

IN BRIEF

Longview man dies in crash on Highway 26

A man from Longview, Washington, died on Thursday in a crash on U.S. Highway 26 about a mile and a half west of the state Highway 53 junction.

Oregon State Police said Joseph Arient, 46, was driving westbound in a commercial truck and towing a flat-bed trailer when the truck veered into oncoming lanes, left the highway, collided with a tree and ended up on its side.

Warrenton High School receives career readiness grant

WARRENTON — Warrenton High School received \$125,000 as a part of the state's CTE Revitalization Grant program.

The grant, with a focus on career readiness, will go toward the school's advanced manufacturing program.

State revises case count for care home outbreak

The Oregon Health Authority on Wednesday revised the case count for a coronavirus outbreak at a Seaside care home.

The number of virus cases tied to an outbreak first reported on Jan. 11 at Suzanne Elise Assisted Living Community now stands at 16.

The updated number was disclosed in the health authority's weekly outbreak report.

The health authority also disclosed three new virus cases at Hilda Lahti Elementary School in Knappa. Two cases were students and one case was a staff member or volunteer.

The health authority, meanwhile, reported three new virus cases for Clatsop County on Thursday and one new case on Wednesday.

Since the pandemic began, the county had recorded 4,541 virus cases as of Thursday.

— The Astorian

DEATHS

March 9, 2022

BENSON, Mark Edward, 59, of Federal Way, Washington, died in Astoria. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

HOLMSTEDT, Donna Mae, 92, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

PORTER, Roberta Adrienne, 84, of Manzanita, died in Seaside. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

MARCH 8, 2022
BRENDEN, Carolyn Elaine, 73, of Warrenton, died in Warrenton. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

MEMORIALS

Wednesday, March 16

AARNIO, Jean D. — Mass of Christian Burial at 11 a.m., St. Birgitta Catholic Church, 11820 N.W. St. Helens Road in Portland.

Thursday, March 17, 2022

AARNIO, Jean D. — Graveside service at 12 p.m., Greenwood Cemetery, 91569 Oregon Highway 202.

ON THE RECORD

Robbery

• Cameron Darnell Petteway, 34, from Steubenville, Ohio, was indicted on Thursday for second-degree robbery, aggravated harassment and second-degree disorderly conduct. The crimes are alleged to have occurred earlier this month.

Burglary

• Vincent David Davidson-Gilbert, 33, of Astoria, was indicted on Thursday for first-degree burglary, second-degree burglary and attempted second-degree burglary. The crimes are alleged to have occurred earlier this month.

Theft

• William Charles Whiteside, 36, of Astoria, was indicted on Tuesday for first-degree theft, second-degree theft, two counts of unlawful entry

into a motor vehicle and second-degree criminal mischief. The crimes are alleged to have occurred in February.

Disorderly conduct

• Kayla Marie Hundle-Sandoval, 29, of Astoria, and Sheila Lynn Robb, 31, of Warrenton, were arrested on Wednesday at the Garden of Surging Waves in Astoria for second-degree disorderly conduct.

• Denis John Reynolds, 36, of Astoria, was arrested on Wednesday on W. Marine Drive for second-degree disorderly conduct and third-degree criminal mischief.

DUI

• Brandi June Morin, 41, of Seaside, was arrested on Thursday at the New Youngs Bay Bridge for driving under the influence of intoxicants.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

MONDAY

Jewell School District Board, 6 p.m., Jewell School Library, 83874 Oregon Highway 103.

Seaside City Council, 7 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

the Astorian

Established July 1, 1873
(USPS 035-000)

Published Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday by EO Media Group, 949 Exchange St., PO Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103. Telephone 503-325-3211, 800-781-3211 or Fax 503-325-6573. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Astorian, PO Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103-0210

DailyAstorian.com

MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MEMBER CERTIFIED AUDIT OF CIRCULATIONS, INC.

Circulation phone number:
800-781-3214

Periodicals postage paid at Astoria, OR

ADVERTISING OWNERSHIP

All advertising copy and illustrations prepared by The Astorian become the property of The Astorian and may not be reproduced for any use without explicit prior approval.

COPYRIGHT

Entire contents © Copyright, 2022 by The Astorian.



Printed on recycled paper

Subscription rates
Effective January 12, 2021

MAIL

EZpay (per month).....\$10.75
13 weeks in advance.....\$37.00
26 weeks in advance.....\$71.00
52 weeks in advance.....\$135.00

DIGITAL

EZpay (per month).....\$8.25



Lydia Ely/The Astorian

Ukrainian flags are set up along Grand Avenue in Astoria. The United States has supported Ukraine after an invasion by Russia.

Federal grant helps state improve access to jobless benefits

By PETER WONG
Oregon Capital Bureau

Oregon will spend more than \$4.5 million from a new federal grant, one of four in the nation, to improve its reach to people who have trouble obtaining unemployment benefits.

David Gerstenfeld, the acting director of the Oregon Employment Department, said the grant will enable the state to build on what it started at the onset of the coronavirus pandemic two years ago, when a surge of benefit claims overwhelmed the staff. Many claims were from people who had never applied for help or were unfamiliar with the process.

