



INSIDE

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Bikes and boxes cover the back room of Bikes and Beyond.

Photos by Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

## Bike shops struggling to meet high demand

By ETHAN MYERS  
The Astorian

Ivan Gonzalez gestured to a brand new mountain bike he was assembling.

"This thing right here will be gone by what, Friday?" he said to Scott Lee, the owner of Bikes and Beyond.

"He builds this bike today, it will be gone tomorrow," Lee said.

When the coronavirus pandemic arrived last year and lockdowns were put into place, bike shops were hit with an instant wave of demand.

A year-and-a-half later, many shops on the North Coast and across the country are still struggling to keep up. On top of high demand, supply chain issues have prevented retailers from being able to satisfy customers.

"I have been in the business for 30 years and I have never seen anything like it," Lee said.

Lee said he would often spend time late at night searching for bikes online for his Astoria shop. Thanks to good connections, he was able to acquire a fair amount of bikes, but they would sell almost instantly.

"We sold every bike we had and every bike we could get our



Bikes and Beyond owner Scott Lee checks on a bike in the back of the shop.

hands on," he said.

Lee said he receives calls from all over the country and gets people driving down from other states in order to get their hands on a specific bike. When he isn't able to supply a customer with the bike they are looking for, he encourages them to call around and hope to get lucky.

### National sales

The Oregonian reported last week that national bikes sales

from May 2020 to April grew 57% and that March bike sales were the highest ever recorded, according to Dirk Sorenson of The NPD Group.

While demand has varied over the past year, Lee said it never fully died off like it typically does in the wintertime.

"It came early in spring and it's really never let up," Lee said. "It smoothed out a bit in the summer

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## Police survey shows concerns about homeless

Community outreach could improve relations

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ  
The Astorian

As national demonstrations and conversations about the role of police continue, homelessness emerged as a top concern in a community survey sent out by the Astoria Police Department.

Police Chief Geoff Spalding hoped the survey, sent out in June, would help the department better understand the community's needs and what it desired from police, as well as reveal perceptions of the department and its officers.

He was not surprised that issues around homelessness became a dominant theme. Calls related to the homeless often place

a strain on police response and can tie up already limited resources, particularly when the calls also involve drug and alcohol abuse or mental health challenges.

In July alone, Astoria police responded to 80 calls related to homelessness. The department's usual monthly average hovers around 40 calls, Spalding told the City Council at a work session Monday night to discuss the survey results.

Homelessness is an increasingly visible dilemma for many cities across the country. Astoria is no different. In recent years, city leaders have considered and discussed illegal camping, the lack of affordable housing, scant mental health and addiction treatment resources and how these all impact a growing homeless population.

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## Historic Gimre's changes hands

Iconic store will stay in the family

By ETHAN MYERS  
The Astorian

After 37 years of ownership, Pete Gimre is retiring and selling historic Gimre's Shoes downtown. His buyer has a familiar name and face — his brother, Jon.

The store, opened in Astoria in 1892 by Pete and Jon's grandfather, Sven Gimre, is one of the North Coast's signature retailers. The business was eventually passed on to their father, who then passed it along to them in 1984. They opened another location in Hillsboro the following year.

About six years ago,

Pete Gimre said he got tired of the traveling between locations, so he and his brother agreed to split responsibilities. Jon Gimre would run the store in Hillsboro, as well as two New Balance stores they operated, and Pete Gimre would run the Astoria location on 14th Street.

Pete Gimre officially retired on Sunday.

Due to the extensive family history within the company, he considered it common sense to pass it along to his brother.

"We always had a desire to keep everything in the family and my first thought was for it to go to my brother," he said. "It really didn't go beyond that."

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## Driven by delta variant, coronavirus cases surge

By GARY WARNER, GRIFFIN REILLY and BRYCE DOLE  
Oregon Capital Bureau,  
The Astorian and East Oregonian

The stronger, more contagious delta variant of the coronavirus is driving infections and sickness across Oregon, state statistics show.

The Oregon Health Authority reported 1,575 new virus cases on Tuesday, including 19 in Clatsop County, which has recorded dozens of new cases over the past several weeks.

Margo Lalich, the county's interim public health director, told county commissioners at a work session Tuesday of a handful of local outbreaks but did not provide any details.

Columbia Memorial Hospital in Astoria has experienced an increase in virus patients and requests for virus testing.

"CMH has seen an increase in COVID-19 patients in the last few weeks, both in our inpatient and outpatient departments," Nancee Long,



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

Thousands of fans packed the Whisky Music Fest in Pendleton in July to hear country music star Toby Keith.

a hospital spokeswoman, said in an email. "Over the past week, we have had between four and six inpatients, depending on the day. There is also an influx of people coming into an emergency room or urgent care asking for COVID testing.

"We have confirmed positives in both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals. The vast majority of patients who are very sick with COVID and are requiring hospitalization are unvaccinated."

The hospital strongly encour-

aged people to get vaccinated to protect themselves and others from the virus. The hospital also urged people who are not showing signs of the virus but believe they have been exposed to remain home and quarantine. People seeking testing, the

'THE MORE CONTAGIOUS DELTA VARIANT HAS CHANGED EVERYTHING.'

Gov. Kate Brown

hospital said, should first contact the county Public Health Department.

"Coming to the hospital only puts you at risk for more exposure," Long said. "If you have a high fever, shortness of breath, or uncontrolled coughing, please reach out to your provider first. If you don't have a primary provider, please use the urgent cares at either CMH, Urgent Care Northwest, or Providence Seaside for assistance.

"We must keep our emergency rooms available for those who are extremely ill or injured."

Gov. Kate Brown announced Wednesday that the state would issue a new rule requiring personnel in health care settings to show proof of vaccination or undergo weekly testing for COVID-19. The rule

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