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## CORONAVIRUS

# Church annex draws ire of neighbors

## Uppertown church wants to expand

By EDWARD STRATTON  
*The Astorian*

Lief Erikson Drive in Uppertown divides the neighborhood between large commercial properties such as Safeway and Comfort Suites to the north and mostly single-family homes to the south.

A proposed annex by Bethany Free Lutheran Church on 34th Street has two families up the hill opposed to what they see as encroachment of another box of a building on a historic neighborhood.

Bethany Free Lutheran, formed in 1890, spent nearly a century on Franklin Avenue amid a collection of historic homes on a bluff overlooking the Columbia River. The church moved in the 1980s to 34th Street, buying a lot across the street and next to the U.S. Customs house replica for overflow parking and an eventual expansion.

Craig Johnson, the pastor of Bethany Free Lutheran for more than 20 years, said there has long been talk of building an annex across the street. Older congregation members have expressed concerns over limited access to the Astoria Senior Center, he said, while church-related youth groups have found it more difficult to find after-school activity space in public buildings.

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Photos by Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Vincent Tadei sits next to his window, which overlooks the Columbia River and the lot Bethany Free Lutheran Church plans to develop. Bethany Free Lutheran Church is facing opposition from some neighbors over plans to develop a 5,000-square-foot annex on this plot of land.



RDA Project Management

Bethany Free Lutheran Church is planning a 5,000-square-foot annex on 34th Street.



# Hood to Coast could return

Last year's event was a casualty of the pandemic

By R.J. MARX  
*The Astorian*

SEASIDE — The Hood to Coast Relay is back on track.

The “mother of all relays,” which was canceled last summer because of the coronavirus pandemic, could take place Aug. 27 and Aug. 28, with 12-member teams running 199 miles from the top of Mount Hood to the beach in Seaside.

“We’ve been planning on operating our 2021 relay events since the beginning of the year,” Hood to Coast Chief Operating Officer Dan Floyd said. “We feel strongly that we can safely operate the 2021 events.”

The relay team lottery has filled its limit, with 1,050 Hood to Coast running teams and 400 Portland to Coast Walk

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# County to remain at moderate risk for virus

Recent spike not enough to change risk level

By NICOLE BALES  
*The Astorian*

Clatsop County will remain at moderate risk for the coronavirus on Friday even after a recent spike in cases.

The county has been at moderate risk since late March.

“We are at a critical moment in this pandemic as we face more contagious variants of COVID-19 taking hold in our communities,” Gov. Kate Brown said in a statement Tuesday. “Now more than ever it’s imperative that we all continue wearing masks, maintain physical distance, stay home when sick and get the vaccine when it’s available to you.”

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# Educators expect strong demand for kindergarten

A large class likely at Astor Elementary

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ  
*The Astorian*

Educators expect a large class of incoming kindergartners at Astor Elementary in September as registration opens this month.

The Astoria School District started this school year online only and principal Kate Gohr believes many

families opted to wait a year to enroll their youngest children. Some reasoned that their kids would gain little from online schooling while the school district remained shut down to in-person classes because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Now, with widespread vaccinations underway and a more positive outlook on pandemic-related precautions, Gohr expects

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# Leaders back historic cemetery name



Edward Stratton/The Astorian

John Goodenberger, a local historian and preservationist, said the stone Astoria Pioneer Cemetery plaque would likely stay as part of the site’s history after the name reverts to Hillside Cemetery.

Pioneer Cemetery was once called Hillside Cemetery

By EDWARD STRATTON  
*The Astorian*

The Astoria Pioneer Cemetery, a burial ground off Niagara Avenue that used to be named the Hillside Cemetery, will revert to its historical name during a restoration by Clatsop Community College students.

Astoria city councilors on Monday voiced their approval of the college using the older name in a new wooden sign on 14th Street a

student will make as part of their capstone project.

In 1865, John Welch deeded land for Hillside Cemetery, which replaced Potter’s Field at 14th and Irving Avenue as the city’s primary burial ground. By the 20th century, the city established Ocean View Cemetery in Warrenton and outlawed further interments in Astoria.

Many bodies were exhumed and moved to

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