

## IN BRIEF

## State reports new virus death for county

The Oregon Health Authority has reported that a 45-year-old Clatsop County man died of the coronavirus in January.

The health authority said he tested positive for COVID-19 on Jan. 3 and died at Oregon Health & Science University Hospital on Jan. 20.

The man, who had underlying health conditions, was not vaccinated against the virus, the county said.

Meanwhile, a virus death from October that was recorded as a county death was in fact from out of the area, the Clatsop County Public Health Department said. That death was of a 60-year-old female from Alaska.

Margo Lalich, the health department's interim director, said the county's official virus death toll now stands at 39, which matches the state health authority's number.

The health authority, meanwhile, reported two new coronavirus cases for the county on Tuesday.

Since the pandemic began, the county had recorded 4,538 virus cases as of Tuesday.

## County unemployment rate declined in January

Clatsop County's unemployment rate was 4.4% in January.

The seasonally adjusted rate was down from 4.6% in December and down from 8% in January 2021.

The state's unemployment rate was 4.3%, according to the Oregon Employment Department, compared to 4% nationally.

## Dump voucher program to replace spring cleanup event in Warrenton

WARRENTON — The city has approved a dump voucher program through Recology Western Oregon that is set to replace the yearly spring cleanup event.

Recology will issue one voucher to every resident who is billed for a minimum of biweekly trash service. Each voucher will be good for up to 800 pounds of mixed solid waste only. No appliances or tires are allowed.

— The Astorian

## DEATHS

**March 7, 2022**  
LUOMA, Allen Edwin, 68, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

**March 5, 2022**  
ARTHUR, Robert Vaughn, 72, of Astoria, died in Astoria.

Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

**March 4, 2022**  
RULJANCICH, Louis Anthony, 69, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

## MEMORIAL

## Saturday, March 12

OCHAL, James A. — Service at 11 a.m. at St Mary, Star of the Sea Catholic Church, 1465 Grand Ave. in Astoria, followed by coffee and refreshments.

## ON THE RECORD

## Animal abuse

• Denis John Reynolds, 36, of Astoria, was arrested on Friday on W. Marine Drive in Astoria for first-degree animal abuse, disorderly conduct and second-degree criminal mischief. Police said Reynolds kicked a box of kittens into the roadway, resulting in them getting hit by a car.

## Assault

• Paul Lee Roebuck, 49, of Astoria, was arrested on Sunday on Marine Drive and First Street in Astoria for fourth-degree assault.

## Disorderly conduct

• Bradley Scott Minder, 42, of Astoria, was arrested on March 2 on Commercial Street in Astoria for second-degree disorderly conduct.

• Adam Mathew Eastman, 30, of Astoria, was arrested on March 2 on Commercial Street for second-degree disorderly conduct.

derly conduct.

## Theft

• Micella Lynn Roberts Lopez, 52, of Medford, was arrested on Sunday at Walmart in Warrenton for second-degree theft.

## DUI

• Scott Russell Brown, 32, of Pensacola, Florida, was arrested on Saturday on Marine Drive and 11th Street in Astoria for driving under the influence of intoxicants, reckless driving and hit-and-run.

• Wesley Dalton Leraas, 28, of Gearhart, was arrested on March 2 on U.S. Highway 26 for DUI and reckless driving.

• Erik Daniel Jensen, 63, of Warrenton, was arrested on Jan. 24 on U.S. Highway 101 for DUI and reckless driving.

• Lynn Darlene Walker, 63, of Warrenton, was arrested on Jan. 21 on U.S. Highway 101 for DUI and reckless driving.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

## THURSDAY

Seaside Civic and Convention Center Commission, 5 p.m., 415 First Ave.

## the Astorian

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## PASSING THROUGH



Gary Henley/The Astorian

The Navios Unite passed through Astoria on Monday on its way to the Port of Portland. According to The Ship Report on KMUN, the 1,100-foot-long container ship is believed to be the largest to transit the Columbia River.

## Astoria police to adjust patrols following vandalism downtown

By NICOLE BALES  
The Astorian

Astoria police will increase patrol presence in response to a recent string of criminal activity downtown.

Over the past couple of weeks, police received reports of broken windows at two downtown businesses and on four Clatsop County vehicles.

Police also responded to a call Sunday night of two people climbing onto the roof of food carts at 10th and Duane Streets, and on the building next door. The Astoria Fire Department brought a ladder, but by the time officers got to the roof, the people were gone.

Police Chief Geoff Spalding said officers are investigating the vandalism, but he cautioned that the incidents are unusual and do not indicate an overall uptick in crime downtown.

However, Spalding said, the recent spike is enough to temporarily increase the number of officers on patrol.

“We’ll review the option of having officers work overtime assignments, and also potentially even reworking our schedule so that we can have some additional coverage,” Spalding told the City Council on Monday.

The department has 10 officers assigned to patrol, with two or three typically working at a given time.

