

IN BRIEF

State discloses virus outbreak at Funland in Seaside

SEASIDE — Funland is tied to five coronavirus cases, the state disclosed.

The virus cases, detailed by the Oregon Health Authority in a weekly report on workplace outbreaks released on Wednesday, date back to April 26. The most recent onset was April 29.

The health authority discloses outbreaks at businesses with 30 or more workers once five virus cases are reported.

Park district selects facility consultant for recreation center

SEASIDE — The Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District selected a strategic consultant to plan the future of the Sunset Recreation Center.

Sports Facilities Advisory and Scott Edwards Architecture were chosen out of three finalists based on firm size and structure, project understanding, firm experience, work plan, proposed staff and fee proposal.

"It's the recommendation of that group to select the Sports Facilities Advisory working with Scott Edwards Architecture for the opportunity to partner with us on our plan for the future of Sunset Recreation Center," Skyler Archibald, the park district's executive director, said in presenting the decision to the board on Tuesday. "This is a significant step forward in the district."

The park district purchased the former Broadway Middle School for \$2.15 million in January. The middle school, renamed the Sunset Recreation Center, was among Seaside School District properties relocated to the new Spruce Drive location outside of the tsunami inundation zone.

— The Astorian

Inslee says Washington state on track to fully reopen from virus restrictions

OLYMPIA, Wash. — Washington is on track to fully reopen its economy by June 30, and a full reopening could happen even sooner if 70% or more of residents 16 and older have gotten at least one dose of vaccine by then, Gov. Jay Inslee said Thursday.

And Inslee said the state would immediately adopt new guidance offered by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which eased most indoor mask-wearing for fully vaccinated people.

Businesses will retain the right to require customers to wear masks, and masks will still be required in hospitals, schools and on public transportation, he said. Nearly 44% of people age 16 and up are fully vaccinated in Washington state.

"This is a heck of a benefit," Inslee said. "People who have been annoyed by this mask ... that shot is a ticket to freedom from masks."

— Associated Press

DEATHS

May 11, 2021

VERNON, Leila Mae, 88, of Seaside, died in Seaside. Caldwell's Funeral & Cremation Arrangement Center of Seaside is in charge of the arrangements.

WARR,

Russell Edward "Russ," 78, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Ocean View Funeral & Cremation Service of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

ON THE RECORD

DUII

Stephanie Marie McGeatchy, 38, of Tenino, Washington, was arrested on May 8 on U.S. Highway 101 for driving under the influence of intoxicants and reckless driving.

• Katie Rosannah

Reynolds, 41, of Hillsboro, was arrested on May 7 off of U.S. Highway 26 for DUII, reckless driving, recklessly endangering another person and eluding.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

SATURDAY

Warrenton Budget Committee, 9 a.m., Warrenton Community Center, 170 S.W. Third Street.

MONDAY

Knappa School District School Board, 5:30 p.m., (electronic meeting).

Jewell School District Board, 6 p.m., (electronic meeting).

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

TUESDAY

Clatsop County Board of Commissioners, 10 a.m., work session, (electronic meeting).

Miles Crossing Sanitary Sewer District Board, 3 p.m., budget meeting, 34583 U.S. Highway 101 Business.

Port of Astoria Commission, 4 p.m., (electronic meeting).

Astoria Historic Landmarks Commission, 5:30 p.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

Seaside Planning Commission, 6 p.m., work session, 989 Broadway St.

Seaside School District Board, 6 p.m., (electronic meeting).

the Astorian

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County man sues hospital for medical negligence

Alleges son suffered permanent neurological damage

By NICOLE BALES
The Astorian

A Clatsop County man has filed a lawsuit seeking more than \$100 million against Columbia Memorial Hospital, alleging negligence resulted in his son suffering permanent neurological damage.

The lawsuit claims the Astoria hospital failed to

properly monitor the fetal heart rate and other aspects of the labor and delivery of William Harvey Humphries in 2017.

