

IN BRIEF

Salmon seasons set for Columbia River

With improved run forecasts for certain salmon species, but below average runs predicted for others, summer and fall salmon fisheries on the Columbia River will be a mixed bag this year.

Retention of adult hatchery Chinook from the Astoria Bridge to Bonneville Dam opens on the river on June 16 and will continue through July 5 downstream of the dam and upstream of the dam to the Oregon and Washington state border through July 31.

Because of forecasts of below average runs for sockeye salmon, retention of sockeye and hatchery steelhead in both areas will be allowed but with a reduced bag limit.

With predictions for a higher number of upriver bright Chinook, the fall Chinook retention season starts Aug. 1 and will last longer than in recent years. Regulations vary by river section, however.

Hatchery coho retention will be open throughout the fall season due to a much-improved run forecast.

But protective regulations will once again be in effect for 2021 fisheries because of the low forecast for upriver summer steelhead. Anglers will be limited to one hatchery steelhead for their daily bag limit and there will be area specific closures, among other restrictions.

Halibut fishing opens off Oregon

Halibut sport fishing opens off the Oregon Coast this month.

Off the North Coast, fishermen will be able to begin fishing on Thursday through May 27 — on Thursdays and Sundays — for the all-depth season in the Columbia River subareas that run from Cape Falcon to Leadbetter Point in Washington state.

The nearshore season inside the 40-fathom line in this same area begins May 10 and runs until the 500-pound quota is met or through Sept. 30.

South of Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain, the nearshore sport halibut fishery has opened, while the spring all-depth season has set openings, with the first occurring on May 13 through May 15. The summer all-depth season off the state's central coast opens in August.

From Humbug Mountain to the Oregon-California border, sport fishing for halibut is now open daily.

Como to serve as interim Gearhart fire chief

GEARHART — Josh Como has been named interim fire chief after the retirement of Gearhart Fire Chief Bill Eddy.

"I have been involved with the fire department since I was 6 years old," Como said. "That's how old I was when my dad joined. I was a cadet when I was 14."

— The Astorian

DEATHS

May 1, 2021

KIRBY, Carley Elizabeth, 82, of Astoria, died in Warrenton. Ocean View Funeral & Cremation Service of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

PELTO, Henry, 72, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

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April 29, 2021

HATCH, William Radburn, 87, of Cannon Beach, died in Cannon Beach. Caldwell's Funeral & Cremation Arrangement Center of Seaside is in charge of the arrangements.

ON THE RECORD

Theft

• Kenneth Weaver Prutt, 38, was arrested Friday on charges of theft in the second degree, unlawful entry into a motor vehicle and possession of methamphetamine.

DUI

• Michael Rhodes Wallace, 33, of Portland, was arrested Thursday in Astoria for driving under the influence of intoxicants.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

TUESDAY

Clatsop County Board of Commissioners, noon, work session, (electronic meeting).
Port of Astoria Commission, 4 p.m., (electronic meeting).
Clatsop Care Health District Board, 5 p.m., (electronic meeting).
Astoria Planning Commission, 5:30 p.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.
Cannon Beach City Council, 6 p.m., (electronic meeting).
Clatsop Community College Budget Committee, 6:30 p.m., (electronic meeting).

WEDNESDAY

Seaside Urban Renewal and Improvement Commission, 5:30 p.m., budget meeting, (electronic meeting).
Seaside Improvement Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, (electronic meeting).

THURSDAY

Astoria Design Review Commission, 5:30 p.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.
Seaside Parks Advisory Committee, 6 p.m., 989 Broadway St.

the Astorian

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FAT BIKE FESTIVAL



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Cyclists raced at the Cannon Beach Fat Bike Festival on Saturday night. The winner of the slow race was the last person to cross the finish line without putting a foot on the ground.

Labor: 'It's really difficult to manage'

Continued from Page A1

because they're offering me more, unless you match it.' If you match it, then what's going to happen? You have 100 other employees, and you have to match. So it's really difficult to manage."

