pass Daily Courier receiving third place.

The Astorian also won first place for a collection of editorials on a group opposed to a Grocery Outlet coming to Astoria and Fort George’s expansion to the city’s waterfront. The collection beat editorials from The Oregonian and Grants Pass Daily Courier.

Reporter Edward Stratton won second place in best education coverage for his story on how Clatsop County schools were utilizing funds from Measure 98, a voter-approved initiative to improve graduation rates, add career-technical classes and expand students’ access to college credits.

The Astorian also received second place for best page one design and third place best overall website.

The Seaside Signal, also an EO Media Group newspaper, won third place awards for best design and best editorial or column in its division.

Hailey Hoffman, The Astorian’s visual journalist, received second place for best multimedia element for her video for the special section, “Gritty to Pretty: Astoria’s Transformative Decade.”

— The Astorian

DEATHS

Sept. 27, 2020 GASTELUM, Steven, 43, of Seaside, died in Tillamook. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements.	Sept. 25, 2020 WEAVER, Charles, 72, of Seaside, died in Seaside. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements.
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MEMORIAL

Saturday, Oct. 3
KEITH, Harold — Celebration of life, scheduled for 11 a.m. at the Hughes-Ransom Mortuary Chapel in Seaside, has been canceled.

ON THE RECORD

Disorderly conduct

- Kendall Oscar Archer, 35, of Seaside, was arrested Tuesday on 15th Street and Commercial Street in Astoria for disorderly conduct.
- Riggs Taut Orak, 26, was arrested Monday on Sixth Street in Astoria for disorderly conduct and criminal mischief in the third degree.
- James Robert Kieweg, 29, was arrested Saturday on Ninth Street and the Astoria River-

walk in Astoria for disorderly conduct and resisting arrest.

DUII

- Joe Bob Carter, 56, of Warrenton, was arrested Sunday on E. Harbor Drive and S.E. King Avenue in Warrenton for driving under the influence of intoxicants.
- Michael Brumbaugh, 61, of Olympia, Washington, was arrested Friday on Fourth Street and Marine Drive in Astoria for DUII.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

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

theAstorian

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RETIRED

ABOVE: Astoria High School head custodian Maria McGregor receives flowers and gifts from a car parade of friends and family in celebration of her retirement on Wednesday. McGregor worked at the school for 30 years.

RIGHT: Danielle McGregor-Clark, Maria McGregor’s daughter, leads the car parade past Astoria High School to celebrate her mother’s retirement.

Photos by Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian



Marquis steps down at Willapa Behavioral Health

By ASHLEY NERBOVIG
Chinook Observer

LONG BEACH — Adam Marquis left his position as CEO of Willapa Behavioral Health on Sept. 26, about a month after some employees protested what they called the “erratic” behavior of the organization’s leader.

Willapa Behavioral Health is a nonprofit organization that provides mental health services and substance use disorder treatment for Pacific County. It is an essential source of psychiatric care for the community. Marquis took over the organization in July 2017. In August, employees called for the CEO to step down.

Employees interviewed by the Chinook Observer in August said Marquis was growing the agency too fast and without proper planning. They described Marquis as a bully who was “fond of telling people they are dispensable.”

Norm Stutznegger, who became chair of the Willapa Behavioral Health Board of Directors in August, also stepped down this week. He did not give details on why he and Marquis left the organization, but said it was an honor to serve on the board and wished the employees well.

The board chair prior to Stutznegger was Long Beach Police Chief Flint Wright. In an Aug. 26 article in the Chinook Observer, Wright said he left the position because he was tired of the “never

ending controversies.”

Marquis’ departure was announced in an email to staff on Monday from Lucy Dupree, chief officer for human resources. No reason was given for Marquis’ exit from the top position. Dupree did not respond to emails requesting comment, and told the Chinook Observer she is on vacation until Oct. 13.

