

IN BRIEF

College plans ceremony for past and present students

Clatsop Community College will celebrate both last year's and this year's graduates at a ceremony this month. The coronavirus pandemic upended plans for a graduation ceremony last spring, so those students will be able to participate in the ceremony this year.

The outdoor ceremony will be held at 4 p.m. on June 18 at CMH Field. Students will be allowed a limited number of tickets for guests. Face coverings will be required and the college will livestream the event.

David Reid, the executive director of the Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce, will be the commencement guest speaker.

"After the challenges of this past year, the student representatives and graduation committee wanted a speaker who had been here in the community with them through it all," Chris Breitmeyer, the college president, said in a statement. "David is the pinnacle of what it means to be a part of this community and we are honored he will be joining us in this celebration of achievement."

State announces free fishing weekend

It is free to fish, clam and crab in Oregon on Saturday and Sunday.

The state will not require fishing licenses or tags for residents or nonresidents.

All other fishing regulations still apply, though, including closures, bag limits and size restrictions.

Razor clamming remains closed on popular North Coast beaches because of high levels of the marine toxin domoic acid.

Astoria police search for robbery suspect

Astoria police are searching for a man who allegedly robbed the Mini Mart East on Thursday night.

Just before 9 p.m., a white man wearing a white bandana on his head, a white face mask, sunglasses and a dark colored jacket entered the store on Marine Drive and showed a demand note to the clerk. He left with an undisclosed amount of money, police said.

A witness who was in the parking lot reportedly saw the suspect run north on 23rd Street toward Commercial Street and then toward the Astoria Riverwalk.

Police said the witness identified the suspect as Calvin Proctor, 29, of Astoria.

Anyone with information about Proctor's whereabouts are asked to contact the Astoria Police Department at 503-325-4411.

Police search for missing Cornelius man

Authorities are searching for a 76-year-old Cornelius man who has been missing since May 16.

Washington County Sheriff's Office deputies have continued to search for Ralph Brown and his 2014 blue Nissan Sentra on the ground and from the air.

The Astoria Police Department has also assisted in the investigation as Brown has ties to Astoria.

So far, no sightings have been confirmed, and Brown has not turned on his cellphone or completed any financial transactions since he went missing.

Anyone with information is asked to contact their local law enforcement agency.

— The Astorian

Earthquakes strike off the coast

GOLD BEACH — A magnitude 5.9 earthquake struck off the Oregon Coast early Friday, and the aftershocks included another 5.9 quake.

But the U.S. Geological Survey said there was no threat of a tsunami or damage to the coast.

The first 5.9 earthquake struck at 12:52 a.m. Pacific time 98 miles west of Gold Beach, at a depth of 5.6 miles. The next quake struck at 1:17 a.m., slightly deeper and closer.

Both quakes and more aftershocks were far enough from land that they were hardly felt.

— Associated Press

DEATHS

June 3, 2021

JESSEN, Jane Irene, 75, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

June 1, 2021

NORDQUIST, John,

60, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements.

POPENHOUSE, Flora, 89, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

MONDAY

Astoria City Council, 7 p.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.
Seaside City Council, 7 p.m., 989 Broadway.

TUESDAY

Clatsop Care Health District Board, 5 p.m., (electronic meeting).
Clatsop Community College Board, 5:30 p.m., work session, (electronic meeting).
Lewis & Clark Fire Department Board, 6 p.m., meeting and budget hearing, main fire station, 34571 U.S. Highway 101 Business.
Clatsop Community College Board, 6:30 p.m., budget hearing, (electronic meeting).
Gearhart City Council, 6:30 p.m., special meeting, (electronic meeting).

the Astorian

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Woman died homeless while the state held small fortune

Boone was among the homeless in Astoria

By KYLE IBOSHI
KGW

Cathy Boone died homeless. She'd been living on the streets of Astoria despite inheriting a small fortune. The state held more than \$800,000 of her unclaimed money when the 49-year-old passed away in January 2020.

"It just didn't make any sense to me. That money was just sitting there, and she needed help in the worst way," said Jack Spithill, Boone's father.

Boone struggled with mental health issues and drug abuse, according to her father.

"She had a rough life but when she was good, she was really good," Spithill said.

Boone was a regular at the Astoria Warming Center. Unlike most visitors who slept in their clothes, Boone would take the extra effort to put on her pajamas at night, explained friends.

"She was a special person as far as I'm concerned," said Donny Holder, who often shared cigarettes and coffee with Boone at McDonald's.

"She was a sweetheart," said Holder, who carries photographs of Boone, wrapped in a tattered Ziploc bag in his coat pocket. "I fell in love with her."

Friends and acquaintances said they had no idea Boone had money available to her. She struggled to survive, like many others living unsheltered in a harsh outside environment.

"We all have our moments but for the most part she had more smiles than cries," said Glen Lonquist, a friend of Boone's.

Struggles

Catherine Boone, known to friends as Cathy, grew up in the Portland area.

Her parents separated when she was young. Her father, who remarried and lives in Texas, tried to stay connected to his daughter.

Boone struggled in her adult life.

"I attribute it almost all to drugs, but I think she also had some mental health issues and the combination of the two didn't work out for her very well," Spithill said.

For several years, Boone volunteered at the nonprofit Sisters of The Road Café in downtown Portland before moving to Astoria, where her mother lived. In 2016, Boone's mother, Patricia



Jack Spithill

Cathy Boone died in 2020.

