

## IN BRIEF

## Man accused of attacking journalists at protests outside Capitol turns himself in to state police

A man accused of attacking two journalists and attempting to gain entrance to the Oregon State Capitol during a protest in Salem last week has turned himself in to the state police.

The Oregon State Police announced Monday that Jeremy Roberts, 40, was booked at the Marion County Jail on Sunday afternoon for charges of criminal mischief, disorderly conduct, assault, harassment and a probation violation.

Police had been trying to locate Roberts after demonstrations turned violent outside the Capitol on Dec. 21 as lawmakers met inside for a special legislative session on coronavirus pandemic-related relief.

According to court documents, Roberts is accused of engaging in “violent, tumultuous and threatening behavior,” damaging a door and attacking Brian Hayes, a photojournalist with the Statesman Journal, and Sergio Olmos, a reporter with Oregon Public Broadcasting.

Roberts’ is one of several arrests stemming from last week’s protests. Oregon State Police said officials have charged two men who remained in the Capitol’s vestibule after warnings to leave — Ronald Vanvlack, 75, and Jerry Dyerson, 53 — with criminal trespassing and disorderly conduct. Ryan Lyles, 41, of Clatsop County, also was arrested for felon in possession of body armor and unlawful use of mace, and Jeremiah Pruitt, 35, was arrested for criminal mischief and disorderly conduct.

— Oregon Public Broadcasting

## Offices close for New Year’s Day

In observance of New Year’s Day on Friday, all federal, state, county and city offices, including Astoria, Warrenton, Gearhart and Seaside, are closed Friday. Cannon Beach offices are closed Thursday and Friday.

All U.S. post offices are closed Friday, and there is no mail delivery.

Astoria, Jewell, Knappa, Warrenton/Hammond and Seaside (including Cannon Beach and Gearhart) school district schools, and Clatsop Community College, are closed for winter break.

The Astoria Library, Seaside Library and Warrenton Library are closed Friday.

The Port of Astoria offices and services are closed Friday.

Garbage collection through Recology Western Oregon and the city of Warrenton garbage collection are not affected by the holiday. Recology Western Oregon’s transfer station closes at 2 p.m. Thursday and is closed Friday.

The Sunset Pool in Seaside and the Astoria Aquatic Center are closed.

The Clatsop County Heritage Museum, Oregon Film Museum, Flavel House and Carriage House are closed Friday. The Uppertown Firefighters’ Museum is closed for the winter.

Lil’ Sprouts is closed Friday. Fort Clatsop is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Columbia River Maritime Museum is open from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Seaside Museum is closed.

Sunset Empire Transportation (“The Bus”) is not running Friday.

The Astorian offices are closed Friday.

— The Astorian

## ON THE RECORD

### Assault

• Peter Johansen, 56, of Astoria, was arrested Wednesday on U.S. Highway 30 for assault in the fourth degree and harassment.

### Burglary

Ellen M. Langevin, 61, of Hammond, was arrested Sunday on Lake Drive in Warrenton for burglary in the first degree, criminal trespass in the first degree and criminal mischief in the first degree.

• Alaina Burns, 31, of Astoria, was arrested Friday on U.S. Highway 101 Business for burglary in the second degree, theft in the second degree and criminal mischief in the first degree.

### Theft

• Lilly I. Pettit, 30, was arrested Saturday at Walmart in Warrenton for theft in the second degree.

### Criminal trespass

• Joshua Henry Marshall, 36, was arrested Saturday on Exchange Street in Astoria for criminal trespass in the second degree and criminal mischief in the third degree.

### DUII

• Kimberly Cae Schwartz, 41, of Warrenton, was arrested Saturday on Columbia Avenue in Astoria for driving under the influence of intoxicants following a hit-and-run complaint in Warrenton.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

### TUESDAY

**Gearhart City Council**, 6 p.m., work session, (electronic meeting).

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

# Officials say mink recovering from virus at Oregon farm

By **GEORGE PLAVEN**  
Capital Press

SALEM — Mink that tested positive for COVID-19 at an Oregon farm in November appear to be recovering, according to state agriculture officials.

Dr. Ryan Scholz, the state veterinarian for the Oregon Department of Agriculture, visited the farm Nov. 23 and collected 10 mink samples that were sent to Oregon State University and the U.S. Department of Agriculture for testing. All samples came back positive for the virus.

