

IN BRIEF

Students play role in local grants

Astoria and Warrenton high school students helped grant \$45,000 to area nonprofits and school programs.

The funds were given to programs that included organizations that work with the homeless, such as Helping Hands, the Astoria Warming Center and Riverfolk; provide support and resources to people dealing with mental health issues; and work with students and the community.

The grants were a combination of money the students raised themselves with matching funding provided by the Harold & Arlene Schnitzer CARE Foundation. The students worked through CommuniCare, a yearlong leadership program designed to give high school students a chance to learn about issues affecting their community.

The students spent a year becoming independent grant makers, drafting a mission statement and reviewing applications from nonprofits, conducting interviews and ultimately deciding who would receive the requested funds.

The program was established 24 years ago.

Seaside Museum, Butterfield Cottage reopen

SEASIDE — A new look and new exhibits marked the reopening of the Seaside Museum & Historical Society and Butterfield Cottage.

Closed for a year as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, the board of directors kept working, preparing new exhibits and upgrades at the center and neighboring cottage, board president and City Councilor Steve Wright said at a reopening ceremony and ribbon-cutting this month presented by the Seaside Chamber of Commerce.

"I read a phrase about a year ago that I felt really described our status and that was we were in 'an arrested state of decay,'" Wright said. "We had good things. And they were nice a number of years ago. People did great jobs. And we just kind of stayed stagnant for a while.

"So last fall we got started and we figured, OK, a good way to start is to start tearing stuff out. And that's what we did."

Grant money and donations brought a new electrical system, lighting, blinds, fresh drywall and an open look to the lobby and colorful new displays, premiering with the Oregon Historical Society's traveling version of their permanent exhibition on modern state history, "Oregon Voices."

— The Astorian

White extremist views strong in Oregon despite majority opposition, poll finds

Nearly 4 in 10 Oregon residents agree with statements aligned with white extremists' views, according to a poll commissioned by a major progressive group.

A majority of state residents support the ideals of a multicultural democracy, according to the survey conducted by DHM Research.

The poll was commissioned by the Western States Center, a Portland-based nonprofit that says its mission is to monitor extremism in the region and work to "strengthen inclusive democracy."

The poll showed a "disturbingly" sizable population in Oregon from which extremists can gather followers and sympathizers, said Lindsay Schubiner, program director at the Western States Center.

"They are social movements spreading bigotry to attain political power," Schubiner said.

About 40% of respondents said they strongly or somewhat agreed with the statement "America must protect and preserve its white European heritage."

— Oregon Capital Bureau

DEATHS

June 15, 2021

BARR, Oliver Wendell, 91, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

June 14, 2021

GRECO, Robert Michael, 81, of Gearhart, formerly of Sequim, Washington, died in Gearhart. Caldwell's Funeral & Cremation Arrangement Center of Seaside is in charge of the arrangements.

June 11, 2021

KELLEY, Thalia, 52, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Hughes-Ransom Mor-

tuary is in charge of the arrangements.

June 9, 2021

LEE, Joanne, 80, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements.

June 7, 2021

SCHMIDT, Patricia, 58, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements.

June 4, 2021

RABAR, Alex, 48, of Seaside, died in Seaside. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

THURSDAY

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

In Seaside, trash creates headache for public works

By R.J. MARX
The Astorian

SEASIDE — A moth-eaten, moisture-drenched couch and loveseat. Wooden pallet boards with nails. A refrigerator door. A sinking boat.

"In the last year, the city of Seaside had some real issues with our residents actually leaving furniture, appliances and anything else in town," Public Works Director Dale McDowell said. "Where we could be doing improvements in the parks, we're taking care of somebody's trash."

McDowell has a rogue's gallery of photos.

"That's at the beach," he said, showing a picture of overflowing garbage bags in a pile of sand. "Someone was done for the day visiting the beach and they just brought their garbage. They dumped it by one of the restrooms, their chairs included."

A discarded couch and loveseat had signs marked "free" in Cartwright Park underneath the picnic shelter.

"We have to haul them to the dump," McDowell said. "Unfortunately, all those charges get charged to the parks."

Another photo showed a boat filled with fishing floats, the seat upholstery ripped, hull damaged, engine in disrepair.

"This one gentleman got the boat off of Craigslist, and the boat, naturally, was free," McDowell said. "He tried to launch it at Quat Park — it immediately sank. Our crews got called in after hours to pick this thing up. We still have it to this day because he doesn't have any money to get it out of so-called impound and do anything with it."

Right now, the boat is parked behind the public works building. "This has to get cut up and then put into a container and shipped out because it's fiberglass,"



Photos by R.J. Marx/The Astorian

Seaside Public Works Director Dale McDowell alongside a boat discarded alongside the river at Cartwright Park.



Items left outside the recycling center in Seaside.

McDowell said.

Around the corner, the recycling center on Avenue S is designed for cardboard and glass only, a message posted on recycling bins and fencing states. Nearly every night, garbage bags or refuse are left outside the gates after they close. "Someone dropped a toilet off," McDowell said. "I'm not quite sure who's going to reuse that toilet."

