

IN BRIEF

State reports 80 new virus cases for county

The Oregon Health Authority reported 80 new coronavirus cases for Clatsop County on Friday.

Since the pandemic began, the county had recorded 3,697 virus cases and 37 deaths as of Friday.

Portland attorney to run for state Senate

A Portland attorney has filed to run in the Democratic primary for state Senate District 16.

Jennifer Kinzey, a former special prosecutor at the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office, works at Ridehalgh & Associates.

Melissa Busch, a Warren resident, is also running in the Democratic primary.

State Rep. Suzanne Weber, R-Tillamook, is relinquishing her House District 32 seat to run for Senate in the Republican primary.

Betsy Johnson resigned from the Senate to launch an independent campaign for governor. County commissioners in Senate District 16 appointed Rachel Armitage, of Warren, to fill out Johnson's term.

Astoria has a new police officer

Astoria held a swearing-in ceremony for a new police officer during a City Council meeting last week.

Zachary Stockton, of Kenai, Alaska, was initially hired as the Astoria Police Department's community service officer late last year.

— *The Astorian*

New child porn charges filed against former Ocean Park teacher

SOUTH BEND, Wash. — The Pacific County Prosecutor's Office has filed 10 new charges against a former Ocean Park Elementary School teacher.

The new charges come just two days before Daniel J. Schenk, 54, of Ilwaco, was expected to be formally sentenced in the Pacific County Superior Court after he admitted to previous allegations that he possessed depictions of minors engaged in sexual activity.

According to court records, the prosecutor's office reached out in late December to the Washington State Patrol, which conducted the initial investigation, to determine if there was any new information that would warrant additional charges.

A detective evaluated Schenk's Kik messaging account in early January and discovered a substantial amount of additional imagery of minors being depicted in sexual activity.

Prosecutors filed formal charges against Schenk on Wednesday for 10 counts of possession of depictions of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct.

— *Chinook Observer*

MEMORIALS

Saturday, Jan. 29

MURRELL, Grant Evans — Celebration of life and reception at 1 p.m., Bateman Carroll Funeral Home, 520 West Powell Blvd. in Gresham.

ON THE RECORD

DUII

• David Harry Densmore, 75, of Astoria, was arrested on Sunday at the Astoria Riverwalk and 14th Street for driving under the

influence of intoxicants.

• Dennis James Wentz, 51, of Hammond, was arrested on Saturday on Exchange Street in Astoria for DUII.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

TUESDAY

Clatsop County Planning Commission and Countywide Advisory Committee, 9 a.m., joint meeting, (electronic meeting).

Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District Board of Directors, 5:15 p.m., 1225 Ave. A, Seaside.

Astoria Planning Commission, 5:30 p.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

Seaside Airport Advisory Committee, 6 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

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

WEDNESDAY

Astoria Parks Board, 6:45 a.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

Astoria City Council, 11 a.m., special meeting, City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

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

THURSDAY

Sunset Empire Transportation District Board, 9 a.m., (electronic meeting).

Columbia River Estuary Study Taskforce Council, noon, (electronic meeting).

the Astorian

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Lydia Ely/The Astorian

A pilot helps guide a ship on the Columbia River on Saturday.

Commercial tuna fisherman seeks to restore 'retirement boat'

By LUKE WHITTAKER
Chinook Observer

ILWACO, Wash. — On a rainy January morning, Ted Martin was chasing a dream.

A longtime commercial albacore fisherman and fixture on the waterfront, Martin is closing one chapter and beginning another in the Ilwaco boatyard.

"The price was right and these are well-known boats," he said while standing beneath the bow of a 33-foot 1984 Chris-Craft Gulf Commander, which he dubbed his "retirement boat."

Martin said he plans to sell his commercial tuna fishing vessel, the F/V Bambi, and reinvest the money in the Chris-Craft, which he bought last spring.

Still, a "bit of engine work" and a "whole lot of interior work" remains before the Chris-Craft will be ready for its next role, Martin said. But the option to buy and overhaul the 38-year-old vessel was an easy one.

"I did this in Canada a lot, rebuilt yachts. It's nothing new to me," he said.

Martin conceded that the twin turbo-charged Volvo Penta six-cylinder diesel engines could be the biggest undertaking.

"One of them has been fired up already, but the other hasn't, so we'll see," he said.

Martin has owned a variety of boats over the years, he said, including his latest addition.

