

IN BRIEF

Astoria to host listening sessions on housing

Astoria has planned four listening sessions on housing development over the next month.

The first session is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Thursday at the Holiday Inn Express & Suites.

On May 4, there will be a noon session at the Barbey Maritime Center and a session at 5:30 p.m. at Astoria Middle School.

A session is also scheduled for 10 a.m. on May 14 at the Barbey Maritime Center.

Astoria Nordic Heritage Park on track to open

The Astoria Nordic Heritage Park is on track for completion, with a celebratory dedication to follow.

The park, located at 16th Street and Marine Drive, is being built by the Astoria Scandinavian Heritage Association.

The association will hold a dedication at 10:30 a.m. on June 17, immediately preceding the Astoria Scandinavian Midsummer Festival at the Clatsop County Fairgrounds.

Karl Marlantes, the author of "Deep River," a novel which details the lives of Nordic immigrants to the region, will speak at the dedication.

Lewis and Clark Timberlands recognized for stewardship

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife has selected Lewis and Clark Timberlands for the Fish and Wildlife Stewardship Award for Forest Lands.

The Seaside-based company will be awarded in the 2019 Industrial Forest Landowner category during a virtual ceremony on Friday. The 2019 awards were postponed due to the pandemic, and 2020 awards were canceled.

Lewis and Clark Timberlands was chosen for its work in habitat protection measures, including stream protection and enhancement, garbage cleanup and creating snags for wildlife shelter and food.

— The Astorian

DEATH

March 26, 2022

MENDENHALL, Joel Eric, 48, of New York City, formerly of Astoria and Warrenton, died in New York City. Ocean View Funeral & Cremation Service of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

MEMORIALS

Saturday, April 23

DARNELL, DeWayne Curtis — Graveside service with military honors at 11 a.m., Ocean View Cemetery, 575 S.W. 18th St. in Warrenton. Reception follows at the Svensen Grange, 92683 Svensen Market Road.

ON THE RECORD

Theft

• Jimmie Allen Clair, 53, of Lakebay, Washington, was indicted on Friday for first-degree theft. The crime is alleged to have occurred in June 2020 at Home Depot in Warrenton.

• Brook A. White, 25, of Raymond, Washington, was arrested on Friday at Walmart in Warrenton for second-degree theft, third-degree criminal mischief and first-degree criminal trespass.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

TUESDAY

Port of Astoria Commission, 4 p.m., 10 Pier 1, Suite 209.

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

Cannon Beach City Council, Design Review Board and Planning Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 163 E. Gower Ave.

Gearhart City Council, 6 p.m., special meeting on parks master plan, (electronic meeting).

Seaside Planning Commission, 6 p.m., work session, City Hall, 989 Broadway.

WEDNESDAY

Clatsop County Board of Commissioners, 10 a.m., work session, (electronic meeting).

Seaside Tourism Advisory Committee, 3 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

Warrenton Urban Renewal Advisory Committee, 4 p.m., City Hall, 225 S. Main Ave.

Knappa School District Board, 6:30 p.m., Knappa High School library, 41535 Old U.S. Highway 30.

THURSDAY

Seaside Transportation Advisory Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.



SCALING A SHIPWRECK

Lydia Ely/The Astorian

A man scaled the Peter Iredale shipwreck at Fort Stevens State Park.

Democrat-backed committee plans to highlight Johnson's conservative record

By DIRK VANDERHART
Oregon Public Broadcasting

As she runs for governor as a nonaffiliated candidate, former state Sen. Betsy Johnson has been able to stay above the fray of a heated May primary battle.

That placidity might soon be over.

A new Democrat-backed political action committee says it's teeing up a messaging strategy against Johnson, a former Democrat who some in the party worry could siphon needed votes from their eventual nominee come November. The PAC, Oregonians for Ethics, says it's going to explain to voters that Johnson's record is more conservative than they might be comfortable with.

"Former state Sen. Johnson will not tell Oregonians about her positions against the environment and the fight against climate change, her working to thwart common-sense gun safety measures, her attacking the interests and well-being of working families and more," said Debby Garman, a Hillsboro resident who is listed as the committee's director. "We believe that for democracy to work, it is vital that voters have the facts. Over the course of the election, we will work to provide those facts to Oregon voters."



Bradley W. Parks/Oregon Public Broadcasting

State Sen. Betsy Johnson held up a wood cutting depicting the statehouse at a TimberUnity rally in front of the Oregon State Capitol in Salem in February 2020.

