

## IN BRIEF

## Virus case tied to Lewis and Clark Elementary School

Less than a week after the school year began for the Astoria School District, some students at Lewis and Clark Elementary School are in quarantine because of the coronavirus.

In an email to parents and school district staff, the district said that someone associated with the school tested positive for COVID-19 and is recovering at home. The school district declined to specify whether the person is a student or staff member.

Superintendent Craig Hoppes told The Astorian that the number of students distance learning for the next two weeks because of the virus case is less than half a dozen.

He stressed that this does not necessarily mean the children in isolation caught the virus, only that they may have had close contact with the virus case. These students are in touch with their teachers and will be provided work electronically and by packet.

"We have trained for that in case this had to happen," Hoppes said.

In a written statement, Hoppes said: "I am acutely aware that parents have received a notice regarding COVID-19 cases within the schools each day, for the last few days. It is important that families know that, although concerning, the cases we have been handling are isolated and have not spread within the school community.

"We would like to remind parents to monitor symptoms closely and keep children home if they are showing any signs of infectious illness. We thank you for your partnership in keeping our schools safe and healthy."

## Hatchery coho retention reopens on Columbia River

Oregon and Washington state fishery managers have reopened a portion of the Columbia River to hatchery coho retention.

Fishing is open from the Tongue Point/Rocky Point line upstream to the Warrior Rock/Bachelor Island line.

Salmon fishing in this area and up to Bonneville Dam had closed after higher-than-expected impacts on a key salmon stock, the listed lower Columbia River natural origin tulle fall Chinook.

Fishermen are allowed a bag limit of two hatchery coho. All Chinook salmon must be released. Steelhead may not be retained until Nov. 1.

Fishery managers also added sturgeon retention days in the main stem Columbia River from the Wauna Powerlines to Bonneville Dam, including the Cowlitz River.

## Warrenton approves lease transfer of Sturgeon Paul's

WARRENTON — The lease transfer of Sturgeon Paul's from Paul Leitch to fishing guide James Fowler was approved by city commissioners on Tuesday night after Leitch took care of issues with the property.

The transfer was held up in August after an inspection found that the buildings, which sit on city land in Hammond, had multiple lease violations. Leitch also had outstanding personal property taxes. Commissioners said at an August meeting that the transfer would not be approved until those violations were cured.

In a report to the city, Fowler said his plans for the property are to "acquire the shop as soon as possible and continue to serve our current sport and commercial clients while also attracting new clients through the next couple months as a record salmon run passes through our community."

— The Astorian

## ON THE RECORD

## Strangulation

• Steven Gerard Larsen, 59, of Warrenton, was indicted on June 15 for strangulation and attempted assault in the fourth degree constituting domestic violence. The crimes allegedly occurred in April.

## Burglary

• Miles Alexander Berry, 19, of Portland, was indicted on Tuesday for burglary in the first degree, two counts of theft in the first degree, unlawful possession of a firearm, criminal trespass in the second degree

and criminal mischief in the second degree. The crimes allegedly occurred in August.

## Mail theft

• James Evan Osburn, 41, of Gearhart, was arrested on Thursday morning for three counts of attempting to commit mail theft. The crimes took place on Seppa Road in Astoria.

## DUI

• Lorenzo F. Melgoza, 35, of Astoria, was arrested Friday at Marine Drive and 14th Street in Astoria for driving under the influence of intoxicants.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

## MONDAY

**Astoria City Council**, 7 p.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

## TUESDAY

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

**Seaside Planning Commission**, 6 p.m., work session, City Hall, 989 Broadway.

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

## the Astorian

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## SALTY SPIRIT



R.J. Marx/The Astorian

Reenactors brought back the spirit of the Corps of Discovery over the weekend by making salt in Seaside.

## Overwhelmed by virus patients, hospitals postpone surgeries

By ERIK NEUMANN  
Jefferson Public Radio

It's a bad time to get sick in Oregon. That's what many doctors are telling their patients and the public, as hospitals full of COVID-19 patients have been forced to postpone some treatments of other medical conditions.

