

County reports 12 new virus cases

The Astorian

Clatsop County has reported 12 new virus cases over the past few days. On Friday, the county reported six cases. The cases include a man in his 20s living in the southern part of the county and a male between 10 and

19, a woman in her 20s, two men in their 30s and a woman in her 40s living in the northern part of the county. All six were recovering at home. On Thursday, the county reported six cases. The cases include two women in their 20s, a man and a woman in their 30s, a woman in her 40s and a man in his 50s living in the northern part of

the county. All six were recovering at home. The county has recorded 672 cases since March. According to the county, 12 were hospitalized and four have died. The Oregon Health Authority reported 131,258 cases and 1,758 deaths from the virus statewide as of Friday morning.

Outbreaks: Staff, residents have not yet been vaccinated

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Clatsop County declined to provide more information about the outbreaks. “The first positive case at Clatsop Retirement Village was identified through routine weekly all-staff testing near the first of the year,” Clarissa Johnson, Clatsop Care Health District’s community outreach director, said in an email. “Since CRV completed baseline COVID-19 testing of all staff and residents in September, they have continued to test staff weekly, exceeding the frequency guidance set for assisted living communities. The recent positive case reported to the county is the first identified positive case at the retirement village. “After the positive case was identified, all staff and residents were tested again within the next 24 hours. The swiftness at which the staff were able to complete testing, and put quarantine guidance in place, directly related to their ability to isolate further spread of the virus. “Since the six cases were first reported to Public Health, continual testing has been performed and no additional staff or residents have tested positive. Residents who tested positive were asymptomatic; experiencing no symptoms. Clatsop Retirement Village



Coronavirus cases have been reported at Clatsop Retirement Village.

follows PPE (personal protective equipment) guidance, requiring all staff to wear surgical masks and face shields or approved eye protection while in the building, and follow social distancing guidance to the greatest extent possible.” It is the county’s first publicly reported outbreak at a care facility during the pandemic. Staff and residents at the retirement village have not yet been vaccinated. The retirement village is

working to secure vaccinations with its pharmacy, Consonus Healthcare Services. The first dose will likely be administered in early February. Staff and residents at Clatsop Care Health and Rehabilitation Center, the health district’s skilled nursing facility, have received the vaccine. Gov. Kate Brown has limited visitation at care facilities since the start of the pandemic because of the increased health risks and potential spread among

seniors. Outbreaks at care facilities throughout the state are tied to a disproportionate share of virus-related deaths. Since December, Clatsop County has shifted back and forth from high risk for the virus to extreme risk under the state’s designation. Indoor visitation at care facilities is prohibited in counties at extreme risk. Big River Excavating could not immediately be reached for comment on the workplace outbreak.

Port: Pivoted back toward an expanded boatyard on Pier 3

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projects, bringing on AmeriCorps intern Lydia Ivanovic to help Matt McGrath, the Port’s deputy director. The capital facilities and strategic business plans will eventually be combined into an intergovernmental agreement providing accountability for how public money will be spent. “We obviously, sitting here today, don’t have all the resources lined up in order to get everything done in the plan,” said Will Isom, Port’s executive director. “But having this IGA in place will open up supports for us and allow, specifically Shane (Jensen, the Port’s grant writer), to start really aggressively going after grant money, which will be an important piece of the financing puzzle.” The facilities plan is a

living document that could change with priorities and new opportunities. It encapsulates deferred maintenance projects, such as the cleanup of petroleum contamination leaking into the Columbia River between piers 2 and 3, the repair of the causeway leading out to the East Mooring Basin and the rehab of a slumping Pier 2 seawall where fishermen transfer their catch to processors. The Port prioritized projects that improve safety and reduce environmental impact, McGrath said. The plan also looks to the future of Port operations, including an expanded boatyard on Pier 3 and improved infrastructure for cruise ships stopping at Pier 1. Many of the projects focus on master plans to provide a cohesive strategy for developing the Port’s central waterfront and the Astoria Regional Airport.

“This is really meant not only to be a component of the strategic business plan, but to provide really a big benefit to Port staff, as to providing some institutional knowledge as far as what projects across Port property need to be done,” McGrath said. “This would have been a document that would have been tremendously helpful for me when I first came on, rather than having to kind of go around and figure out everything that needed to be done at the Port.” Stephanie Prybyl, the ports manager for Business Oregon, said the capital facilities plan would help her organization as it goes to Salem seeking money for the Port. Business Oregon has already loaned the Port around \$20 million since 2001 for past projects, in addition to several infra-

structure grants. But some of the financing went toward a boatworks cluster concept around Pier 3 that was largely scrapped after the arrival of lucrative log exports. With the loss of logs, the Port has pivoted back toward an expanded boatyard on Pier 3. The strategy is one similar to the Port of Toledo, a coastal port upriver from Newport that parlayed a focus on its boatyard into millions of dollars in state grants. In addition to getting help from the state, the Port hopes master planning on the central waterfront will attract urban renewal money from the city to help create a commercial district around the West Mooring Basin. Isom sees much of the agency’s future in land development, with leases being the Port’s largest source of revenue.

