

IN BRIEF

Girl dies after being pulled into sea off Cannon Beach

A girl died after she was swept out to sea Thursday afternoon by a tide north of Haystack Rock in Cannon Beach.

Officials say the girl was located by a U.S. Coast Guard aircrew and brought back to shore by a jet ski and rescue swimmer. She was flown to a hospital.

The principal at the girl's Portland school told parents that she died.

Highway 26 paving project to cause delays for drivers

A paving project on U.S. Highway 26 is expected to cause delays beginning Sunday evening.

Single-lane closures between state Highway 53 and the Nehalem River Bridge will last from 7 p.m. to 8 a.m. from Sunday through Thursday each week.

The project will replace the asphalt and add new guardrails, signs and Americans with Disabilities Act ramps at the end of the bridges.

Wahl steps down from Seaside school board

SEASIDE — A.J. Wahl has stepped down from her position on the Seaside school board.

Wahl, of Gearhart, was unopposed for the Zone 3, Position 1 seat in the May election.

But Wahl won't serve. As an attorney and mediator, she was named judge pro tem for the Clatsop County Circuit Court.

In her resignation letter to the board, she said rules of Oregon judicial conduct prevent her from serving in public office.

Wahl is an attorney and mediator for Wahl LLC. She will still be eligible to continue to serve on the school district's budget committee.

— The Astorian

Oregon legalizes human composting

Gov. Kate Brown has signed a bill passed by the Legislature legalizing human composting.

Brown signed House Bill 2574 on Tuesday, which will legalize what's also known as natural organic reduction, KOIN-TV reported. It also clarifies rules surrounding alkaline hydrolysis, known as aqua cremation. The law goes into effect July 1, 2022.

State Rep. Pam Marsh, from southern Jackson County, who co-sponsored the bill with Rep. Brian Clem, said she decided to sponsor the bill because her constituents are interested in alternative after-death options.

"My colleagues could see as well that in addition to providing families with a choice, it also is a business opportunity," she said.

Lawmakers mark Juneteenth by reviving 'abolition amendment'

As the nation this week made Juneteenth a federal holiday, honoring the end of the enslavement of Black people, lawmakers are reviving calls to end a loophole in the Constitution that allowed another form of slavery — forced labor for those convicted of some crimes — to thrive.

Oregon U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley and Georgia U.S. Rep. Nikema Williams reintroduced legislation Thursday to revise the 13th Amendment, which bans enslavement or involuntary servitude except as a form of criminal punishment. That exception, which has been recognized since 1865, has led to the common practice of forced prison labor.

Social justice advocates say it created generations of Black families touched by mass incarceration and poverty and that the ramifications are still being felt today. Juneteenth seemed like the appropriate time to address this "huge piece of systemic racism in the middle of our Constitution," Merkley, a Democrat, said.

"At the moment that we are celebrating, if you will, the 13th Amendment and the end of slavery and its eventual announcement ... we should at the same time recognize that the 13th Amendment was flawed," Merkley said. "It enabled states to arrest people for any reason, convict them and put them back into slavery."

— Associated Press

DEATHS

June 17, 2021

WELLS, Robert Ernest Jr., 71, of Warrenton, died in Warrenton. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

June 15, 2021

BRISENDINE, Holly, 42, of Seaside, died in Seaside. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements.

June 3, 2021

CLAUSEN, Dwane, 82, of Warrenton, died in Warrenton. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements.

GILBERTSON, Ace Barry, 74, of Warrenton, died in Seaside. Ocean View Funeral & Cremation Service of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

MONDAY

Knappa School District Board, 5:30 p.m., (electronic meeting). Astoria City Council, 7 p.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

TUESDAY

Astoria Planning Commission, 5:30 p.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St. Warrenton City Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 225 S. Main Ave.