As a result, the lawsuit alleges, Humphries was taken to Oregon Health & Science University Hospital in Portland for emergency treatment and diagnosed with hypoxic ischemic encephalopathy.

The suit claims the hospital's negligence led to permanent neurological damage, including cerebral palsy.

Humphries is severely

developmentally delayed and will be impaired in all activities for the rest of his life, the suit claims.

The lawsuit, filed in late April in Multnomah County Circuit Court, alleges medical negligence and names the hospital and Dr. William Barstow.

Wesley Humphries, the child's father, is bringing the lawsuit on his behalf. He is seeking more than \$45 million in medical, custodial and life care expenses and \$65 million for noneconomic damages.

The hospital declined to comment.

Brent Barton, a Newport medical malpractice attorney representing Humphries, said, "Like any responsible parents, their first priority is to protect their son, who will never be able to work or care for himself."

"This child's life will forever be very different than yours and mine, and we want to give him the resources necessary for his basic needs and to have a chance at becoming the best version of himself."

Pandemic boosts Hood River agritourism

By SIERRA DAWN
McCLAIN
Capital Press

HOOD RIVER — It was a sunny spring afternoon. The parking lot at Draper Girls Country Farm was packed. Visitors were touring the Hood River Fruit Loop, one of Oregon's top agritourism destinations.

The Hood River Fruit Loop is named after the cluster of farms growing fruit trees and wine grapes between the Columbia River and majestic Mount Hood. About 30 farms selling fresh produce, flowers, ciders, wines and gourmet foods are part of the Fruit Loop.

According to the Oregon Tourism Commission, visitors spend more than \$100 million annually in Hood River County, and staffers at the Visit Hood River organization estimate tourists spend as much as tens of millions of dollars on the Fruit Loop alone.

When COVID-19 struck last spring, it rattled agritourism ventures across the nation, including along the Fruit Loop. Events were canceled. Couples postponed on-farm weddings. The number of foreign tourists nosedived.

Fruit Loop farmers say the lockdown pushed them to adapt at warp speed. Some created websites. Others started delivery services. Several farmers invented new products.

"We all really worked our tail ends off," said Tammi



Sierra Dawn McClain/Capital Press

Ali McLaughlin, founder and a tour guide at MountNbarrel, a scenic bike tours company, rides past farmland with Mount Hood in the background.

Packer, a farmer along the loop.

It worked.

Although some businesses still suffered, especially wineries that were mandated to close tasting rooms, most Fruit Loop farmers say 2020 turned out to be a great year and expect 2021 to be even stronger. Consumer interest in buying direct-from-farm is growing, many say. And agritourism is on the rise.

Farms along the Fruit Loop have long relied on tourism traffic, so when the pandemic hit, many farmers were afraid a shutdown could destroy them.

For the first few months, the situation looked dismal.

One tourist who visited last April told the Capital Press the Fruit Loop felt like a ghost town.

Ali McLaughlin is a tour guide and founder of MountNbarrel, a company that

takes hundreds of people annually on scenic bike tours between farms along the Fruit Loop. Last spring, she said, nearly every group on her reservation list canceled.

"It killed us," she said.

McLaughlin canceled all remaining tours until June. Tourism picked up over the summer, but at the end of the year, she had made about 80% less revenue than in 2019.

Events that normally support local farmers were canceled, too.

Ashley May, who promotes the loop and was previously executive director of Visit Hood River, said it was sad to see the Fruit Loop's two biggest events canceled last year: the spring Cider Fest, which usually brings in 5,000 people, and the weekend Harvest Fest, which draws up to 12,000 people.

The Cider Fest was again

canceled this year. A decision has yet to be made about the Harvest Fest.

Revenue loss from those events meant Visit Hood River went from 10 full-time staffers to the equivalent of one-and-a-half staff.

Tourism lodging tax data show the number of overnight guests in the area also dropped — a reduction of almost 100% in spring, and about two-thirds fewer guests than normal during summer.

Hood River winery and vineyard owners, who were required to close tasting rooms several times throughout the year, were especially hard-hit.