Khan blamed the government for what he described as a ham-fisted application of unemployment benefits in places, like the coast, where jobs are readily available.

David Posalski, a Seaside city councilor who owns several local eateries, said the labor shortage has been exacerbated by virus-related travel bans that have stopped between 50 to 60 foreign exchange students from Asia and Europe who come each year to work in hotels and restaurants. He said he usually hires seven to eight students, mostly from Lithuania.

"Between my businesses, I could use another 10 people," Posalski said. "If I get my Lithuanians come summertime, I could probably get away with three or four."

Kim Dewar, an office manager for Total Employment and Management, oversees several hundred temporary workers for mostly blue-collar positions between Astoria and Newport. She's been fielding a flood of calls from businesses struggling to find workers through traditional advertising and perks like signing bonuses.

"Everybody's wanting to keep it at last year's wages, and that just isn't going to work," she said. "People have had a year to be home, get stimulus money, and they don't want to come back and work for what they worked for last year. Because guess what? If they stay home, they can still get the money."

Regional workforce analyst Shawna Sykes said most of the shortages appear to be in lower-paying hospitality jobs, where frontline workers often have to enforce health and safety guidelines to protect against the virus.

"One of the things we've been hearing from employers is the frustration with enforcing the COVID restrictions with guests that don't want to comply," Sykes said. "That confrontational aspect that is really difficult for some people to handle as wait staff or hostesses ... even retail."

People who want to come back to work face pressures from child care to the lack of affordable housing. The county, like all of Oregon, is considered a child care desert. Even small differences between pay and unemployment benefits can have an impact when rents routinely



Edward Stratton/The Astorian

David Posalski, the owner of Tsunami Sandwich Co. in Seaside, said coronavirus travel restrictions have prevented international students from coming to work at local hotels and restaurants.



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Esteban Becerra smooths a bed at the SaltLine Hotel in Seaside. The hotel needs housekeepers and other staff.

surpass \$1,000 a month for one-bedroom apartments.

Dewar's office provides a shower and laundry to help workers who struggle to find adequate housing. She called the local rental market "exploitative."

"I have four employees who share one room, and they pay \$500 a month for the bunk," Dewar said.

Sykes said the county has a unique set of housing challenges, with a higher proportion of retirees, remote workers moving to the coast and around 22% of homes being second or vacation properties, compared to 4% statewide.

"There's just a lot less homes available for residents, overall," she said.

Warrenton Mayor Henry Balensifer, who works at JBT Lektro, said the county also faces shortages for higher-wage jobs in industries such as manufacturing, where global supply chains have been disrupted by the pandemic and created uncertainties for businesses.

He also recognized the logic of staying home, earning unemployment and saving on child care costs.

"Child care can cost the equivalent of a mortgage anymore these days," Balensifer said. "So at that point, if the unemployment ben-

efit is going to cover what you need ... it's cheaper to stay home than pay for child care."

'There was no child care'

Some service-sector workers, like Josie Lilly, have turned the pandemic into an opportunity for professional development. Lilly was laid off along with most of the staff at the Astoria Coffeehouse & Bistro just after her daughter's sixth birthday in March 2020. Then schools closed.

"I was kind of trapped at home with my daughter," Lilly said. "There was no child care. Trying to be my daughter's playmate 24/7 was a little draining and exhausting. I was kind of anxious to get back doing something."

Lilly had periodically attended college, but she usually went back to the rel-



Edward Stratton/The Astorian

Josie Lilly used a layoff during the coronavirus pandemic to go back to school to become an electrician.

atively good pay — after tips — from restaurants. But after more than 20 years of waitressing, she decided during the pandemic to get more serious about a long-held dream of becoming an electrician.

She now spends her days attending class, caring for her daughter and picking up shifts at Columbia Housewarmers on the rare occasion she can find a babysitter.

"I'd definitely been considering it and kind of dipping my toes in the water before," Lilly said, "but this was the real shove over the cliff."

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