Charlie Callagan had his scheduled bone marrow transplant postponed. Now he's waiting for a new surgery date, hunkered down at his home in Merlin, a small Rogue Valley town.

Though he looks perfectly healthy, sitting in the smoky summer air on his outdoor deck, Callagan, 72, has multiple myeloma, a blood cancer of the bone marrow.

"It affects the immune system; it affects the bones," he says. "I had a PET (positron emission tomography) scan that described my bones as looking 'kind of Swiss cheese-like.'"

Callagan is a retired National Park Service ranger. Fifty years ago, he served in Vietnam. This spring, doctors identified his cancer as one of those linked to exposure to Agent Orange, the defoliant used during the war.

In recent years, Callagan has consulted maps showing hot spots where Agent Orange was sprayed in Vietnam.

"It turns out the airbase I was in was surrounded," he said. "They sprayed all over."

A few weeks ago, Callagan was driving to Oregon Health & Science University in Portland for a bone marrow transplant, a major procedure that requires intensive follow-up tests and monitoring for complications.

But during the drive, Callagan got a call from his doctor.

"They're like, 'We were told this morning that we have to cancel the surgeries we had planned,'" he said.

Callagan's surgery was postponed until further notice because the hospital was full. That's the story at many hospitals in Oregon where they've been flooded with COVID-19 patients.

OHSU spokesperson Erik Robinson said the hospital, which is the state's only academic medical center and



Erik Neumann/Jefferson Public Radio

Charlie Callagan's bone marrow transplant for multiple myeloma was postponed at the last minute because Oregon hospitals are overwhelmed with treating COVID-19 patients.

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Charlie Callagan

serves patients from across the region, has had to postpone numerous surgeries and procedures in the wake of the delta surge. "Surgical postponements initially impacted patients who needed an overnight hospital stay, but more recently has impacted all outpatient surgeries and procedures," Robinson wrote.

Callagan says his bone marrow transplant has not yet been rescheduled.

Such delays can have consequences, according to Dr. Mujahid Rizvi, who leads the oncology clinic handling Callagan's care.

"With cancer treatment, sometimes there's a window of opportunity where you can go in and potentially cure the patient," Rizvi said. "If you wait too long, the cancer can spread. And that can affect prognosis and can make a potentially curable disease incurable."

Such high stakes for delaying treatment at hospitals right now extends beyond cancer care.

"I've seen patients get ready to have their open-heart surgery that day. I've seen patients (who) have brain tumor with visual changes, or someone with lung cancer, and their procedures are canceled that day and they have to come back another day," said Dr. Kent Dauterman, a cardiologist and co-director of the regional cardiac center in Medford. "You always hope they come back."

In early September, according to Dauterman, the local hospital had 28 patients who were waiting for open heart surgery, 24 who needed pacemakers, and 22 who were awaiting lung surgeries. He said during normal times, there is no wait.

"I don't want to be dramatic, it's just there's plenty

of other things killing Oregonians before this," Dauterman said.

Right now, the vast majority of COVID patients in Oregon hospitals are unvaccinated — about five times as many as those who got the vaccine, according to the Oregon Health Authority. COVID infections in Oregon are starting to decline from a peak of the most recent delta-variant driven wave, but hospitals are still burdened with the most severe cases.

Even in nonpandemic times, there's not a lot of room to spare in Oregon's health care system.

"If you look at the number of hospital beds per capita, Oregon has 1.7 hospital beds per thousand population. That's the lowest in the country," said Becky Hultberg, the CEO of the Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems.

At his home in southern Oregon, Callagan said he doesn't consider his bone marrow transplant as urgent as what some people are facing.

"There's so many other people who are being affected," he said. "People are dying waiting for a hospital bed. That just angers me. It's hard to stay quiet now."

## VOLUNTEER PICK OF THE WEEK



Sonny  
Male Red Tabby blend

Perfectly suited to Autumn's season of tucking in -- there is nothing like a cat for creature comforts.

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