



Gary Peterson Photography

People use wheelchairs to navigate Fort Stevens State Park.

## Accessibility: A huge first step to showing people what accessibility and inclusivity in recreation can look like

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trails, but they are often little more than a short paved path from a parking lot to a viewpoint, said Jennifer Wilde, the director of outreach and development at Adventures Without Limits.

“Some people want to go for a longer hike than that, especially if you’re going to drive a couple hours to a place,” she said.

“If people go to Fort Stevens, they want to see the shipwreck, they want to see the battery, they want to get on the water at Coffen-

bury Lake. The trails in the park are nice and extensive, but extending that to identifying the other activities that people are doing in the park and the small steps that can be taken to make those more accessible for people that may face barriers otherwise.”

One of those small steps, according to Wilde, is to improve imagery and visual descriptions of sites and trails rather than labeling them as accessible under the Americans with Disabilities Act. More elaborate descriptions that display a broader understanding of the spec-

trum of comfort that many with disabilities have, she said, can give people a better understanding of what to expect from a recreational experience.

Events like the one at Fort Stevens are a huge first step to showing people what accessibility and inclusivity in recreation can look like, García Fullana said.

“This particular event is allowing for the word to spread and state that there is a need for activities like this, because there is an interest in participating,” she said. “Especially living in Oregon.”

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**Inés García Fullana** | Person who has spent her life using a wheelchair, living with spina bifida, a congenital defect in the spinal column

## Dix: ‘I would give anything if this didn’t happen’

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Hartmann, who placed her mother with Hughes-Ransom Mortuary & Crematory in Astoria, describes the day her mother died as the worst of her life.

“I spent the entire weekend with my mother. She struggled for two days until she finally passed,” said Hartmann, who lives in Warrenton and works as a night auditor. “I just wanted everything to go smoothly and have everything taken care of so I didn’t have to feel at loose ends. And she just made it feel like it was no big deal.

“I would give anything if this didn’t happen,” she said.

Dix fits the description of Clatsop County’s 13th virus death of the pandemic.

The Astorian is aware

of other potential virus deaths based on information from families and indicators from funeral homes during the surge linked to the delta variant. While some virus deaths have been publicly reported soon after they happen, there have been lags of days, weeks and even months for others.

Columbia Memorial Hospital in Astoria has also said that several patients who did not have the virus have died because they were unable to be transferred to other hospitals for specialized care due to the number of virus patients.

Local deaths — whether linked to virus or not — have put pressure on funeral homes.

Hughes-Ransom, for example, shared 18 death notices with The Astorian over the weekend covering Aug. 16 to Saturday.

## Firehouse: Vote set for the November ballot

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formal contracts subject to bond approval,” Zimmerman wrote in response to questions from the newspaper.

The City Council turned to Highlands Lane after potential obstacles for the project at the High Point location.

The city is working with planners to bring the 30-acre Cottages at Gearhart subdivision off Highlands Lane into the city’s urban growth boundary in a land swap for acreage in the city’s “no-build” zone near the ocean.

The developers, Cottages at Gearhart LLC, must also receive city approval for a subdivision containing four units per acre, twice as many as permitted by the county.

If the 20-year bond measure is approved by voters, the firehouse could see a four- to six-month design process in 2022 with construction starting in 2023. The city estimates the bonds would cost property owners \$1,052 per \$1,000 of assessed value per year.

At this point in the pro-



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

**Gearhart is considering a new firehouse off Highlands Lane.**

cess, a city likely wouldn’t have final architectural drawings, geotechnical data or other details for such a project, City Attorney Peter Watts said.

“All of that work would only occur after voters have authorized the bonds necessary to build the building,” he said. “I have never seen the kind of information they are requesting included in a ballot title.”

Normally in a ballot title challenge, Watts said, the challengers provide an alternate ballot title to the court that they want the court to adopt. The judge can confirm the city’s ballot title, order the alternate to be used or a combination of the two.

Because of the word limit of the ballot summary, it is impossible for the city to address every possible

issue, Watts said.

The idea is to inform voters of what the bonds are going to be used for and how much is authorized.

“Those are the items that would decide whether they could decide whether to vote ‘yes’ or ‘no,’” Watts said. “My goal as the city attorney is simply to inform the voters so they can make an informed decision on the question.”