"In northern British



Luke Whittaker/Chinook Observer

Ted Martin looks at a boat he intends to restore.

Columbia, I had water taxis, fast-freight boats. Down on the coast, I was a salmon fisherman in B.C., then I emigrated to America. Now it's time to retire and take it easy. So Bambi will be up for sale in the spring, then I'll go from there," he said.

Martin hasn't settled on an asking price for Bambi, a vessel that served as a regular fixture along the waterfront for years, but acknowledged the market may be tough, particularly for a fishery that's fallen on hard times in recent seasons.

"Right now is not a real great time to sell a tuna boat," he said.

Martin is mostly focused on the future and the adventure the Chris-Craft could

bring.

"I'm going to take it up to the Tri-Cities and do a lot of exploring around the Columbia and Snake river up to Lewiston, Idaho," he said.

Martin plans to head out "as soon as Bambi sells," but hasn't been in a big hurry while the majority of the necessary prep work on the Chris-Craft awaits.

"It could go up this summer, but maybe next year, because I'm rebuilding it right now inside and out. I'm converting it into what I want it to be," he said.

He acknowledged he wasn't sure how long the trip to Idaho via river would take, adding, "It's not something you do overnight. A couple years maybe, just fish

and explore here and there as you're going."

Martin may one day take it as far as the Mississippi.

"A friend of mine bought it and the trailer, because he wanted the trailer. Then I bought the boat because I was looking for something similar to rebuild into what I want. I want to live on the river part of the time and do a lot of fishing and traveling. If you go to Lewiston, Idaho, on the Snake River, you can then truck it over to the Mississippi I'm told," he said. "And that just opens up a whole new world."

Martin has already restored the vessel's original name.

"It's called the Dream Chaser," he said.

Report finds gap in public defense system

By CONRAD WILSON
Oregon Public Broadcasting

Oregon's public defense system has less than one-third of the public defenders required to meet caseloads, according to an American Bar Association report publicly released Friday.

The report found Oregon's Office of Public Defense Services requires 1,888 public defenders, but only has the equivalent of 592 public defenders — a 69% deficit.

"At current caseloads, (the Office of Public Defense Services) simply is unable to adequately represent individuals in adult criminal and juvenile cases," the two-year study found.

Public defenders represent people who cannot afford their own attorneys. The Sixth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution requires criminal defendants to receive adequate represen-

tation. Public defenders are required to study the case and charges against their clients and perform their own investigation of the case before recommending a plea.

The American Bar Association report is just the latest indicators that Oregon's public defense system is failing to meet its constitutional requirements. A 2019 report by the Sixth Amendment Center found Oregon's public defense system was essentially unconstitutional. For the last several months, some criminal defendants in counties such as Lane, Washington and Multnomah have been in custody without an attorney because of a shortage of public defenders.

"It's a civil rights crisis that's been in the making for a while," said Bobbin Singh, the executive director of the Oregon Justice Resource Center. "All three branches of government have been

complicit in this."

Overloaded public defense systems can harm defendants and lead to outcomes that damage the overall credibility of the justice system, said Carl Macpherson, executive director of Metropolitan Public Defender, a nonprofit public defense firm that provides services in Multnomah and Washington counties.

"What happens in an overloaded, underfunded system, people triage and cut corners," he said. "It can lead to wrongful convictions because people miss things."

Macpherson described the American Bar Association report as an overdue "wake-up call for the state."

Some lawmakers predicted future consequences for the state, ones beyond not following the Constitution.

"We are primed for having a lawsuit filed against the state for not adequately providing legal services for those who have the right to them," said state Sen. Floyd Prozanski, D-Eugene, who chairs the Senate Judiciary Committee.

"And what that means is that you could see verdicts

overturned because of inadequate defense. You could also see where the court could in fact impose conditions on the state to come in compliance. Either way, it's not good. And to be very frank, it is something that we, the Legislature, have an obligation to address."

The way Oregon attempts to meet those obligations lacks transparency, according to the report.

At the trial level, Oregon contracts out its public defense system to non-profits and private attorneys. Office of Public Defense Services data about its contracts contains inconsistencies and inaccuracies.

"The OPDS contracting system, which includes over 100 contractors that vary significantly in both size and organizational structure, imposes challenges to building and implementing a unified case management system and other data collection mechanisms," the American Bar Association found. "OPDS should be able to track which individual attorney is assigned to which cases to verify both qualifications and caseloads."

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