

## IN BRIEF

## Seaside fire and police to receive seismic retrofit grants

SEASIDE — The Seaside Fire Department will receive more than \$1.7 million and the city's police department an additional \$1.6 million in seismic retrofit grants from Business Oregon, the state's economic development agency.

The goal is for the buildings to withstand an earthquake that will initiate a Cascadia Subduction Zone event, Fire Chief Joey Daniels said. "If the building can withstand the quake, we can get millions of dollars of equipment out," he said.

## Astoria approves spending for equipment and technology upgrades

The Astoria City Council has approved two purchases for equipment and technology upgrades.

City councilors on July 5 approved an expenditure of \$74,296 to upgrade the audio and visual system in the council chambers.

The City Council also authorized the purchase of up to \$768,338 for a new fire engine.

## Astoria distributes grant to Liberty Restoration Inc.

The Astoria City Council has distributed grant funding to Liberty Restoration Inc.

Each year the arts and cultural subcommittee makes recommendations to the budget committee on how to spend Promote Astoria funds based on applications and available funds. In June, the city allocated \$68,816 to six organizations for the fiscal year starting in July.

The city said on July 5 that due to staff oversight, an application from Liberty Restoration Inc. requesting \$12,500 was not included in the materials provided to the subcommittee.

The City Council approved the theater organization's request.

## Razor clam harvest to close

The razor clam harvest will be closed in Clatsop County from Friday through Sept. 30.

The annual closure began in 1967 to protect the clam population by allowing newly set young clams to establish themselves.

The closure extends from Tillamook Head in Seaside to the Columbia River. During the closure, staff at the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife will assess stock.

— The Astorian

## DEATH

July 10, 2022

TUCKER, Gerald Eugene, 74, of Astoria, died in Portland. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

## ON THE RECORD

## Encouraging child sexual abuse

• Blake Edward Lasser, 29, of Amherst, Massachusetts, was arraigned on Monday on 12 counts of encouraging child sexual abuse in the first degree and 12 counts of encouraging child sexual abuse in the second degree.

The crimes are alleged to have occurred in Clatsop County between Jan. 1, 2020, and March 4, 2021.

## Criminal mischief

• Richard Dean York, 52, of Puyallup, Washington, was arrested on Monday for first-degree criminal mischief and giving false information to police. He allegedly launched a firework into the side of an apartment building on Steam Whistle Way in Astoria. York also had a warrant out of Klamath Falls.

• Riccardo Jacob Pare-

des Moyer, 28, of Astoria, was indicted on June 30 for first-degree criminal mischief, second-degree criminal mischief, third-degree criminal mischief and second-degree disorderly conduct. The crimes are alleged to have occurred earlier that month.

## DUI

• Lucas Theodore Hieronymus, 45, of Spokane, Washington, was arrested on Tuesday on N.E. Skipanon Drive in Warrenton for driving under the influence of intoxicants and reckless driving.

• Ricardo M. Linares, 25, of Salem, was arrested on Saturday on U.S. Highway 101 on the Warrenton side of the New Youngs Bay Bridge for DUI, reckless driving, driving without privileges, violation of a basic rule and failure to carry or present a driver's license.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

## THURSDAY

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

Warrenton Planning Commission, 5:30 p.m., City Hall, 225 S. Main Ave.

## FRIDAY

Astoria City Council, 9 a.m., work session, City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

## 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

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Effective January 12, 2021

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## Art unveiled at Seaside convention center

## Pieces capture regional themes

By R.J. MARX  
The Astorian

SEASIDE — When the Seaside Civic and Convention Center completed its remodel in 2019, one aspect remained to be completed: artwork.

Three years and a pandemic later, the convention center debuted its collection at an open house on July 8 featuring Northwest-themed art in mediums including tapestry, quilts, oil paintings, prints, glass, jewelry and metal.

Commissioned pieces are placed on the exterior of the building, Russ Vandenberg, the convention center's general manager, said. "I really hope you came in with high expectations, because you're going to be really thrilled to get what you're going to see inside the building."

Curator Drea Frost, a Cannon Beach resident, worked with a team of judges to distribute the \$150,000 budgeted for the convention center. Forty-five pieces by 30 artists span work from the past 10 years, including work by Royal Nebeker, the North Coast-based painter who died



R.J. Marx/The Astorian

A sphere composed of hard driftwood at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center by artist Joshua Blewett.

in 2014.

"I felt it was important to include him because he was so prolific in this area," Frost said.

Dave Schaerer lives in Portland and has a house in Rockaway Beach. He's been chronicling the coast in photographs for 55 years, including collections of razor clamming, sea gulls and what he calls "raindance." Frost saw his work on his website and he has three pieces in the show.

Schaerer's work, and that of other artists represented in the show, reflects the nature and the beauty of the area that we live in, Frost said.

"Some folks that come to the convention center come from all over the world, and maybe they won't get a chance to go out and enjoy some of the beautiful spaces, but they will have that here," she said. "It really honors the nature and the beauty of the space that we live in."

Stirling Gorsuch, an Astoria-based printmaker raised in Cannon Beach, said his work was inspired by Japanese wood-block prints from the 19th century. The Seaside High School graduate's work has been shown throughout the North Coast and beyond.

"It's nature-inspired by the forests on the coastline,"

Gorsuch said. "They're playing with different light, different weather, different seasons."