Lupton, passed away. Boone relapsed into drug abuse, according to her father.

"When she didn't have any connection to family or friends, and she was using drugs, then I think she was a truly lost soul," Spithill said.

Court records show after her mother died, an attorney and personal representative assigned to her mother's estate tried to locate Boone. They took out advertisements in the local newspaper, messaged her on Facebook, emailed family members and tried reaching Boone by phone. A private investigator hired to find Boone also came up empty.

In July 2019, a Clatsop County judge ordered \$884,407 of the estate's assets be sent to the Department of State Lands, which handles unclaimed money from estates where heirs cannot be located or refuse payment.

life.

"I think my failure to recognize her mental health issues. I kind of gave up on her because of the drugs and shouldn't have done that," said a tearful Spithill.

"This sounds like a very tragic story," said Chris Rosin, Oregon public guardian and conservator.

Rosin explained guardianship is only appropriate and legally allowable in Oregon when a person is so profoundly cognitively impaired that they are incapacitated.

Guardianship is a last resort. It essentially removes the ability of a person to make their own decisions and gives that authority to someone else who then has the power to decide where they can live, what medical care they receive, where they can go, who they can see and basically everything else in their life.

THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE LANDS IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR FINDING KNOWN HEIRS. INSTEAD, THE STATE AGENCY IS SIMPLY REQUIRED TO HOLD THE MONEY UNTIL THE PERSON ENTITLED TO IT COMES FORWARD.

It is not clear if Boone ever knew the money was hers or if she understood how to get it, according to her father.

"I don't think she would approach them on her own, but there were enough people who could have given her some help," said Spithill.

Boone's father regrets that he wasn't able to help his daughter, nor was anybody in the court system or local police. He wishes someone could have stepped in to help her take the first step toward reclaiming her

Many services can be obtained voluntarily, like mental health counseling and drug and alcohol treatment. But, in those cases, the person must want treatment for their condition.

"When individuals are homeless, day-to-day survival becomes more important than dealing with a medical condition," explained Amy Baker, executive director of Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare.

Baker said sometimes the criminal justice system

gets involved due to minor crimes. Health workers can help through mental health and substance use disorder treatment courts.

Additionally, Baker said Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare has started hiring people with lived experience to do recovery outreach.

Another option could have potentially been a civil commitment, although the requirements are often more difficult than the standard for guardianship.

In the end, health experts say the bar is very high to force treatment.

'A unique case'

On Jan. 13, 2020, Boone had breathing problems while staying at the Astoria Warming Center. An ambulance rushed her to Providence St. Vincent Medical Center in Portland, where she later died.

In October, the Department of State Lands paid \$884,000 to the personal representative of Boone's estate. Court records indicate the estate is working to identify all persons who might have claims to the money, including her two biological children.

The Department of State Lands is not responsible for finding known heirs. Instead, the state agency is simply required to hold the money until the person entitled to it comes forward.

"Given a year and a half of effort taken by the personal representative and the attorney for this particular estate, there really isn't much more that the state could do," explained Claudia Ciobanu, unclaimed property manager with the department.

Ciobanu said the money was sitting and waiting for Boone prior to her death. She just needed to claim it.

"This is a unique case and we sympathize with the family," Ciobanu said.

Friends say Boone's story helps illustrate the complicated challenges of being homeless while struggling with health issues.

"We're not just statistics," said Johnathan Kvale, a friend of Boone's who is no longer unsheltered. "These are good folks. It's just circumstances."

Sometimes the system just isn't equipped to get people the help they need, even if they're sitting on a small fortune.

"There's got to be more out there — more just like her," said Boone's father.

Warrenton grad's composition featured by Portland ensemble

Morrill's song will be performed Saturday

By ALYSSA EVANS
The Astorian

Warrenton High School graduate Isabella Morrill will debut one of her latest compositions as part of a virtual concert.

The concert, scheduled for 7 p.m. Saturday, will be performed by the Portland Youth Philharmonic Wind Ensemble. Morrill's composition "Bartokian Brass," will be performed among new compositions by other young musicians. The concert will be free to view at portlandyouthphil.org/concerts-tickets/ but registration is required to get a concert link.

"This has been a great opportunity for me, and I feel honored to be a part of



Isabella Morrill

this initiative," Morrill said.

Morrill graduated from Warrenton High School in 2020. A music composition major at Western Oregon University, Morrill is interested in studying film scoring and composing.

Morrill was commissioned to compose an original piece for the ensemble's 97th concert season. The concert will feature eight other young musicians, most of whom are women and

musicians of color. Morrill's piece is a brass piece, which is a modern interpretation of Hungarian composer Bela Bartok's "Mikrokosmos."

"Composing this lively, energetic piece was a fun outlet for me to explore my personal ties to European music as well as my love for the brass family of instruments," Morrill said.

Morrill's main instrument is the French horn. She is proficient in several other instruments, includ-

ing piano, ukulele and guitar. She also sings.

Morrill's composition, "Hymn to the Rain," premiered at a Columbia River Symphony concert in 2019.

She has received various awards, including an Oregon Music Hall of Fame scholarship in 2020 and being awarded the 2019 co-state champion in the high school division of the Oregon Music Education Association state music composition contest.

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