It is believed the mink contracted COVID-19 from humans at the farm, which was placed under immediate quarantine. The Department of Agriculture has not identified the operation or disclosed its location.

Oregon has 11 permitted mink farms with an estimated 438,327 animals, making it the fourth-largest pelt-producing state behind Wisconsin, Utah and Idaho. Eight of Oregon’s mink farms are in Marion County, one is in Linn County and two are in Clatsop County.

An animal rights group has claimed that a mink farm in Astoria is the one under quarantine, but the state has declined to identify the farm, citing medical privacy.

Since the initial positive tests, the Department of Agriculture has conducted two rounds of follow-up testing



Fur Commission USA

**COVID-19 has been found in an Oregon mink farm.**

documenting the animals’ recovery. The first round was conducted Dec. 7. Out of 62 mink sampled, only one showed “barely detectable” levels of the virus.

The second round, conducted Dec. 21, revealed no positive tests at the farm. The Department of Agriculture says it will conduct one more round of testing before deciding whether to lift the quarantine.

Meanwhile, USDA Wildlife Services, under the direction of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, continues to trap and test local wildlife to ensure the virus does not spread. Biologists have tested nine animals since Dec. 7, including five opossums, three cats and one mink that was believed to have escaped from the farm.

The mink, captured Dec. 13, tested positive for low levels of COVID-19 while the cats and opossums all tested negative. Based on where the mink was captured

and its condition, the Department of Agriculture believes it had recently escaped.

The Department of Agriculture has requested continued surveillance, trapping and testing as an added precaution.

Scholz said there is no evidence that COVID-19 is circulating or has been established in the wild.

“Several animals from different species were sampled, and all others were negative,” Scholz said in a statement. “Still, we are taking this situation very seriously and continuing to survey and trap near the farm. Also, we have asked USDA to run additional tests on the trapped mink, including sequencing the viral genome and a DNA test to ensure we know exactly where this mink came from.”

Outbreaks of COVID-19 in farmed mink have also been reported in Utah, Michigan and Wisconsin, as well as six countries, according to

the World Organization for Animal Health. The situation in Denmark was particularly severe, where health officials discovered a mutated strain of the virus that threatened to undercut the effectiveness of a vaccine.

In response, Denmark culled its entire population of farmed mink — more than 17 million animals. To make matters worse, the Wall Street Journal reports Danish parliament has voted to exhume 5.5 million of the dead mink beginning in May after environmental inspectors found that some water sources might have been contaminated by bacteria as the mink decayed.

Fearing a similar threat in Oregon, the Center for Biological Diversity, an environmental group, has urged the Department of Agriculture, the Oregon Health Authority and Gov. Kate Brown to release more information about the November outbreak.

“It’s inexcusable that Oregon officials are withholding information critical to identifying and protecting anyone exposed to this facility,” said Lori Ann Burd, environmental health director for the group, in a letter sent earlier this month. “Given the surge of COVID-19 cases, it’s astounding that Oregon’s public health officials are choosing to protect this facility’s secrets rather than public health.”

# Marine heat waves concern researchers

By **CASSANDRA PROFITA**

Oregon Public Broadcasting

This year brought one of the biggest marine heat waves on record in the Pacific Ocean, and it’s one of several record-setting spikes in ocean water temperatures over the last six years.

The string of warm water events has scientists wondering if this is actually the new normal for the Pacific Ocean.

A series of heat waves started in 2013 with what was nicknamed “the blob,” which brought water temperatures up to nearly 7 degrees Fahrenheit higher than normal across a 1,000-mile stretch of the West Coast.

The warm water caused massive harmful algae blooms that shut down crab and clam fisheries and affected food availability for wildlife. Many young sea lions were left stranded on beaches by parents searching for food. Whales started feeding closer to shore, which caused more of them to be struck by vessels and entangled in fishing gear. The heat wave also brought warm-water species farther north and spurred a baffling proliferation of a pickle-shaped creature known as a pyrosome.

But although “the Blob” retreated in 2018, the marine heat waves continued with



NOAA Fisheries

**An emaciated sea lion pup in California’s Channel Islands.**

water temperatures reaching record highs again in 2019 and 2020.

Andrew Leising, a scientist with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, uses satellite data to track how much of the ocean is much warmer than normal in these heat waves.