While the board searches for a new CEO, the organization will be co-led by Salina Mecham, chief clinical officer, and David Nicholson-Klingerman, chief compliance and integration officer.

Mecham was hired in March 2018 as a program manager. Nicholson-Klingerman was hired in May 2015 as a clinical supervisor and

was promoted in July 2019.

In her email to staff, Dupree said the changes in leadership may cause uneasiness for the staff and it was important for there to be open lines of communication between employees and their leadership team.

“The well-being of our staff is paramount,” Dupree wrote.

However, the organization continues to flout the public disclosure requirements of a nonprofit agency. The Chinook Observer made repeated requests for the organization’s most recent tax forms, governing documents and conflict of interest policies for its board of directors. Neither Dupree nor the board have provided these documents.

Federal agencies sign management decision for Columbia River dams

By GEORGE PLAVEN
Capital Press

PORTLAND — The Trump administration has signed off on a new operations plan for 14 dams in the Columbia River Basin that commits to improving fish passage and habitat, but does not call for breaching dams on the lower Snake River to protect endangered salmon and steelhead.

On Sept. 28, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation and Bonneville Power Administration signed a joint agreement for managing the Columbia River System, capping a long and litigious process that began in September 2016.

“We believe our decision carefully balances the region’s needs for clean, reliable energy, supports the economic vitality of the communities that depend



Associated Press

Ice Harbor dam near Burbank, Washington. The new operations plan for 14 dams in the Columbia River Basin commits to improving fish passage and habitat, but does not call for breaching dams on the lower Snake River to protect endangered salmon and steelhead.

on the rivers, and includes durable actions that offset impacts on fish and wildlife affected by the Columbia River System,” said John Hairston, acting Bonneville Power administrator.

Built between 1938 and 1976, the Columbia River System provides flood control, irrigation, electricity, navigation and recreation benefits across the Pacific Northwest. On average, the system generates 8,500 megawatts of power, enough for eight cities the size of Seattle.

Dam operators must also balance the needs and survival of native fish species protected under the Endangered Species Act.

A federal judge in Portland invalidated the previous Columbia River System plan in 2016 and ordered the agencies to issue a new environmental study considering more drastic measures to preserve salmon and steelhead runs throughout the basin.

U.S. District Judge Michael Simon said the study should evaluate removing Lower Granite, Little Goose, Lower Monumental and Ice Harbor dams on the lower Snake River in Washington state, which environmental groups argue is necessary for both Pacific salmon and orca recovery.

Earlier this year, the agencies rejected breaching the dams, finding it would

raise electricity rates as well as transportation and production costs for farmers. They instead recommended an alternative increasing the amount of water spilled over dams to boost fish migration, rehabbing wetland and riparian habitat and modifying some fish passage structures.

That recommendation, or “preferred alternative,” was ultimately adopted in the final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision.

Les Schwab sold to California investment fund

By MIKE ROGOWAY
The Oregonian

Les Schwab Tire Centers has reached a deal to sell the Bend company to an investment fund in California called Meritage Group, ending local family ownership of one of Oregon’s best-known businesses.

Schwab Tire announced in December it would seek

a buyer for the 68-year-old business, citing the difficulties of running a company in its fifth generation of family ownership.

Tire baron Les Schwab started the business in his hometown of Prineville in 1952 and grew it into one of Oregon’s largest companies with nearly 500 stores in 10 western states, and annual sales of \$1.8 billion.

The business remained in Schwab’s family after his death in 2007.

When Schwab announced its sale plans last year, Bloomberg reported the owners hoped for \$3 billion in the deal. Schwab and Meritage did not report terms of Tuesday’s transaction but said the current management team will remain in place and Schwab

will continue operating as it has.

“We see Les Schwab Tires as an ideal investment,” said Aubrey Barth, Meritage’s managing director, in a statement. “The company’s exceptional employees and programs, strong financials, and respected, customer-focused brand set it up for success for years to come.”