

IN BRIEF

Westport boat ramp closes for construction

The Westport boat ramp will close on July 1 as Clatsop County begins construction of a new boating recreation facility.

The closure is expected to last into November while the county builds a new boat ramp, short-term tie-up dock and kayak launch, along with paved parking and restrooms.

The second phase of the project will include the construction of a picnic area and playground.

County dissolves housing authority

County commissioners, acting as the Clatsop County Housing Authority, voted unanimously Wednesday night to dissolve the agency.

The housing authority was established in 1974. The board contracted with the Northwest Oregon Housing Authority, which provides critical housing assistance to low-income residents in Clatsop, Columbia and Tillamook counties, in 2013 to provide management services.

The Clatsop County Housing Authority agreed in 2016 to transfer all properties and assets to the Northwest Oregon Housing Authority and dissolve upon completion of the transfer.

The county completed the transfer in May.

— *The Astorian*

Washington state's drought increasingly 'extreme'

The second-driest spring on record has pushed more than one-fifth of Washington state into an "extreme drought," the U.S. Drought Monitor reported.

In 127 years of record-keeping, only the spring of 1924 was drier statewide, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

South-central and southeast Washington are especially dry. The U.S. Department of Agriculture on Thursday predicted winter wheat production will decline by 28% and rated nearly half the state's pastures and rangeland "very poor."

— *Capital Press*

Feds could restrict West Coast salmon fishing to help orcas

Federal officials are proposing to curtail nontribal salmon fishing along the West Coast in especially bad years to help the Northwest's endangered killer whales.

NOAA Fisheries is taking public comment on the plan, which calls for restricting commercial and recreational salmon fishing when Chinook salmon forecasts are especially low.

The southern resident killer whales — the endangered orcas that spend much of their time in the waters between Washington state and British Columbia — depend heavily on depleted runs of fatty Chinook.

— *Associated Press*

DEATHS

June 12, 2021

DEAN, Janette Louise, 70, of Warrenton, died in Warrenton. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

June 11, 2021

PASSMORE, George Gordon, 91, of The Dalles, formerly of Astoria and Warrenton, died in The Dalles. Ocean View Funeral & Cremation Service of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

ON THE RECORD

Assault

• Amber Hope Duffy, 23, of Astoria, was arrested Saturday at McDonald's in Astoria for assault in the fourth degree and two counts of

aggravated harassment.

• John Henry, 43, of Sherwood, was arrested Saturday on S.E. Marlin Avenue in Warrenton for assault in the fourth degree.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

TUESDAY

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

Port of Astoria Commission, 4 p.m., budget adoption hearing and workshop, 10 Pier 1, Suite 209.

Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District Board, 5:15 p.m., 1225 Avenue A., Seaside.

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

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

Gearhart Small Business Committee, 6 p.m., (electronic meeting).

WEDNESDAY

Astoria City Council, 1 p.m., work session, City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

Seaside Tourism Advisory Committee, 3 p.m., 989 Broadway.

Gearhart Parks Master Plan Citizens Advisory Committee, 5:30 p.m., work session, (electronic meeting).

THURSDAY

Seaside Transportation Advisory Commission, 6 p.m., 989 Broadway.

the Astorian

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SAIL AWAY



TOP: Nansen Malin raises a flag, signaling that the race will begin in five minutes.

TOP INSET: The Escape Artist sails across the start line and heads for Port Angeles.

LEFT: Doug Pihlaja pulls the spinnaker up the mast.

BOTTOM: Twenty-four sailboats left Ilwaco for Port Angeles at the beginning of the Pacific Northwest Offshore Yacht Race on Thursday morning. Rage was the first to finish with line honours in just over 33 hours.

Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian



Game sparks real-world skills at Seaside library

By **KATHERINE LACAZE**
For The Astorian

SEASIDE — During the coronavirus pandemic, local educators searched for an activity that could take place remotely, keep students engaged, spark creativity and provide real-world problem-solving skills.

The fantasy role-playing game Dungeons & Dragons was the ideal solution.

"You have a chance to be creative," said Ann Branson, the assistant youth services and teen services librarian at the Seaside Public Library. "There's a lot of collaboration and teamwork. It teaches a lot of really good skills for kids — and all of us, too," she said. "It's a fun escape that's still healthy and productive. It's a great way to make friends."

The imaginative game was created in the 1970s and has taken slightly different forms over the past 50 years. In general, it consists of an adventure or story that is narrated by the dungeon master. The other players are the adventurers who contribute to a structured yet fundamentally open-ended narrative with an overarching theme or goal.

One of the first steps is



Dungeons & Dragons
The Sword Coast in the game Dungeons & Dragons.

building a character. Participants can choose from being an elf, dwarf, human or fairy, and accompanying titles, such as sorcerer, monk, barbarian, druid or bard. During the course of a game, the adventurers run into a variety of nonplayer characters, all created and controlled by the dungeon master, who provides information or assistance to the group, or are sometimes villains who must be defeated in combat.

When Branson was hired in September, the library's Teen Tuesdays program had been out of commission for several months because of the pandemic. She was tasked with helping to rebuild the program

and introduce activities that could be done in a virtual environment. The idea of Dungeons & Dragons was pitched during Branson's interview, and by November, she had incorporated the game into the monthly lineup for Teen Tuesdays.

At the Cannon Beach Academy, first and second

grade teacher Ryan Hull had come up with a similar idea. During the end of 2019-20 school year, when he was teaching third-through-fifth grade, he asked his students if they wanted to create characters for fun. Of the 23 in his class, 19 chose to. Throughout the following summer, he kept thinking, "I've got to do something about this."

At the start of the new school year, Hull invited the students to start an ongoing campaign, which means continuing the same story with the same characters from week to week with different quests or tasks along the way.

He originally had three students involved, but the group has since grown to seven kids between second and fifth grade. They meet once a week on Wednesday afternoons.

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