the Astorian

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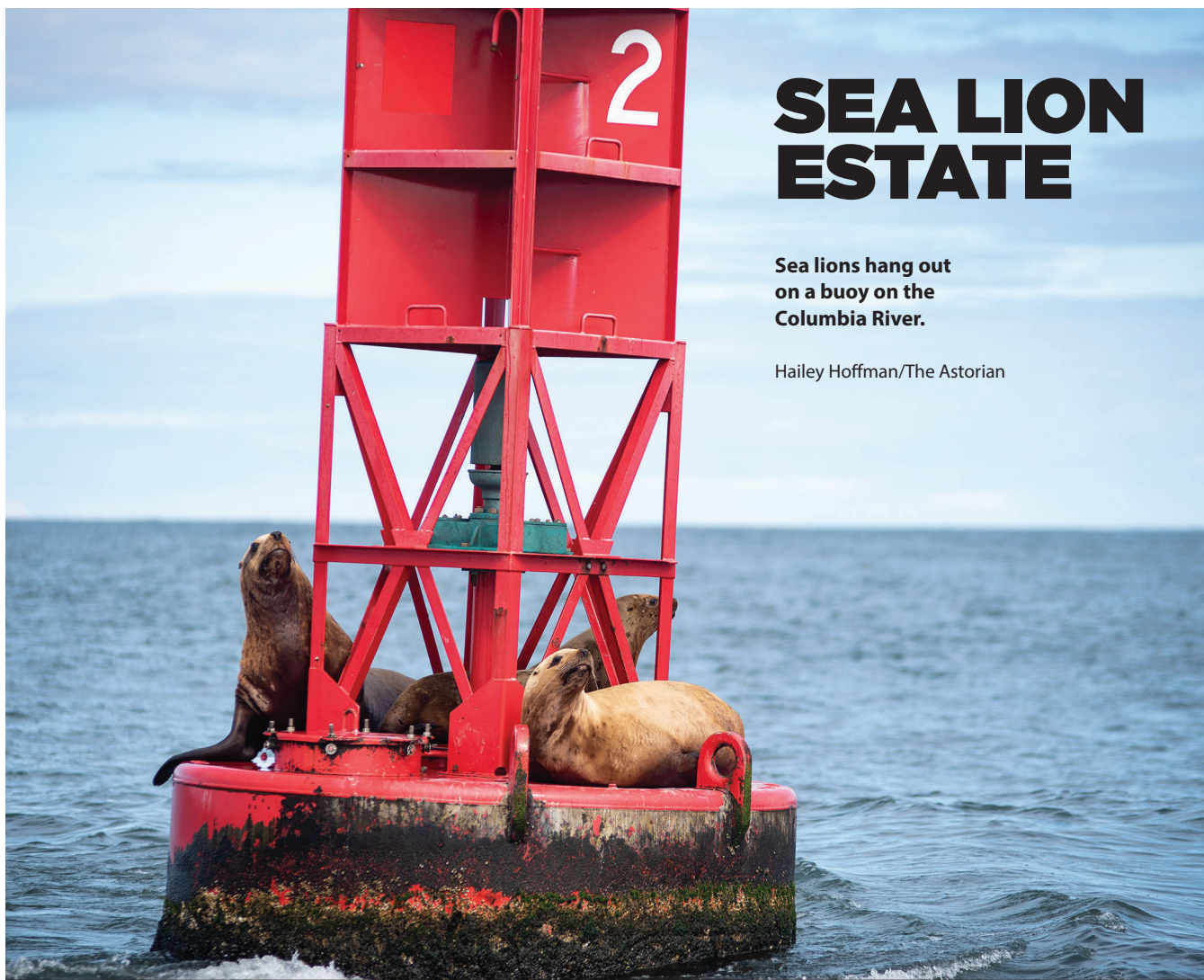
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SEA LION ESTATE

Sea lions hang out on a buoy on the Columbia River.

Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Stuntman: 'I put my physical well-being on the line'

Continued from Page A1

ball player for 30 years. Your body is being hammered. It takes a toll. But it's all relationships and ego."

Jensen's stunts appear in movies including Arnold Schwarzenegger's 1990 sci-fi classic "Total Recall" and "Speed," the 1994 Sandra Bullock bomb-on-a-bus drama.

But creating thrills for moviegoers came at a cost. Some 17 surgeries on a misshapen knee that bulges through his jeans, plus ugly burn scars on both his forearms, attest to a life of falling from bikes and buildings or handling flames and explosives.

At 63, he has had to retire.

As he drove his motor home north from California, Jensen parked in Kelso and jumped on his motorcycle. Riding west through Wahkiakum County, he discovered his new home. He described scenic State Route 4 as spectacular. "I said, 'I want to live here,'" he recalled.

Now settled, Jensen is embarked on his new project. He has started a foundation called Soldiers to Cinema, using his Hollywood contacts to train disabled veterans for jobs on movie sets.

Learning the trade

His story began with a preteen boy admiring Steve McQueen in the 1971 motorcycle documentary "On Any Sunday." Jensen grew up in California's Orange County, racing motorcycles and cars through his teens then getting into the construction industry, building homes for such notables as California Angels baseball star Rod Carew.

In Hawaii, he observed Jack Lord's crew filming "Hawaii Five-0." "I saw them doing motorcycle stunts and thought, 'I could do that,'" he said.

Jensen had already earned his Screen Actors Guild credential filming a commercial for Yamaha. He moved to Los Angeles to break into Hollywood.

At 6 feet, 5 inches tall, he had an advantage. "There were three other big guys. The only other guys my size were old cowboys and they'd say, 'Let the kid do it,'" he said. "I was very fortunate and my career took off."

Jensen thirsted to learn every aspect. "From Day 1 in the film industry, I was wanting to direct and would like that job," he said.

He enrolled in the University of Southern California film school. On days when stunts were not required, he returned to the set, observed directors and helped out. His career advanced by earning credentials with the Stunt-



Sean Connery, left, is pictured with stuntman Jeff Jensen wearing identical costumes on the set of the 1987 movie 'The Untouchables.'

men's Association of Motion Pictures and the Actors Studio in New York.