Cecil Capoman, based in Hoquiam, Washington, carved "Dragonfish," based on a Salish tribal legend.

The piece, 60 inches in diameter and 2 inches thick, is carved from yellow cedar and acrylic painting.

"The general story is when, when the thunderstorms are here, that's when thunderbird comes out from the mountains and hunts the killer whale. And the thunder and lightning you hear is the thunderbird throwing a lightning bolt down and spearing the whale."

Capoman is the son of artist and Quinalt Indian Nation President Guy Capoman. In 2019, Guy Capoman delivered a 10-foot welcome pole that now stands in Cannon Beach.

"He taught me everything I know," Cecil Capoman said.

Work was selected by a committee of five and Frost.

"We brought an expert in to help us," Vandenberg said. "We gave her our vision, bringing Northwest beauty into the building and encouraged her to use local and regional artists as much as she could."

## Counties ask state Supreme Court to reinstate timber verdict

By TED SICKINGER  
The Oregonian

A group of rural counties and some 150 taxing districts is asking the Oregon Supreme Court to reinstate a \$1 billion award against the state for failing to maximize timber harvests on state forests and resulting payments to those local governments.

The Oregon Court of Appeals this spring ruled that the Oregon Department of Forestry and its policy-setting board are not obligated to maximize timber harvests and associated payments to counties where the forests are located.

That opinion overturned a 2019 decision by a jury in Linn County that concluded the state breached a statutory contract with the counties and shortchanged them on harvest revenues for two decades.

The latest appeal had been expected, given the huge sum

at stake. The Supreme Court is not obligated to review the case, but its previous involvement and precedent in related cases make it more likely. There is no established timeline for a decision.

As a result, the final outcome of the \$1 billion verdict remains unclear. The state never made payments in the case and had been racking up \$262,829.44 a day in interest.

The Linn County lawsuit has its origins in 1941, when state and county officials cut a deal that eventually resulted in the transfer of some 600,000 acres of logged-over and burned forestlands to the state. Those once-derelict lands now comprise the bulk of Oregon's state forests, and as a condition of their transfer, the state agreed to rehabilitate them, protect them from fire and share a portion of timber revenues with the counties when they became productive again.

The state's formal mandate, codified in the Forest Acquisition Act of 1941, was to manage the forests for the greatest permanent value of such lands to the state.

The counties, which receive two-thirds of the timber sale revenues off the lands, contend that the Forest Acquisition Act and subsequent amendments constituted a contract between the counties and the state, and that in 1941, greatest permanent value was understood to mean that the state would manage the lands to maximize timber production and resulting revenue transfers to the counties.

The state has asserted that the legislation never constituted a statutory contract, and that even if it did, the language around greatest permanent value gave it discretion to manage the lands for multiple purposes, including clean water, wildlife habitat

and recreation.

In their petition for review filed this week, the counties maintain that a three-judge panel of the Court of Appeals misinterpreted a prior decision by the Supreme Court that recognized their enforceable contract rights regarding management of the state forestlands, then misapplied the Supreme Court's framework for identifying statutory contract terms.

"Failure to review and reverse the opinion will mean that local governments and future contract partners will never again be able to trust the state to honor its promises," John DiLorenzo, the counties' lawyer, said in an emailed statement.

The state's response to the counties' filing, if it chooses to file one, is due by July 20.

The Clatsop County Board of Commissioners voted 3 to 2 in 2017 to opt out of the lawsuit.

## Housing: The Astor Building is almost 100 years old

Continued from Page A1

Now, he said, people cannot identify which tenants live in subsidized units.

The Astor Building won Coast Weekend's 2020 Readers' Choice award for best apartments and was runner-up in 2021.

While parking has come up as a concern for new development downtown, including a proposed workforce housing project at Heritage Square that was scrapped earlier this year, Caruana said parking has not been a problem at the Astor Building.

Tenants park on the street, he said, adding that many of the people who live downtown also work downtown and do not drive. He said some are students and others are retired.

## Vacancies

While the issue of vacant units at the Astor Building

has improved, Caruana said it still poses a challenge. The annual contract was renewed on July 1 for 48 units, but 41 are leased. Applicants are in the pipeline for all the vacant units, but it takes time.

When there is a vacancy, the housing authority is notified and calls families from its moderate rehabilitation program waiting list, which has 165 applicants. Eligible applicants are screened by the building and must meet the criteria.

"There are multiple steps and the staff at NOHA and Astor have been working together to help streamline the process and fill vacant units more quickly," said Jim Evans, who has served as the housing authority's interim executive director. "The time to complete the eligibility and suitability process varies between tenant."

In some cases, Evans said, 30 days or less might be pos-

sible. In other instances, it may take 60 to 90 days to fill a vacancy.

Another challenge, Caruana said, is the program prevents the apartment building from keeping up with the market. He said over the years, the building has fallen substantially behind market rates.

Caruana sees the transition as a win-win.

"It doesn't matter to me what someone's income is," he said. "If they qualify to be

in the building, they're welcome to live in the building. But the way the system is now, our rents are determined by NOHA and HUD.

"And it's a historic building. It's almost 100 years old now. We put a fortune in that building in maintenance and improvement and I can't afford to do that if we have vacancies, No. 1, and we have rents that are 20% to 25% below market," he said. "It just seemed like kind of an easy fix."

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