The City Council is considering closing the center because of the expense of disposing unwanted gar-

bage, he said.

"I really don't want to shut the recycle center down, because the majority of people are using it for its intended purpose," McDowell said. "There's a few that are impacting a lot of people by dumping this stuff off and leaving it. It's affecting our parks budget. We only have so much money to go around. We're basically garbage men."

Homeowners should think twice before leaving items on the city's streets, even if

well-intentioned.

"That's a great excuse for not having to take something up to the dump and pay for it yourself," McDowell said. "I'm not sure if anyone understands the homeless don't need five microwaves. They don't need one microwave. They have no electrical power, right? We really need to educate our residents that that's not how you'd get rid of things."

McDowell said he will also propose a garbage day for residents to dispose of their unwanted waste. Public works also teams with the Seaside Community Cleanup, a group of volunteers working to keep the nearby Mill Ponds clean.

Residents can also bring items to recycle to the Astoria Transfer Station. Homeowners can contact Recology for special household pickups.

"You live here because you like this area," McDowell said. "Your kids grow up here. You want them to stay. I want to make sure that everything is set set up for them to have a lifetime here themselves."

Seaside Helicopters owner flies high to retirement

By R.J. MARX
The Astorian

SEASIDE — Gary Turel, the owner and pilot for Seaside Helicopters, is the city's original whirlybird.

He hosted the first in-person "Good Morning Seaside" since the coronavirus pandemic, with about 15 members of the Seaside Chamber of Commerce joining him near the tarmac.

A Tigard resident, Turel surprised them in announcing he will be retiring.

"There's a point in time with just like airline pilots, really other pilots, you should probably get out of the game before somebody asks you to," he said. "And so that time for me will be the end of this year."

Turel learned to fly by getting a job at the Hillsboro Airport when he was 15, earning his pilot's license before his driver's license. He was in the Oregon Air National Guard for nine years. He and his family were in the income tax preparations business for many years and owned Columbia Turel Bookkeeping. Seaside Helicopters launched in 1990. Turel purchased the business in 2001.

"This is the 19th year that I've had a heliport here," Turel said. "And last year I shut down for 13 months during the COVID. I just felt that was the wise thing to do."

Liftoff resumed about a month ago and business has been sky high since. "We found that demand is actually been so great that we're gonna have to curtail on occasion just a little bit of that," he said. "We're having



R.J. Marx/The Astorian

Gary Turel, the owner of Seaside Helicopters, stands with Tammi and Bruce Rath, owners of Captain Kid Amusement Park.

record days in terms of what we did over the (Memorial Day) weekend."

Seaside Helicopters offers four basic flights, from a six-minute run over the coastline to a 18- to 20- minute flight for \$165.

Turel's Bell Jet Ranger helicopter can carry four passengers in addition to the pilot. Turel does most of the flying, joined by Gearhart's Craig Looms — a retired Los Angeles Police Department pilot and U.S. Navy fighter pilot — and Dan Leary, a retired U.S. Coast Guard commander.

Bruce and Tammi Rath, the owners of the neighboring Captain Kid Amusement Park, will take over the location, he said.

"The job that they've done with that fun park is incredible," Turel said.

He sees the Rathes as the

perfect successors for the business.

"It's hard to find somebody that can buy a helicopter and buy a piece of property," he said. "The perfect fit is for the expansion in some way or another of the fun park. They've proven themselves by what they've done."

Turel said there are a lot of people interested in keeping the helicopter aloft. "But it takes somebody that is going to be here all the time,

all the work that goes into this to keep it safe. And that's the big thing about this is keeping it safe. And that's what I want to finish this year up with is a very, very safe year," he said. Turel figures he's taken over 100,000 people flying. "So many people have their first helicopter ride here," he said. "They view the beautiful colors, see the contrast of the mountain range and the coast. If the weather changes, one day looks different than another day. I especially get delight out of the first flight of the day. And so I just feel very blessed. And I hope that I've been able to be somewhat of a goodwill ambassador for the city of Seaside and the whole area."

During the season, Seaside Helicopters opens at 11 a.m. Flights are first come, first served; reservations are not accepted.

For visitors coming from a distance, "Have a plan B," Turel said, as flights can get canceled for weather conditions, fatigue, or if he thinks something isn't right about the helicopter.

"Everybody seems to understand, he said. "As a matter of fact, they thank me for being careful."

the Astorian

Established July 1, 1873
(USPS 035-000)

Published Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday by EO Media Group, 949 Exchange St., PO Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103 Telephone 503-325-3211, 800-781-3211 or Fax 503-325-6573. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Astorian, PO Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103-0210

DailyAstorian.com

MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
MEMBER CERTIFIED AUDIT OF CIRCULATIONS, INC.

Circulation phone number:
800-781-3214

Periodicals postage paid at Astoria, OR

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Printed on recycled paper

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Effective January 12, 2021

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All School Reunion
High School Cafeteria

All Teachers Invited

July 24, 2021 11:00 am-4:00 pm
Light refreshments & Coffee