

IN BRIEF

Local project, volunteer recognized by Oregon Main Street awards

An affordable housing project in Astoria and a community volunteer were recognized with Oregon Main Street “Excellence on Main” awards this month.

The awards, tied to a downtown revitalization effort run through the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, are intended to recognize people and projects that enhance and help renew the state’s historic downtowns and commercial neighborhoods. Besides Astoria, 13 other towns in Oregon received awards.

The Merwyn Apartments, a historic former hotel that had sat vacant next door to Astoria’s City Hall for decades, received an award for outstanding downtown housing. The housing project and renovation work received local and state support and opened to residents this year. Of its 40 units, 36 are set aside for low-income residents.

Patsy Oser, who moved to Astoria in 2013, received the “Volunteers on Main” award. Oser has worked with the Astoria Downtown Historic District Association as a volunteer on a promotion committee and later on the board of directors.

A former librarian, she has raised thousands of dollars during the downtown association’s membership campaigns and has often taken on volunteer positions at the organization’s events.

— *The Astorian*

Oregon recognizes Indigenous Peoples Day

Oct. 11 might have felt a little different across Oregon this year.

The second Monday in October, long celebrated as Columbus Day, was officially recognized as Indigenous Peoples Day in Oregon — a recognition of the Native American communities here long before Christopher Columbus set foot in the Americas.

Among tribal leaders in Oregon, the change represents overdue recognition and hope for the future, as well as a feeling that more could be done to recognize and support Indigenous communities.

According to the 2020 census, there are 129,081 Oregonians who identify as full or part American Indian and Alaska Native, comprising 3.1% of the state’s population.

Roberta Frost, secretary of the Klamath Tribes tribal council, told The Oregonian that progress like this always moves in increments, and that the new Indigenous Peoples Day recognition is just one step in that process.

“At some points in our history we were almost invisible, so this is a small step forward,” Frost said. “It’s not everything, but it’s an acknowledgement that we’re still here, we still have vibrant societies.”

Gail Hatcher, vice chairwoman of the Klamath Tribes tribal council, added that it’s not just about the present or the past but the future as well.

“When we are recognized and seen for who we really are, and what we celebrate and why we celebrate it, that’s a huge step for my grandchildren and their children,” she said. “The prayer that I have is that they will always be seen from this day forward.”

— *The Oregonian*

ON THE RECORD

Assault

- Juli Ann Hol, 50, of Astoria, and Shayna Marie Driskill Kieling, 29, of Astoria, were arrested on Saturday for assault in the third degree and harassment on Eighth Street in Astoria. The alleged crimes involved the same victim.

DUII

- Joshua Gavin Archibald, 37, of Salem, was arrested on Saturday at Marine Drive and Fourth Street in Astoria for driving under the influence of intoxicants.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

TUESDAY

Clatsop County Planning Commission, 10 a.m., (electronic meeting).

Cannon Beach City Council, 6 p.m., work session, (electronic meeting).

Gearhart City Council, 6 p.m., special meeting on contractor hours, (electronic meeting).

Warrenton City Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 225 S. Main Ave.

Clatsop Community College Board, 6:30 p.m., (electronic meeting).

WEDNESDAY

Clatsop County Board of Commissioners, 6 p.m., (electronic meeting).

Warrenton-Hammond School District Board, 6 p.m., Warrenton High School Library, 1700 S. Main Ave.

Astoria School District Board, 7 p.m., (electronic meeting).

THURSDAY

Gearhart Planning Commission, 6 p.m., (electronic meeting).

Warrenton Community Library Board, 6 p.m., Warrenton Community Library, 160 S. Main Ave.

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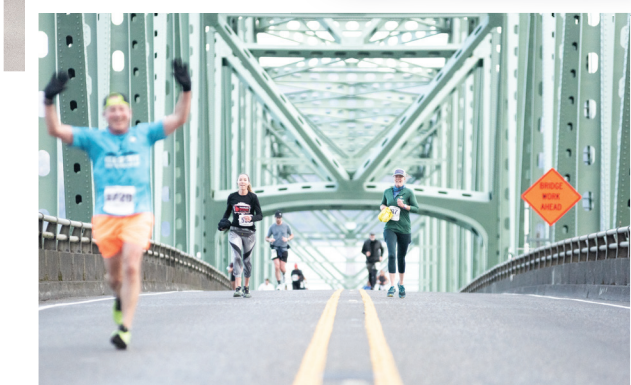
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Photos by Lydia Ely/The Astorian

TOP: The first runner crosses the Astoria Bridge on Sunday morning during the Great Columbia Crossing 10K. The event returned after being canceled last year because of the coronavirus pandemic. **ABOVE LEFT:** Runners smile as they reach the peak of the Astoria Bridge. **ABOVE RIGHT:** People walk and jog down the Astoria Bridge. See more photos at [DailyAstorian.com](https://www.dailyastorian.com)

One last gift to a dying grandma

A trip to the beach before hospice care

By PATRICK WEBB
Chinook Observer

Gratitude is sometimes fleeting.

