

# the Astorian

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## CORONAVIRUS

### Weber requests federal funds for local projects

Library, resilience among her priorities

By EMILY LINDBLOM  
*The Astorian*

State Rep. Suzanne Weber has recommended several local projects, including two in Clatsop County, to be considered for funding through the American Rescue Plan.

State lawmakers divided up \$240 million of the federal pandemic relief money among their districts. While each senator got to suggest how they would want to spend \$4 million, each representative got \$2 million.

The requests are under consideration in Salem as the Legislature moves toward the end of session. While not set in stone, they do speak to the lawmakers' priorities.

Weber requested four capital projects, meaning they had to do with building, repairing or renovating. She asked for \$360,000 for Cannon Beach to use on resilience projects, \$420,000 for Astoria to use on the Astoria Library renovation,

\$400,000 for the Anderson Creek raw water transmission main for Nehalem and \$820,000 for well and wastewater treatment resilience for Bay City.

Weber said the projects align with her priorities of buoying water, sewer and earthquake and tsunami resilience.

The Tillamook Republican said \$2 million spread across House District 32 is not a lot of money, but she worked with Sen. Betsy Johnson and Rep. Brad Witt to look through all the projects submitted and to make sure most of the regions in their districts were covered.

"Some smaller areas were chosen because they don't have a lot of opportunities to be able to leverage any kind of dollars at the present time," Weber said. "I asked all the municipalities and different organizations in my area what was extremely important to them."

See Weber, Page A8



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Lisa Parks sits at a table in her new parklet outside of Brut Wine Bar in Astoria.

## In Astoria, parklets emerge as an option

The pilot program could change post-pandemic

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ  
*The Astorian*

If Lisa Parks charted it out, it would immediately be obvious when she installed the parklet outside Brut Wine Bar on 10th Street.

By-the-glass and bottle sales shot up and continue to climb. Most days she's open, old and new customers flock to the tables she's arranged in the semienlosed outdoor seating area. Others, drawn by the activity outside, seem more inclined to turn down the usually sleepy street and venture inside Parks' shop to select a bottle for their home or hotel room.

The chairs in the parklet might slant with the street and sometimes there's a light drizzle falling — Astoria in the spring — but no one seems to mind.

"It's like being in Europe," customers tell her.

Astoria loosened requirements for parklets last year as coronavirus pandemic restrictions cut into the ability of downtown bars and restaurants to serve customers and turn a profit.

The parklet program has stayed a pilot program since the City Council first launched it in 2015. The business owners who have taken advantage of "parklets: the pandemic edition" have invested sparingly — some barrels as tables here, basic seating there. They aren't sure what will be allowed when the pandemic ends and city leadership reviews — and possibly reconsiders — the program.

But for the summer, at least, the looser rules and the parklets are here to stay.

The lenient parklet policies, as well as relaxed rules on sidewalk seating, were intended to help businesses weather an unprecedented, tough economic situation, said Megan Leatherman, Astoria's community development director.

Even as things open up and tourists flood the city on sunny days and weekends, "there's still an economic hardship," she said, "and I don't see that going away this summer."

### Details could change

The details about what might be allowed in parklets could change post-pandemic. Under program guidelines, coverings are supposed to go away when the city ends its emergency declaration, Leatherman noted.

At that time, the entire pilot program also goes back to the City Council for evaluation "and to determine if parklets should continue in downtown Astoria," according to city documents.

Both Parks and Michael Angiletta, the primary owner of Blaylock's Whiskey Bar, where another parklet is located, are waiting for firmer guidelines before they invest more heavily in their parklets.

The components of the Blaylock's parklet are intentionally sparse for now.

"Would I like to make it nicer? You betcha," Angiletta said, "but I need some confidence that it's something we'll be able to continue to do in a sustainable fashion."

In other words: That the city isn't going to come by later and say something isn't allowed.

See Parklets, Page A8

### Knappa health curriculum now under review

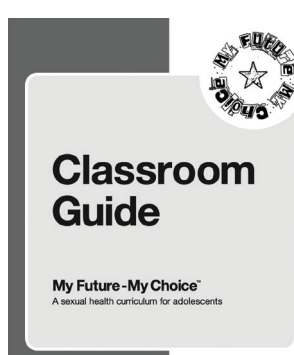
Parents raised concerns about content

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ  
*The Astorian*

The Knappa School District has suspended the bulk of a state-created middle school health curriculum that includes a basic sex education component after parents asked for a review of the course.

Besides lessons about human reproduction, the "My Future-My Choice" curriculum, intended for sixth grade students, covers information about puberty, bullying, marginalized groups, healthy and unhealthy relationships and issues of general and sexual consent, among other topics. It has been used in Knappa for nearly a decade.

But supplemental worksheets provided by teachers that touched on questions and discussion about biological gender and gen-



Oregon Department of Education  
**Knappa School District has suspended the use of a state middle school sexual health course after parents demanded a review.**

der identity raised concerns among parents.

Other parents said they did not receive the opt-out forms the school sends home with students ahead of the course and were surprised when they found out their children were going through the curriculum.

See Review, Page A8



Emily Lindblom/The Astorian

Seth Howard cuts the ribbon during the grand opening of The Magic Shop & More.

### New magic shop opens in Astoria

Magician offers tricks of the trade

By EMILY LINDBLOM  
*The Astorian*

With trick cards, gag gifts, wands and a professional magician, The Magic Shop & More opened on Commercial Street in Astoria in time for Memorial Day weekend.

Seth Howard, the owner, has been fascinated by magic tricks since the seventh grade, when his

science teacher held a card to his forehead and read his mind. Howard was so inspired that he watched David Copperfield and "The Bozo Show," and checked out all the books about magic from his school library.

He begged his teacher to show him how the card trick worked, and when he was told it was a trick deck of cards, he bought his own.

"The love of magic has stayed with me ever since," Howard said.

After moving to Oregon in 1999 from Kansas, Howard went on to work at the magic shop in Lloyd

Center in Portland and began performing in his own magic shows.

He moved to the North Coast and performed in the Festival of Dark Arts at Fort George Brewery in Astoria, among other local shows.

"I always wanted to open my own magic shop," Howard said.

See Magic shop, Page A8



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