Oregonians for Ethics was formed in February and to date has reported a single contribution: \$49,500 worth of polling donated by the national Democratic Governors Association. History suggests much more money could be on the way. The Democratic Governors Association kicked in more than \$2 million helping Gov. Kate Brown fend off a challenge in 2018.

Sam Newton, a spokesman for the governors' organization, declined to answer questions last week, referring an inquiry to Garman.

In an email, Garman described the new group as a "broad coalition of Oregonians who have come together to ensure that voters have an accurate under-

standing of the records of candidates for governor" and suggested the PAC might target more people than Johnson. She did not answer questions about how much the PAC planned to spend or where it would get financial backing.

Johnson spent 20 years in the Oregon Legislature and was often the most conservative member of the Democratic caucus. Her friendly relationship with timber groups helped kill a bill to cap and reduce the state's carbon emissions in 2019 — a proposal Garman fervently supported. Johnson has reliably voted against gun control proposals, such as opposing a 2020 bill that required guns to be stored securely when not in use and

banned concealed weapons in the Capitol.

But Johnson is also against abortion restrictions, and sided with Democrats on key votes like a 2019 bill to create a new tax on Oregon businesses to fund public schools. Both of those stances could cut against her as she tries to woo the support of conservative voters.

So far, Johnson's sales pitch has resonated with moneyed Oregonians. The candidate has raised more than \$6 million in the race, far more than any of the candidates running in the May primaries. The sum includes \$1 million from Nike co-founder Phil Knight.

Johnson has said often that she expected to be attacked by the major political parties, and said last week she was "not surprised" by the new PAC.

"Both national parties fear an independent governor who represents the people over entrenched special interests," she said in a statement. "We need a governor loyal only to Oregonians and not national political interests."

As an unaffiliated candidate, Johnson is taking a rare path to the November ballot. Rather than vying for a party nomination, she plans to collect roughly 23,750 signatures from voters who support her.

White House study of lower Snake River dams raises farmers' questions

By MATTHEW WEAVER
Capital Press

The White House Council on Environmental Quality said in a post on its website that it is studying the fate of four lower Snake River dams — and the rest of the Columbia basin.

In the March 28 post, the council outlined efforts to study breaching the dams, including a March 21 "Nation to Nation" meeting between federal agencies and leaders of the tribes of the basin.

"We heard calls to support breaching the four dams on the lower Snake River to restore a more natural flow, also about the need to replace the services provided by those dams, and recognition that such a step would require congressional action," the blog post reads. "We were asked to consider the basin holistically because of its inherent interconnectedness."

A representative of the council declined to comment.

According to the blog, the council last fall convened leaders from the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the



Associated Press

The Lower Granite Dam near Pomeroy is one of four dams on the lower Snake River.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Army Corps of Engineers and the Bonneville Power Administration.

The group will "build on existing analyses to identify a durable path forward that ensures a clean energy future, supports local and regional economies, and restores ecosystem function, while honoring longstanding commitments to tribal nations," the blog states.

"We cannot continue business as usual. Doing the right thing for salmon, tribal nations, and communities can

bring us together. It is time for effective, creative solutions," the blog states.

The Biden administration is contacting stakeholders to get more information to understand the system and process, said Michelle Hennings, the executive director of the Washington Association of Wheat Growers.

"We continue to be engaged with the administration at CEQ," Hennings said. "Looking at the blog, we would have liked to see more focus on the impact this would have had on farmers across the country."

It's important for farmers to remain fully engaged in educating the decision-makers, Hennings said.

"We have to keep in mind that farmers are facing significant disruptions already, including drought,

input costs, the supply chain and rail reliability," she said. "This would just cause another major disruption in our transportation system, which would be very harmful to the wheat farmer."

The Biden administration is focused on infrastructure, Hennings said.

"We appreciate that they have reached out to stakeholders to have discussions to better understand what's happening," she said.

"There are a lot of unknowns about this CEQ process but farm bureau is keeping an eye on this process," said Sean Ellis, a spokesman for the Idaho Farm Bureau. "CEQ is one of several conversations taking place right now on this issue and we're continuing to watch all of these processes. We continue to monitor the situation with the lower Snake River dams and will respond as necessary."

Farmers support salmon recovery, but want a solution that will benefit all stakeholders instead of harming one more than others, Hennings said.

The wheat industry is concerned, but there are members of Congress who understand the importance of the dams, Hennings said.

"One of the cleanest modes of transportation is barging, not putting 150,000 trucks back on the road," she said.

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