

## New look for Cowapa League

Changes take place next fall

By GARY HENLEY  
*The Astorian*

A reclassification of schools by the Oregon School Activities Association will give the Cowapa League a “Back to the Future” look beginning with the 2022-23 school year.

Out goes Banks and Valley Catholic, in comes St. Helens and Scappoose. Or, rather, a big welcome back to the Lions and Indians, who were members of the Cowapa League almost 20 years ago.

Because of changes in enrollment, the OSAA reclassifies leagues every four years. The realignment for the next four-year block will give some local leagues a very different look.

No local schools will change leagues or levels, but the 4A Cowapa League will be losing two of its smallest — and most competitive — schools in athletics, as Banks and Valley Catholic drop down to 3A because of declining enrollment.

See Cowapa, Page A6



Photos by Lydia Ely/The Astorian

Cannon Beach wants to preserve a village character.

## Cannon Beach officials restrict ‘McMansions’

City Council prohibits combining lots to build larger homes

By NICOLE BALES  
*The Astorian*

CANNON BEACH — Other cities have seen it happen: once buildable land becomes scarce, some people resort to buying two lots, demolishing the homes to build a larger one.

With few readily buildable lots left in Cannon Beach, City Manager Bruce St. Denis said the trend poses a threat to the city’s village character.

“And that’s not the direction we want to go,” he said.

During a meeting last week, the City Council unanimously adopted an ordinance prohibiting the combination of lots for the purpose of building larger homes. The council also repealed the city’s planned unit development chapter, blocking any future proposals.

But the city is not stopping there.

The work is part of a code audit process to address concerns over the increasing size of homes through combining lots, maximizing floor area and lot coverage ratios.

Over the next couple of years, the city will review and update policies to support a vision of maintaining a cottage village, which is outlined in the city’s comprehensive plan.

“There’s a wide range of things that you can build, per our code, that a lot of people would say, ‘Wait, that’s not what we want in Cannon Beach,’” St. Denis said. “Those are things we’ll be taking up as we move along.”

City Councilor Nancy McCarthy said the items approved last week were



The city is addressing concerns over the increasing size of homes.

some of the more urgent and obvious policy matters. They were also supported during the public hearing.

“We don’t really want to see big ‘McMansions’ here,” she said. “We want to keep that village character. And I think we define the village as a cottage town.”

Planned unit developments have also proved troublesome.

Cannon Beach has only approved one planned unit development project, which has been entangled in legal appeals. No homes have yet to be built on the property.

The City Council also considered capping square footage and requiring larger homes to be rebuilt to the new standard if they are destroyed.

However, those items drew questions and opposition. The issues will come back before the City Council during a work session on Tuesday.

While coastal cottage homes built prior to 1960 are not on the historic register, the city said they are key to its cultural heritage. The pre-1960 cottages were on average below 1,500 square

See McMansions, Page A6

### GEARHART

## Volunteers organize for new firehouse

Firefighters will form a political action committee

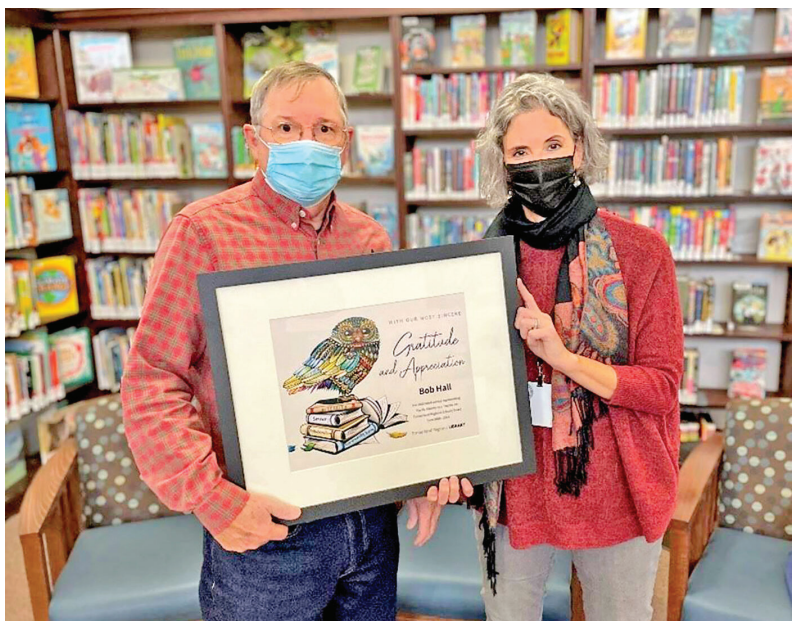
By R.J. MARX  
*The Astorian*

GEARHART — Volunteer firefighters hope to have a voice in the May election on a \$13 million bond measure for a new firehouse off Highlands Lane.

Josh Lair, speaking on behalf of the Gearhart Volunteer Fire Department Association, said at Wednesday’s City Council meeting that the volunteers are forming a political action committee to help push the measure to approval.

Firefighters see the need as an urgent one. The cinder-block firehouse on Pacific Way, built in 1958, is considered outdated and vulnerable to an earthquake

See Firehouse, Page A6



Timberland Regional Library

Cheryl Heywood, right, the executive director of the Timberland Regional Library system, presents a gift at the South Bend Library to Bob Hall for his lengthy service on the board. The retired school teacher was president three times and helped steer the district through budget worries and staffing reductions.

### TIMBERLAND

## ‘I think the value of libraries has increased’

A longtime advocate steps down from role at Timberland

By PATRICK WEBB  
*Chinook Observer*

SOUTH BEND, Wash. — Bob Hall has retired from helping to run the Timberland Regional Library system. But he’s hanging on to his library card, using it regularly, and encouraging everyone else to do the same.

“I think the value of libraries has increased,” he said. “We have always had books and magazines and newspapers, but we have so many online resources to help students and all kind of databases.”

**EVERYDAY**  
people

Timberland linked the libraries of Pacific, Grays Harbor, Mason, Lewis and Thurston counties in 1968 and now has 27 branches, including Ilwaco, Ocean Park and Naselle. It provides access to the system’s collections and has partnerships with others, including the well-funded King County system in Seattle, plus access to the nationwide InterLibrary Loan program.

Hall, 76, retired as an elementary school teacher in 2002 and joined the

regional library board a few years later to fill in for someone who had resigned. He then served two seven-year terms, retiring in December after three stints as board president.

He said the service has been rewarding. “There’s a real high quality of trustees and I have enjoyed getting to know them and serving with them,” he said.

His tenure in the past 17 years has seen a switch in library services, from simple book lending to access to online resources and materials

See Hall, Page A6

