



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

The Astoria Regatta is planned for August.

Regatta: 'It's been a long time since we've been able to gather as a community'

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Queen since 2020. This year, Steele will pass the crown to one of five court members.

Chris Nemlowill, the owner of Fort George Brewery, and his wife, Zetty, will serve as the grand marshals of the Grand Land Parade.

Pete Gimre, of Gimre's Shoes, will be the parade admiral. He will be joined

by admiral's aide Julie Flues Troedsson.

Grothe said the Regatta is working to connect the Astoria Yacht Club's races to the festival schedule and riverfront events.

They are also working with the U.S. Coast Guard, hoping to bring back events such as the search and rescue demonstration.

Spruce Up Warrenton

is working on the movie in the park event and hoping to expand Thursday evening activities for families.

"As for the Grand Land Parade and Highwater Boat Parade, we are hoping to broaden our reach and grow participation to include community and business groups with which we have not connected in the past," Grothe said.

The Astoria Regatta Association plans to publish more information about festival events in the coming weeks.

"It's been a long time since we've been able to gather as a community," Grothe said in a statement announcing the Regatta's return, "but I can't think of a better way to come together again, than in celebration of this wonderful region we call home."

Crockett: 'I think we could all use a little vibrancy'

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conversation with the city," she said. "Just adopting some arts goals — not necessarily more funding — but things like making space for public art, making space for busking downtown, and murals and sculpture.

"I think we could all use a little vibrancy after the last two years."

Crockett is a member of the Arts Council of Clatsop County and serves on the advisory board for the Independent Venue Coalition of Oregon. She served on the board for Coast Community Radio from 2017 to 2020.

Crockett, a professional musician, is a substitute clarinetist with the Oregon Symphony.

During her time at the helm of the Liberty Theatre, the organization has quadrupled its operating budget, Crockett said. Staff have increased from two to nine. Two more staffers are expected to be hired by the end of the year, and six more over the next three years.

Since the start of the pandemic, Crockett has focused her efforts on helping arts organizations weather the

DURING HER TIME AT THE HELM OF THE LIBERTY THEATRE, THE ORGANIZATION HAS QUADRUPLED ITS OPERATING BUDGET.

storm and recover.

She spearheaded the creation of the North Coast Performing Arts Alliance, which made the Liberty Theatre a backbone for 17 performing arts organizations.

Crockett said leaders of the different organizations were able to communicate and help each other. She also hosted workshops about insurance, fundraising and grant writing.

"Some of the organizations wrote and received their first grant," she said. "Some of them did their first fundraising campaign."

"We all sort of acknowledged that what had worked in the past may not work ever again, and we got through it together."

One of the biggest questions before the City Council is a workforce housing proposal at Heritage Square that would also include units for people undergoing mental health and substance

abuse treatment. The project has left the City Council and many people in the community divided.

Last week, city councilors voted 3 to 2 to enter into an exclusive negotiating agreement with Edlen & Co., a Portland-based developer, which will allow the city and developer to negotiate and refine the concept.

Crockett said that if she had to vote on the decision, she probably would have sided with City Councilor Tom Brownson and City Councilor Tom Hilton, who voted "no." Brownson and Hilton have expressed concerns about the mental health component of the project.

Crockett said she would like to see the timeline pause to allow for more discussion.

"I, like a lot of people, have a loved one that struggled with addiction for a really long time, and was often homeless during that

time," she said. "And it absolutely ripped my family in half for a very long time."

Despite her personal experience and understanding of the need, Crockett said she recognizes why many businesses are concerned.

She said there are many questions, including whether Heritage Square is the best location and how the project would impact tourism and walk-up traffic.

Crockett hopes her decision will inspire other young people, women and artists to run for City Council.

Mayor Bruce Jones and City Councilor Roger Rocka, who represents Ward 1, which covers part of the Port of Astoria, Uniontown and the western edge of downtown, have indicated they will not seek reelection in November.

"I know I'm not going to be right for everybody," Crockett said. "So I hope there's enough candidates to chose from, especially with as many openings as we have coming up on the council."

"It would be awesome to have a big pool to choose from."

Phillips: Was hired by school district in 2018

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fill in as acting superintendent due to the timing, the requirement of a superintendent's license and the need to relocate to Jewell.

"It just concerns me a little. I've been here six years and I've seen quite a lot of turnover here at the school," Mialon told the school board. "I think hiring someone in a hasty way

— I am just really apprehensive about that approach. I think it needs to be looked at very carefully and hopefully you aren't going to just pick somebody because they are available and you're going to pick them because they're fair, compassionate and ethical people, and they're going to do the job well."

"That's what we're shooting for," Ginger Kaczinski, a school board member, replied.

Phillips was hired by the school district as an executive administrator in 2018 and was eventually appointed superintendent in 2019, replacing Alice Hunsaker, who had retired.

Phillips' tenure in Jewell followed his resignation from his position as deputy superintendent in the Beaverton School District after receiving blowback for reposting a tweet that

expressed anti-immigration sentiments. Members of the Jewell Education Association had opposed Phillip's hiring at the time.

He served as superintendent and director of secondary education in the Malheur Education Service District before his time in Beaverton.

Jewell School, the only school in the school district, serves students from kindergarten through 12th grade.

Store: Company expects to bring 25 to 30 new jobs

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Harbor Freight expects to open this spring, but an official opening date will be revealed closer to launch, the company said in a statement.

"We've been looking to open a location in Warrenton for a number of years so that we can provide the tools and equipment at tremendous values to the community," said Trey Feiler, the senior vice president for real

estate and construction for Harbor Freight Tools. "In addition to finding a great location, we were attracted by the availability of great associates in the Warrenton area, and we look forward to having them join the Harbor Freight team."

Construction is underway on the building, where tenant improvements are being made, according to City Manager Linda Engbretson.

Harbor Freight sells a wide range of products,

including power tools, generators, jacks, tool boxes and more.

The company expects to bring between 25 and 30 new jobs to the community, including positions for sales and logistic supervisors,

senior associates and additional seasonal opportunities. Harbor Freight is looking for interested applicants to apply on their website.

The company has more than 1,200 locations nationwide.

Emergency: Move has been mulled for more than a decade

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"There's no doubt that the risk towards Clatsop County regarding earthquakes, tsunamis and windstorms, and any other form of natural disaster, is high," he said, "and I think that it's important as we move forward that the emergency management function be elevated to a department level."

Next week, commissioners will hold a second reading on an ordinance to remove from the county manager's assigned duties the direction of the emergency management office.

The move has been considered for more than a decade.

In 2010, emergency management — a statutorily required agency — was shifted from the sheriff's office to the county

manager's office. In 2015, the county manager at the time considered converting emergency management into a director-led department, but ended up absorbing the duties himself.

This is the first time a full-time director will lead the county's emergency management functions.

"It's exciting for me, and should be for the whole community, that the county manager, and the board in turn, has decided to make this investment," Brown said.

The state, meanwhile, is doing something similar. By law, the state Office of Emergency Management, long under the umbrella of the Oregon Military Department, is slated to become the Department of Emergency Management, and report directly to the governor.

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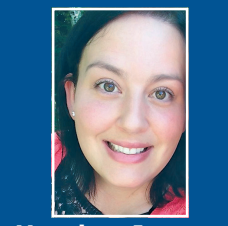
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