"We have listened to the needs that were voiced by Oregon's diverse communities," Gerstenfeld told reporters at a virtual briefing Wednesday. "We have quickly applied strategies that have improved access.

"However, we know we are still not meeting the needs of all Oregonians, especially those in underserved communities. We

want to do better. This grant will help us reach those people who really need our services, but have not been able to access them."

The agency will build on its expansion of written and website materials in languages other than English, outreach to community groups that can help people navigate the system and one-on-one meetings between staff and workers who need help.

A new unit within the agency will focus on equitable access to unemployment benefits.

Among the groups that the new efforts will focus on are Black people, Hispanics, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, immigrants, people with disabilities, people whose primary language is not English and people who are poor.

Money also will be spent on collecting information that the agency can use to measure and improve its efforts.

Other jurisdictions that received similar grants were

Pennsylvania, Virginia and Washington, D.C.

"These grants are the first of their kind to advance equity in state unemployment insurance programs," said U.S. Labor Secretary Marty Walsh, whose agency oversees those programs. "To become a more robust safety net and economic stabilizer, our unemployment insurance system must serve all workers fairly and equitably."

Efforts have stalled in Congress to overhaul some aspects of unemployment benefits after Congress created a host of temporary federal benefit programs in 2020 and 2021. Basic benefits go back to 1935.

One of the champions of change is U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, the Oregon Democrat who leads the Senate Finance Committee, which oversees the payroll tax system that employers pay into to support benefits on a state level.

Wyden had been critical of the Oregon Employment Department when it fell far behind in processing hun-

dreds of thousands of claims that piled up in the early weeks of the pandemic, when businesses closed or curtailed operations and thousands lost their jobs or took pay cuts.

In a move he later said was a rare intervention in state government affairs, Wyden called on Gov. Kate Brown to fire the department's director. Brown did so in May 2020, and named Gerstenfeld acting director. He had led the unemployment insurance division from 2011 to 2019, when he was moved over to lead the paid family medical leave program under development.

"While the Oregon Employment Department continues to work tirelessly to get benefits out the door as quickly as possible, I'm gratified to see federal dollars going to help the state address equity issues head-on," Wyden said in a statement.

The Oregon Capital Bureau is a collaboration between EO Media Group and Pamplin Media Group.

Oregon to receive \$425 million from opioid settlements

By ROLANDO HERNANDEZ
Oregon Public Broadcasting

After two settlements with manufacturers and distributors of opioids, Oregon is expected to receive about \$425 million for treatment and prevention of opioid abuse.

Approximately five Oregonians die every week from opioid overdoses. According to the Oregon Health Authority, many overdose deaths are linked to both prescription pharmaceuticals and illicit opioids such as heroin.

Wally Hicks is the legal counsel for Josephine County. He said in rural Oregon, the effects were more dramatic than other parts of the state.

"By 2012, Josephine County was plagued by the highest rate of opioid use in the state," he said. "Nearly 300 prescriptions per 1,000 residents."

The statewide average at the time, according to Hicks, was 234 prescriptions per 1,000 residents.

He said that opioids not only affected the health of the community, but its workforce as well.

"When the spike in opioid availability occurred, there was a dramatic decline in the wood product industry in southern Oregon," he said.

Josephine County wasn't the only community hit hard by opioids. Alex Cuyler is the intergovernmental relations manager for Lane County. He said that despite efforts to make anti-overdose drugs like naloxone more accessible, Lane County continued to feel the brunt of the opioid crisis.

"Even through 2020, we had the higher burden of overdose deaths in the state of Oregon," he said.

Money from the settlements will be divided among local governments and the state, with the state receiving 45%.

This wasn't always the case.

The state originally intended to keep 85% to have more centralized control, but Lane and other counties pushed back.

"We felt strongly that since we initiated the lawsuit ... it was inappropriate for the state to take the vast majority," Cuyler said.

Hicks said that if the origi-



Kristian Foden-Vencil/Oregon Public Broadcasting

Approximately five Oregonians die every week from opioid overdoses.

inal plan went through, it would mean less relief at the local level.

"Counties in Oregon are the local public health authority and really are the ones who do the lion's share of the work to battle the opioid epidemic and deal with the consequences," he said.

He said more funds from the settlement means more investments in education and

prevention, medical examiners, sheriffs and jails.

According to Hicks, the cost associated with crime and opioids in Josephine County has been approximately \$7 million beginning in 2017.

"We are going to see an impact here, but this epidemic is so overwhelming and it's not over yet," Hicks said.

Please ADOPT A PET!



MILK

American Long Hair female

A volunteer reports Milk magnifies magnificence in her terrific tuxedo—attracts attention, loves attention, and oh so soft.

See more on

Petfinder.com

CLATSOP COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER • 861-PETS
1315 SE 19th St. • Warrenton | Tues-Sat 12-4pm
www.dogsncats.org

THIS SPACE SPONSORED BY BAY BREEZE BOARDING

WANTED

Alder and Maple Saw Logs & Standing Timber

Northwest Hardwoods • Longview, WA

Contact: John Anderson • 360-269-2500