Plea: Students described experiences with isolation and distance learning

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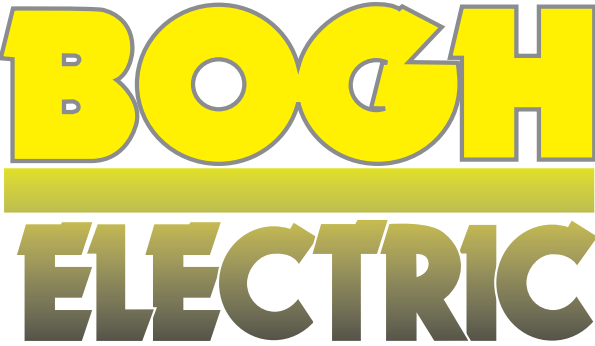
many of them have recovered at home already pretty quickly. And as a physician, I want to explain just very briefly, it’s not OK for people to say that this is going to peter out. “It’s not OK to assume that COVID isn’t a serious threat just because people in Clatsop County have recovered at home and not many of them have had severe illness. Most of our cases are mild, yes, but this still translates to more time in quarantine, more time out of work. “Also, people who have mild COVID are ending up months later still having symptoms. People who have lost their sense of smell six months ago still cannot taste their food. Studies are showing persistent organ damage in patients, even patients who didn’t have severe COVID. The best example of this is with heart disease. So we don’t know how years from now, just having had a mild case of COVID will play out in causing long-term heart damage or damage to other organs.”

Students described their experiences with isolation and distance learning. Xochitl Perez, a senior at Astoria High School, said it is difficult having to sit in front of her computer from morning until night for class and homework while managing scholarship and college applications. She said she has seen the pandemic take a toll on the mental health of many of her friends. “A lot of them just looked forward to going to school, being able to get out of their homes, being able to see teachers, other students, and just being ... able to be around other people,” Perez said.

“Most of us are missing out on our senior years. Senior year was something that I looked forward to since my freshman year, and now I don’t even get to do half of the activities I got to see my sister do when she was a senior. “And it’s just crazy to think that I don’t get that chance to have a regular graduation.” Perez said she wished “we could just go back to school, but for that to be possible, we really need the community to step it up and start wearing their masks and maintain social distance.” Samuel Irwin, a senior at Warrenton High School who won a state championship in wrestling last year, said not being able to practice with a team or go to

class has disrupted his academic and athletic life. He said it has also been difficult to watch his friends struggle. He said a teammate who broke his hand at the state tournament last year may not have a second chance at competing. “This is his last year if he wants any chance of competing at the college level to show coaches that he has what it takes to go far,” Irwin said. “And as his best friend, it hurts me. I’ve gotten a chance to do that. It hurts me to see his opportunity to do what he wants for the next two to four years of his life are going to be taken away because of COVID. “I just want to see him be happy. And it’s tough to do that when he can’t do what he truly loves to do.” Government restrictions to contain the virus have created economic havoc. Political and business leaders have urged Gov. Kate Brown to reduce restrictions in counties classified as extreme risk so indoor activity at restaurants, bars and gyms can continue. But the requests come as the local case count has soared over the past few months. About 62% of the county’s 672 virus cases have been reported since November, and about 43% have been reported since December. David Reid, the executive director of the Astoria-War-

renton Area Chamber of Commerce, described the effects the pandemic has had on the local economy. “Whether it’s layoffs at companies that can’t hire those people back until the current restrictions are lifted, whether it’s lower revenues, whether it’s inability to contribute to the tax base that provides the other services that we’ve got — all of those things are affecting us,” Reid said. “We have businesses that have failed already as a result of what’s going on. We have businesses that are on the verge of that. And those things are going to have an impact for a long time for us.” Astoria Mayor Bruce Jones said the community needs to stay focused. “And that’s why we’re continuing to be diligent about following those public health care guidelines, about wearing masks when we’re around other people, about washing regularly, about avoiding those social gatherings and unnecessary gatherings of any kind,” the mayor said. “And just continuing to be diligent for several more months until enough people have been vaccinated and the virus hopefully starts to taper away.”



My team has the ability to perform all electrical services from low to high voltage, commercial and residential, and vintage to new build projects. “You’re only as good as the people you surround yourself with, and I am very blessed to have the team I have here.” Bogh Electric also installs LED lighting, and is a trade ally through Energy Trust of Oregon for lighting Retro-fits. Tony’s mother, Jean Bogh, is also very active at her son’s business on a daily basis. She is Tony’s biggest fan, and has always been very supportive of her son. Tony feels honored that his phone rings daily, whether it be a new customer, or a referral received from a competitor. We strive to serve our customers with integrity and quality work. Tony believes his two most important assets are his customers, and taking care of the people that work with him. Everyone that works at Bogh Electric knows that to Tony, reputation is everything, and that he stands by his word.

Tony Bogh, a born and raised Astorian, started working in the electrical trade in June of 1988 for local contractors. He started Bogh Electric in October of 2009. After a few years of working off of his dining room table, he became busy enough to hire employees. Tony gives a significant amount of credit to his wife of 30 years, Jamie Bogh, who is not only the co-owner of their company, but is also very supportive of her husband’s growing business.

To stay busy on the coast, Tony believes you need to be versatile and have nothing less than a team of all-stars, and speaks very highly of his employees.