For the family of Kathy Ambrose, it will last a lifetime.

When it was clear a “brain bleed” would prove debilitating, her family asked the 80-year-old grandmother what would make her happy.

She wanted to breathe ocean air — one last time.

And, thanks to the personnel at Pacific County Fire District 1, it happened.

Late last month, crew members helped Ambrose into one of their shiny red ambulances and drove onto the beach. They positioned the rig with the rear doors facing the ocean.

The weather cooperated: sunshine and a bracing breeze.

“It was very emotional,” said her granddaughter, Sabrina Wages. “She has always been the strong one and so sassy, and suddenly she’s not. She is so dependent on us. I’m thankful we got to take her.”

57 years

Mel and Kathy Ambrose met in Seaview in the early 1960s. He was from the peninsula, where his family owned the Arcadia Court, now apartments. She was from Portland. They married 57 years ago, moved elsewhere, but retired to Ocean Park, where they lived for about 15 years.

About 10 years ago, the couple moved to Branson, Missouri, to be close to

daughter Sue Ambrose Wages and seven grandchildren.

“We used to go to the beach every summer, although we couldn’t during the pandemic,” Sue Wages said. “Then in January, she had a large brain bleed.”

Seeing a slight recovery, they planned September’s Long Beach visit. Just before they left, Kathy Ambrose suffered another serious health setback.

“Dad was just adamant that we go,” Sue Wages said. “I think he thought the beach would change everything. We worked very hard to get them there.”

The complicated logistics would fill a chapter in a book. One family member flew back from Portland to accompany Kathy Ambrose on her flight; others drove 2,121 miles west. The beach party included the Ambroses, daughter Sue Wages and five of her children, Sabrina, Olivia, Timothy, Johanna and Aidan.

When the family posted an online plea for help, Lani Karvia, from Fire District 1 in Ocean Park, pitched in. At first they thought borrowing a beach-adapted wheelchair would be best, but Kathy Ambrose’s frail condition meant that would not work.

The family said Karvia realized a little more aid was needed. “She was great,” said Sue Wages, emotion evident during a telephone interview.

The fire district is cautious sharing details about its mercy missions because of medical privacy laws. But pride in his team’s role was evident when Fire Chief Jacob Brundage was asked about it. He noted that everything his personnel do is geared toward providing the best quality of life for



Sue Wages, left, and daughter, Olivia, hug with joy as her mother, Kathy Ambrose, enjoys the refreshing ocean air thanks to personnel from Pacific County Fire District 1 who arranged an ambulance ride to the beach.

peninsula residents.

“This includes providing special opportunities for families and patients to enjoy a final special moment during the difficult times faced during end-of-life circumstances,” he said. “We are honored to provide these opportunities that promote peace and healing for everyone involved.”

Compassion above and beyond

The family shared its thanks on the Long Beach Peninsula Friends of Facebook page.

“This was a perfect day. Thanks to the amazing Ocean Park Fire Department we were able to take Grandma to the beach one last time,” posted Sabrina Wages. “She enjoyed the breeze and ocean air.”

It touched hearts.

Lori Schaffer added her gratitude for the fire district. “This goes above and beyond the call of duty. This is called compassion, something that this world seems to be lacking of late.”

She added, “Sabrina Wages — thank you for sharing these precious memories with us. Your love for your grandmother is shown so deeply here. You ... wanted to give her one last gift.”

“Just love our time on the peninsula and its great people,” noted Jim Hutchinson. “As the son of a longtime volunteer fireman, it does my heart good when I read of these kindnesses.”

The next challenge was the family’s return trip to Missouri, where Kathy Ambrose was admitted to hospice care. “I honestly didn’t think she would make it home from the beach,” Sue Wages said. They persevered, in part because of the complications involved in trying to arrange care away from her existing medical team. “My dad needed it, too,” she added, noting he wanted to share a farewell at the location where they met.

For those commenting on the online story, Miriam Schaffer offered the best words. “This is what love looks like.”

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