

BIDEN ON CUSP OF PRESIDENCY

By JONATHAN LEMIRE, ZEKE MILLER, JILL COLVIN and WILL WEISSERT
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Democrat Joe Biden was on the cusp of winning the presidency on Friday as he opened up narrow leads over President Donald Trump in the critical battlegrounds of Georgia and Pennsylvania.

Those put Biden in a stronger position to capture the 270 Electoral College votes needed to take the White House. The winner will lead a country facing a historic set of challenges, including a surging coronavirus pandemic and deep political polarization.

The focus on Pennsylvania, where Biden led

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Former Vice President Joe Biden speaks on Thursday in Delaware.

Carolyn Kaster/
AP Photo



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CORONAVIRUS

State money helps Buoy Beer upgrade water line



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Buoy Beer Co. received \$100,000 from the state to upgrade a water line in Astoria.

City Council OK'd grant agreement

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

Big things are brewing at the western edge of downtown Astoria, where Buoy Beer Co. has received \$100,000 from the state to upgrade a water line for the city.

The state provided money for the water line upgrade along Astor Street between Eighth and Ninth streets to support Buoy Beer's expansion and the benefits it would have for surrounding properties.

The City Council approved the grant agreement on Monday. City Manager Brett Estes described the money as part of a partnership between the city, Buoy Beer and Business Oregon, the state's economic development agency.

"It was more conversations and looking for ways to be able to help incentivize the redevelopment of this area," Estes said.

Since opening in 2013 inside a former Bornstein Seafoods plant, Buoy Beer has quickly grown into Astoria's second-largest brewery after Fort George Brewery. The company purchased a warehouse last year kitty corner from the main brewhouse. It leased the former Video Horizons building just south of the main brewery for a

beer hall to increase seating during the coronavirus pandemic.

Improving the water line would also benefit the boutique Bowline Hotel, a former sardine plant just east of the brewery that members of Buoy Beer's ownership and Adrift Hospitality are partnering on and hope to open in the spring.

Dave Kroening, the president and general manager of Buoy Beer, said the company is in the process of mapping out a further expansion. Improving the water line along Astor Street is critical to making sure buildings in the area have adequate fire suppression, he said.

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Seaside man gets new sentence in child's death

Roden's sentence reset to 20 years

By NICOLE BALES
The Astorian

A Seaside man who was found guilty of killing his girlfriend's 2 year-old daughter received a new sentence Friday after his murder convictions were overturned by the Oregon Court of Appeals last year.

To avoid a retrial, Randy Roden's counsel and prosecutors settled on a guilty plea to manslaughter in the first degree.

Roden, 32, was sentenced to 20 years in prison from when he was arrested in December 2014. The murder charges he was convicted of in 2016 were dismissed.

Roden was sentenced to nearly 40 years in prison in 2016 after a jury found him guilty of murder by abuse, felony murder, manslaughter, assault and criminal mistreatment in the death of Evangelina Wing and the abuse of her two brothers.



Randy Roden

The Court of Appeals, however, ruled that during the trial the prosecution failed to present an adequate scientific foundation for expert testimony on bite marks found on the children.

District Attorney Ron Brown, who prosecuted the case, said the state agreed to make the deal based on many different factors, including a lapse in time since the crime, holes in the investigation — particularly with the autopsy of Wing — and the uncertainty of another trial.

Brown said he also did not want to further traumatize the children and other witnesses with another trial. Another reason, he said, is no one could duplicate the work of the lead detective on the case, Seaside Sgt. Jason Goodding, who was killed on duty in 2015.

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Housing authority hires interim leader

Agency works through management challenges

By NICOLE BALES
The Astorian

The Northwest Oregon Housing Authority's board appointed an interim director Thursday and discussed the path forward after the agency's former executive director, Todd Johnston, resigned in October.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development flagged the housing authority as "troubled" in January follow-

'I THINK THAT THERE'S SORT OF A RENEWED COMMITMENT TO JUST SORT OF DOING THE RIGHT THING AND CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT AND AN ORGANIZATION THAT'S SUPPORTIVE OF THE FAMILIES THAT WE SERVE.'

Jim Evans | director at Quadel

ing an audit report of the housing choice voucher program. The program helps low-income families find rental housing.

Before Johnston resigned, the housing authority entered into a contract with Quadel, a Washington, D.C., based management and consulting firm, to man-

age the housing choice voucher program.

The housing authority's board approved an emergency resolution Thursday appointing Jim Evans, a director at Quadel, as interim director of the housing authority while the agency searches for a new executive

director.

The housing authority has been working with the Department of Housing and Urban Development on a corrective action plan to get the agency from troubled to what HUD calls a "standard performer."

Evans will lead the housing authority through the transition. He said the agency's ultimate goal is to become what HUD calls a "high performer."

Evans and Nina Reed, the board's chairwoman, attributed the disarray of the voucher program to staff turnover and inconsistent management, which resulted in a lack of capacity of the staff to do the job in a way that met HUD's expectations.

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Sunset Pool closes after virus case

Spike in new cases in county

By R.J. MARX and NICOLE BALES
The Astorian

SEASIDE — The Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District has closed the Sunset Pool for two weeks after a staff member tested positive for the coronavirus.

The closure comes amid a spike of new virus cases in Clatsop County over the past week. The virus is also spreading rapidly across Oregon, prompting Gov. Kate Brown to announce a two-week pause on social activities in several counties.

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