

IN BRIEF

Two people injured after tree falls on vehicle

A woman and a minor were injured Sunday on U.S. Highway 30 after a tree fell on their vehicle.

Police say the vehicle was heading eastbound in Astoria when strong wind gusts caused the tree to fall over.

The two occupants were taken to Columbia Memorial Hospital in Astoria.

— *The Astorian*

Bill barring firearms from Oregon's state buildings passes state Senate

SALEM — All firearms would be barred from state buildings, and local governments would have the option of barring them from their own buildings, under a bill that is halfway through the Oregon Legislature.

The state Senate voted 16 to 7 on Thursday for Senate Bill 554. State Sen. Betsy Johnson, D-Scappoose, was the lone Democrat in opposition.

The bill goes to the House after a debate lasting more than three hours and reflecting the national arguments about gun regulation.

The bill would bar about 300,000 holders of concealed-handgun licenses from bringing their firearms into state buildings, including the Capitol. Some places, such as state courts, already are off-limits.

Cities, counties, schools and other local governments would have the option under the bill to bar firearms from their buildings, although adjacent garages and parking lots are excluded. A ban also can apply to airport terminals; the federal Transportation Security Administration oversees boarding areas and the shipment of firearms in stored luggage.

Violations would be considered a Class C felony, maximum penalties for which are a \$125,000 fine and five years in prison, although unlikely to be levied on a first offense.

The bill also would raise initial fees for concealed-handgun licenses from \$50 to \$100, and renewals from \$50 to \$75.

— *Oregon Capital Bureau*

Washington House approves open carry ban at Capitol, permitted rallies

OLYMPIA, Wash. — The Washington state House on Sunday approved a measure to prohibit the open carrying of guns and other weapons at the Capitol and surrounding grounds and at or near permitted public demonstrations statewide.

The measure passed the Democratic-led chamber on a 57-40 vote after nearly five hours of debate and heads back to the Senate, which will need to concur with changes made in the House before the bill heads to the governor. The Senate initially passed the measure last month on a 28-20 vote.

— *Associated Press*

DEATHS

March 28, 2021

BROWNE, Sharon Louise, 73, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

March 27, 2021

FORST, James Edward, 65, of Astoria, died in Warrenton. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

March 26, 2021

CARROLL, Patrick J., 87, of Warrenton, died in Astoria. Ocean View Funeral & Cremation Service of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

March 24, 2021

ANDERSON, Carl Ernest, 76, of Gearhart, died in Gearhart. Ocean View Funeral & Cremation Service of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

ON THE RECORD

Assault

• Ashly Lukoszyk, 36, was arrested Saturday at Walmart in Warrenton for assaulting a public safety officer, criminal mischief in the third degree, criminal trespass in the first degree and theft in the second degree.

DUII

• Tony Z. Clemons, 48, of Warrenton, was arrested Friday in Warrenton for driving under

the influence of intoxicants, reckless driving, reckless endangerment, unlawful possession of a firearm and failure to perform duties of a driver in an accident after allegedly crashing into a parked Sunset Empire Transportation District bus on N.E. Skipanon Drive.

• Sigrid Anna Silva, 43, of Fairview, was arrested Friday on U.S. Highway 26 for DUII.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

TUESDAY

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

THURSDAY

Astoria Design Review Commission, 5:30 p.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

the Astorian

Established July 1, 1873
(USPS 035-000)

Published Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday by EO Media Group, 949 Exchange St., PO Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103 Telephone 503-325-3211, 800-781-3211 or Fax 503-325-6573. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Astorian, PO Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103-0210

DailyAstorian.com

MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MEMBER CERTIFIED AUDIT OF CIRCULATIONS, INC.

Circulation phone number:
800-781-3214

Periodicals postage paid at Astoria, OR

ADVERTISING OWNERSHIP

All advertising copy and illustrations prepared by The Astorian become the property of The Astorian and may not be reproduced for any use without explicit prior approval.

COPYRIGHT

Entire contents © Copyright, 2021 by The Astorian.



Printed on recycled paper

Subscription rates
Effective January 12, 2021

MAIL

EZpay (per month).....\$10.75
13 weeks in advance.....\$37.00
26 weeks in advance.....\$71.00
52 weeks in advance.....\$135.00

DIGITAL

EZpay (per month).....\$8.25



BEACH BUBBLES

Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Teddy Tully reaches to pop a massive bubble with the help of his sister, Grace, on the Prom in Seaside on Friday. People flooded Seaside to enjoy the beach during spring break.

Lawsuit claims proposed road near Mount St. Helens threatens research

By **MONICA SAMAYOA**
Oregon Public Broadcasting

Conservation groups and scientists are challenging a federal decision to build a road through the Mount St. Helens blast zone, saying it would damage decades worth of irreplaceable research plots.