He savored travel to exotic locales. "I have been on every continent except South America, even under the polar ice cap," he said. "The places that they paid me to go! I had the most amazing career. But my injuries caught up with me."

Early stunt work was on TV shows like "Walker, Texas Ranger," as well as Chuck Norris' 1983 movie "Lone Wolf McQuade." He fell off a seven-story building in "The Fall Guy," and appeared in episodes of "Falcon Crest," "Knight Rider" and "Magnum, P.I." He fought with Jackie Chan on "Cannonball Run 2" in 1984 and Sylvester Stallone in the 1988 "Rambo III" movie, where he was second-unit director. He performed stunts in the 1989 "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" with Harrison Ford.

Fighting — or pretending to fight — meant developing eye and hand coordination to effectively "pull punches."

"The worst thing you can do is hit an actor or hit the camera," he said. "Fighting is all choreography for the camera. It's all rehearsing, blocking. It is all a big con."

On rare occasions where performers actually hit Jensen, he made sure he was paid extra.

Another inside secret is how stunt coordinators plan car chases and crashes. Jensen is amused to reveal how they use tiny "Matchbox" toy cars to help multiple drivers learn their moves before they did the real thing for the rolling camera. "We are creating illusions. We are not crashing," he said.

Doubling for the stars

Jensen cherishes memories of working with big-name stars, especially those who recognized his skill. "I put my physical well-being on the line so they can be safe," he said. A treasured 1987 snapshot from the set of "The Untouchables" shows Sean Connery and his double — Jensen, with identical costume and mustache. Another shows him with Donald Sutherland, who he describes as "very thoughtful."

The contrast in scenes ran the gamut. In "Running Man" in 1987 with Schwarzenegger, he was a motorcycle

rider who attacked brandishing chainsaws then flew over the handlebars. Doubling for John Goodman in the 1994 "Flinstones" movie, meant wearing a dress when Fred put on a disguise.

One spectacular stunt was for Lundgren's 1992 adventure "Universal Soldier." The scene called for Lundgren's character to Australian rappel (standing, facing down) 650 feet down the Hoover Dam on the Nevada-Arizona border.

"I wore five layers of gloves," Jensen said, recalling meticulous preparation that included making sure the rope was long enough. "If I trip and fall, I die. You have to lean out at a 90-degree angle. I did it six times, once with a camera on my head."

Jensen appeared in three of the "Star Trek" movies, but laments the change to computer generated images in many of today's films. "I love making movies," he said. "I hate the business of movies," alluding to how money is wasted, "but I love the process."

He worked as second-unit director for several. "We get to blow up all the buildings. We are like the 'red-haired stepchildren.' But you have to adapt your style to each director," he said.

Director Peter Masterson's 1991 movie "Convicts" was a farm drama starring Robert Duvall and James Earl Jones.

Jensen was filming Duvall ride his horse to his planned mark, then turn. Jensen said he amazed himself by asking Duvall to do it again, but make sure his character appeared to make a conscious decision to change direction. He was relieved when the seasoned actor agreed to the validity of filming a second take.

"It was my first day on the set as a union director!" Jensen laughed.

Other second-unit work

included "The Indian Runner" (1991), "Sub Down" (1997) and "The Watcher" (2000). He directed and wrote the films "Fallacy" (2004) and "Velocity" (2007). The latter highlighted his love of Moto Grand Prix Championship motorcycle racing. "High Speed," which he directed in 2002, was a British motorcycle racing drama.

No regrets

Jensen was still racing professionally until about five years ago. A 2009 documentary, "The First, Last Race" features his love for racing, despite his injuries. In an online report, an admirer described in gory detail how he fell off his cycle during the grueling Pike's Peak International Hill Climb, but insisted on riding his BMW down the steep hill with a broken collar bone. "If I crash, I don't bounce anymore" Jensen quipped.

He isn't happy with the injuries, but has no real regrets. "I had a life of real adrenaline, racing and then stunt work. Filmmaking is a rush," he said, lamenting the need to stop. "I was cut off from the drug of adrenaline."

His father, who died last year, encouraged him. "He taught me to pursue all my dreams. He asked me if I would do it over. The only thing maybe I would start directing full time sooner," Jensen said.

On one shoot, he knew he was going to need help to continue working so he arranged to visit his orthopedic surgeon between scenes. "I should have stopped doing it," he said. "But you build relationships and don't want to let anyone down."

Satisfaction isn't the only reward. "It is a lifetime of work that keeps paying off," Jensen said. Somewhere in Hollywood, a clerk with a calculator determines residuals — additional contracted payments each time a film is shown. Jensen said on one recent night, he turned on his TV and discovered he had eight films being shown. "I just got a stack of 107 residual checks," he laughed. "One was for 8 cents."

He teases that if he ever writes his autobiography, the title will be, "Fall down, pick up check: The life of a Hollywood stuntman."

VOLUNTEER PICK OF THE WEEK



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