The Wy'East Vineyards tasting room is set on a family farm with livestock, farmhouses and pear orchards with a view of Mount Adams to the north.

Mount Hood graces the southern sky, visible from the family's main vineyard, where vines sprawl across hills about 1,600 feet above sea level — one of Oregon's highest-elevation vineyards.

Dick and Christie Reed founded the farm in 1992 after shirking city life in Chicago. They, along with daughter Keely Reed Kopetz, now general manager, run the business together.

When Gov. Kate Brown ordered wine tasting rooms and restaurants to close last spring, Christie Reed says it was "financially devastating." The main income, Keely Kopetz said, came from generous wine club members.

Masks: More pop-up vaccination clinics planned

Continued from Page A1

"The new CDC guidance makes clear that vaccines are the best tool to protect yourself, and everyone around you. Vaccines are also the fastest way to get back to doing the things we all love, and to returning to a sense of normalcy."

The Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce said in a Facebook post Friday the new mask guidance from the CDC was unexpected and asked that people be patient with businesses.

"It may take some time for businesses to adopt procedures to implement the changes," the chamber said. "Please have patience and understand that businesses may continue to request masks for all customers until they know more."

The CDC outlined a few exceptions in the new guidance, and will continue requiring people to wear a mask and socially distance on public transportation, in hospitals and health care clinics, correctional facilities and long-term care facilities.

Nothing is changing for schools this school year, Brown said, and she expects staff and students to continue to wear masks and physically distance.

She said the new guidance from the CDC is "yet another sign that, if we all continue to do our part, the pandemic is coming closer to an end."

On Tuesday, Brown announced plans to lift most risk level restrictions statewide once 70% of Oregonians 16 and older receive their first vaccine doses against the virus.

Counties where 65% of people 16 and older have received at least one dose will have the option of moving to lower risk beginning May 21.

Margo Lalich, Clatsop County's interim public health director, expects the county will meet that metric by the end of the month. The county will be at high risk through Thursday.

As of Friday, 32,300 vaccines have been administered in Clatsop County and 14,855 people were fully vaccinated. The county's goal to reach herd immunity against the virus is vaccinating 27,533 people, or 70% of the population.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration gave Pfizer emergency approval of its vaccine Monday for children 12 to 15.

The county will administer the two-dose vaccine at clinics in Astoria on Satur-

day and Seaside on May 22 to 12- and 17-year-olds and their families.

The county's vaccine task force has begun to wind down mass vaccination clinics because of lower turnout. The task force is seeking new ways to reach people who are either hesitant about vaccination or simply haven't yet made an appointment by reducing barriers.

The one-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine is available through Providence Seaside Hospital and Columbia Memorial Hospital primary care clinics. People can also receive vaccines at pharmacies at Fred Meyer, Safeway, Walmart and Costco.

The task force also plans on hosting more pop-up vaccination clinics throughout the county.

"We're starting to see that shift of those who have been watching or just adamant they're not going to get vaccinated — so there are the vaccine hesitant and they're crossing over and now they're wanting to get vaccinated," Lalich said

during a county Board of Commissioners work session Wednesday. "And when you think of the size of our population, we've given over 30,000 shots in Clatsop County. That's a lot of vaccinations, right? And so now it's time to lace it all together and help the community to understand what this return on investment is."

"And one of the most significant ... is that after you get that second dose, your series is complete — or a single dose for Johnson & Johnson two weeks afterwards — if you're exposed to COVID, you no longer have to quarantine. If you develop symptoms because we do have some breakthrough cases, then you'll want to get tested. But for small businesses, for employers, that is significant that if your employees are vaccinated, it means that you're not going to lose part of the workforce if they've been exposed to somebody else who's positive. So there are many pluses, but this is a very significant one that has certainly economic benefits."

VOLUNTEER PICK OF THE WEEK



Jamie Lee
2 year old grey
American shorthair

Love blooms where kindness is planted. Only with the heart can one see rightly.

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