Since the 1980 eruption, Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument's blast zone, known as Pumice Plain, has provided scientists and researchers a unique opportunity to conduct studies on plots of land unlike anywhere else in the world. Some of the research started right after the blast, providing four decades worth of scientific knowledge and insight into the ways watersheds take shape, the evolution of aquatic species and mammals and the development of new plant communities.

But the preservation of some of these research plots is in conflict with another value: protecting against the risk that water, logs and debris held back by a natural dam on the volcano's Spirit Lake could break loose.

The May 18, 1980 eruption destroyed the lake's only water outlet. Five years later, a 1.6-mile-long tunnel was dug into a ridge to release the water, which continues to enter the lake as rainfalls and snow melts.

But the need for ongoing repairs to the tunnel's intake gate, along with concerns that the tunnel could be damaged in an earthquake, has led the U.S. Forest Service to authorize a new or improved intake gate and to conduct geotechnical drilling to determine possible future outflow from the lake. And it wants to build an access road across Pumice Plain so crews and equipment can reach the work sites.

The decision says there is a need to "ensure the protection of public safety, health, property and the environment from a catastrophic breach of the Spirit Lake natural debris blockage caused by the 1980 eruption."

The access road would be 3.4 miles in total length and 16 feet wide — and it would impact at least 25 research plots in the area.

That work is being challenged by the Western Environmental Law Center, which is representing four conservation groups and three individuals in its legal challenge against the Forest Service's decision. Susan Jane Brown, staff attorney for the law center, said the Forest Service failed to consider alternatives and to gather input from sci-



Wes Peck

Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument's blast zone, known as Pumice Plain, has provided scientists and researchers a unique opportunity to conduct studies.

'THAT INABILITY OR THE LACK OF TAKING THAT COMPREHENSIVE LOOK THREATENS THE SCIENTIFIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES THAT THE PUMICE PLAIN REPRESENTS TO NOT ONLY PEOPLE IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST BUT REALLY RESEARCH GLOBALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY.'

Susan Jane Brown | staff attorney for the Western Environmental Law Center

tists who have conducted research there.

"That inability or the lack of taking that comprehensive look threatens the scientific and environmental values that the Pumice Plain represents to not only people in the Pacific Northwest but really research globally and internationally," she said.

The proposal would impact about 4% of the 3,840-acre Pumice Plain research area.

Brown said she understands the importance of repairing the natural dam for public safety concerns, but the overflow is not a new or urgent issue.

"It's something that we need to deal with but it's not going to fail tomorrow and it's not going to fail next week, it's not going to fail next month," she said. "It will fail eventually but we will have quite a bit of warning at that point should that situation arise."

Jim Gawel is an associate professor at the University of Washington Tacoma. He's been doing research in Mount St. Helens for more than 10 years, most recently in the Spirit Lake watershed. If the Forest Service plan moves forward, his work, along with that of more than a dozen professors and graduate students, would be

impacted.

One of those projects is his research into the recent appearance of a highly invasive species called New Zealand mud snails in Spirit Lake and its tributaries. Gawel is worried that if he can't complete his research, the opportunity to learn about ways to prevent the snail's spread across North America could be lost.

"New Zealand mud snails would likely accelerate the spread ... possibly introducing it into regions where it might not naturally reach," he said.

Gawel argued the Forest Service could avoid impacting his and others' research by using helicopters for aerial transport of crews, building

materials and equipment.

"We do lots of jobs where it requires people to be flown in and out," he said. "There's other ways where you basically fly them in and spend a week working on the job and then are flown out at the end," he said. "That decreases the potential risk of flying out on a regular basis."

The Forest Service says it considered helicopter transport but it rejected the idea because of weather-related safety risks.

John Bishop, a professor of biology at Washington State University, says the plan would be extremely damaging for researchers — but also for ordinary people who want to better understand the 1980 eruption's aftermath. The road construction and tunnel work would require the temporary closure of the Truman Trail, a hiking route across the Pumice Plain.

"Right now, when you go hiking out in the Pumice Plain as well as many other areas in the monument, you're experiencing being in a wilderness," he said. "You really feel that when you're out there, you're in a really unique place."

The Forest Service determined the plan strikes the right balance between public safety and scientific pursuits. It plans to begin work this spring.

First Baptist Church

ASTORIA, OREGON

He is Risen - Come Join in Praise



In person Service at 10:45 a.m. broadcasted live on facebook

facebook.com/astoriafirstbaptist/

Face masks and social distancing required

7th & Commercial, Astoria
(Across from the Courthouse)
503-325-1761

WANTED

Alder and Maple Saw Logs & Standing Timber

Northwest Hardwoods • Longview, WA

Contact: John Anderson • 360-269-2500