Spalding told The Astorian that while calls for service and public frustration over the increased visibility of homelessness and bad behavior has grown, the recent string of events is not necessarily tied to people who are homeless.

“I’m sure there’s a lot of people that would attribute the homeless to that problem,” Spalding said. “Minus maybe a couple of incidents, we can’t say with any specificity that that is related to homeless behavior.”

Meanwhile, the city is looking at adopting a menu of options designed to address quality of life concerns tied to homelessness, including converting the

police department’s part-time community service officer position into a full-time role that handles those calls.

Astoria police and Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare, Clatsop County’s mental health and substance abuse treatment provider, are in the initial stages of developing a program that would embed a clinical staffer in the police department.

The new officer could also work directly with the clinician to proactively handle some mental health crisis calls together.

The City Council expects to review a job description for the new officer in the coming weeks.

## Trio: ‘We still feel that music can unite’

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was chosen long before the Russian invasion.

“There is much to be reflective about in the programming of this festival and I anticipate that we may make changes along the way,” Crockett said in an email, adding that potential changes could include more music from Ukrainian composers.

Crockett said the Liberty Theatre is donating ticket sales from Friday’s 45th Parallel Universe concert to Mercy Corps for relief for Ukrainian refugees.

Shostakovich’s symphony was famously performed during the siege of Leningrad, now St. Petersburg, during World War II. The musicians faced dire circumstances, with three dying from starvation and exhaustion during the rehearsal period. The performance was broadcast on loudspeakers throughout the city to intimidate German forces.

Sergey Antonov, the

Hermitage Piano Trio’s cellist, immigrated to the United States 16 years ago from Russia. He said that the “Leningrad” piece will likely be the most serious of the program. He hopes it will remind the audience of the terrible impact of war.

“As difficult as it sounds, we’re not here only to entertain people. We’re also here to provoke thoughts,” he said. “And unfortunately, the history, even current — and I call it current history, because right now the history is being made — forces us to look back to look forward. So this is a very special program for me, especially now.”

The trio — Antonov, violinist Misha Keylyn and pianist Ilya Kazantsev — released a joint written statement addressing the war on Monday.

“We wanted to express our dismay, shock and how furious we are with the recent and continued bloody aggression against millions of innocent people of Ukraine. Our job is

to be musicians and not politicians, but not speaking up means you give up the right for which many have died before us. Although the three of us reside now in the USA (for many years), our relatives, colleagues and friends remain both in Ukraine and Russia. We hope and pray that this unnecessary devastation stops immediately, and please, NO MORE WAR!” the statement said.

Russian musicians and artists around the world have been asked to make statements about the war. Some have been fired from prominent positions or had performances canceled for supporting Russian President Vladimir Putin.

“It’s difficult. It’s difficult not only for musicians, it’s difficult for people on both sides of the story. Everybody who I know: my family, my friends, my colleagues are just terrified by the events. Some of them don’t even have words to express. But this is something that we have to deal

with,” Antonov said. “And I know that a lot of people in the music community are trying the best they can to say that we’re one world and at the end, this is what we all are going to be facing.”

Antonov said that he hopes the Third Dimension Festival will bring the community together.

The event will include the first Astoria International Chamber Music Competition, open to all artists between the ages of 18 and 30. Winners will be invited back to participate in next year’s festival. The semifinals and finals will be open to the public and the community will have a chance to vote for their favorite performers.

“We still feel that music can unite. We still feel that music can bring peace to the world, to people, and music can have the conversation between people that we don’t have right now. And we desperately need this conversation,” Antonov said.

## Carts: ‘We’re just trying to gain compliance’

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The ordinance would declare shopping carts a public nuisance. The city’s two biggest grocery stores — Safeway and the Astoria Co-op — would be required to pick them up within a few days. The businesses could be subject to a \$50 fee after the first courtesy notice if the carts are not picked up.

Police Chief Geoff Spalding said police met with the management at Safeway and the Astoria Co-op to craft the ordinance with the goal of reducing the number of abandoned shopping carts and theft of the carts. He said store manag-

ers were supportive of the ordinance.

“One thing that we wanted to stress is, this is not about punishing the store owners,” Spalding said during a City Council meeting Monday night. “This is not a revenue generator. We’re not trying to make money on this. We want to work with them, and we will continue to work with them.”

“We’re just trying to gain compliance and incentivize the return of these carts.”

The action is one of many the City Council is expected to take to respond to quality of life concerns tied to homelessness.

City councilors are expected to review an ordinance covering RVs in the coming weeks. The council will also discuss updating the city’s camping ordinance and creating an expulsion zone ordinance, which would temporarily expel repeat offenders from specific areas.

A community discussion on homelessness and livability is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on March 23 at the Liberty Theatre, where the city will provide more information and hear from the public.

The city will be joined by representatives from Clatsop Economic Development Resources, the Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce and the Astoria Downtown Historic District Association.



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