“For the last six years, we’ve now had the three largest events on record,” he said. “It’s tempting to say, ‘OK, this may be the new normal.’”

However, Leising said, satellite data only goes back to 1982. So, this could be part of a temperature cycle that hasn’t been documented before.

“My take on it is it’s just still too early to say,” he said. “We need another cou-

ple years of data and more research into the pressures and drivers of what’s causing them to really understand if we’re in a new pattern.”

The ocean is also getting warmer with climate change, which complicates the measurements scientists use to identify a marine heat wave. Leising said the definition of a heatwave might need to change as the overall temperature of the ocean rises.

“Basically, in 40-50 years from now, everything will look like a heat wave if we keep the same definition we have now,” Leising said. “The whole ocean will be a heat wave all the time, right? But that’s kind of meaningless.”

It is important to distin-

guish between long-term warming and shorter-term temperature spikes because they can have different effects on the marine ecosystem, he said.

“The heat waves are basically exacerbating the effects of background warming,” Leising said. “And that actually can be important for some animals because certain fish and other animals have these absolute limits. ... suddenly it gets to 25 degrees Celsius and bam, it’s dead. They do fine up until a certain point and then they just can’t have it any warmer.”

Research shows warmer water and more frequent marine heat waves are increasing the risks of harmful algal blooms in the ocean.

A recent study found the 2013-2015 marine heat wave created a new toxic hot spot near the border of Oregon and California where the algae that produce domoic acid have shut down fisheries every year since the heat wave and are likely to continue proliferating in that area in the future.

Fishery managers are developing new systems of forecasting harmful algal blooms that produce domoic acid, a potentially deadly neurotoxin, so they can provide early earnings and prevent people from eating shellfish that could poison them.

# Food cart: Long-term spot in Seaside could be a challenge

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on rye or sourdough.

Lancaster, a Seattle native, joined Bridgewater Bistro as a sous chef and graduated to chef de cuisine.

At The Cove restaurant at the Peninsula Golf Course in Long Beach, Washington, he enhanced his reputation with an Iron Chef Goes Coastal award and was mentioned in a “picks” selection by The Oregonian contributor Gerry Frank.

He established a permanent truck as part of a food pod in Astoria before buying a second truck, which he tried out this summer at the Seaside Farmers Market and is now debuting for eight weeks every Friday at the Hamilton.

He is joined by his partner, Amy Myers, who worked at Maggie’s as a sous chef.

Myers, a Portland native, grew up in Hillsboro and the Portland area before her family relocated to Seaside. She brings 27 years of experience to the food truck, working at various restaurants since she was around 10.

“I went to culinary school over a decade ago,” Myers said. “I used to be the kitchen manager right here in this neighborhood at the former U Street Pub.”

The most difficult part of operating a food truck, Lancaster said, is setting up and shutting down.

“You’re putting in an hour before you even touch any food,” he said.

Unlike in Astoria, where he serves from a fixed location, moving the cart means loading and packing up. Not done properly, once out of the parking lot the inside of the

truck “looks like a bomb went off,” he said.

Lancaster, Myers and Montero still face a challenge to maintain a long-term spot in Seaside.

In 2018, Seaside restaurant owners largely opposed a request from another food cart owner to operate in Seaside, citing limited housing and the short tourist season, which, they said, put brick-and-mortar businesses at a disadvantage.

All uses in the city’s commercial zones, “shall be conducted entirely within a completely enclosed building,” Seaside’s code reads.

“When I asked for the event permit, I used COVID as the basis for my request,” Montero said. “My sense is that we are really not infringing upon the sit-down diners, we’re really affecting the

fast-food people. There’s a need. Even McDonald’s and Kentucky Fried Chicken are backed up for blocks.”

A challenge looms. After their first day serving, Montero said, they were told that downtown restaurateurs had complained to the city’s planning department about Lancaster’s operation.

Montero planned to approach the department to seek a variance for a long-term permit.

If denied, he said, Montero could approach the City Council to try to change the ordinance.

Lancaster said he is confident he will be able to continue to operate in Seaside.

“If places have the right setup and you’ve got your own garbage disposal and power, I think they’re going to allow it,” he said.

## the Astorian

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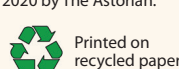
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