



»INSIDE

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Warrenton names finalists for city manager

A new search after contract talks failed

By **ETHAN MYERS**
The Astorian

WARRENTON — The city has named three finalists for city manager.

Marc Howatt, a project engineer and senior civil inspector for a design firm; Donald Kewley, most recently a senior risk manager for a technical consultant; and Esther Moberg, the library director and public information officer in Seaside, are the three candidates to take over the top spot, the city announced on Friday.

Howatt, a former public works director in Warrenton, has over five years of local government management experience. He previously served as the public works director and the interim city administrator in Molalla.

"It's an honor to be chosen as a finalist for the city manager vacancy," Howatt said in a statement. "The North Coast has always been near and dear to me."

Kewley has served in a number of roles — public and private — across the country, totaling over three years of local government management experience. He was also a member of the Oregon Army National Guard.

"I am excited for the opportunity to be of service and develop community partnerships that will shape the landscape of Warrenton for future generations," Kewley said.

Moberg, who was a finalist for the city manager role in Seaside, has held a number of library posts on the North Coast. She has nine years of local government management experience.

"Warrenton is a wonderful town with many unique possibilities," Moberg said. "I'm excited for the opportunity to work there."

The new city manager will replace Linda Engbretson, who is retiring. Her last day is Aug. 5.

See Warrenton, Page A6



Lydia Ely/The Astorian

Renovating the Astoria Library has been a longtime hope for the city.

Astoria crafts strategy for \$8M library bond

Designs for renovation are conceptual

By **NICOLE BALES**
The Astorian

City leaders are stressing that designs for a renovated Astoria Library are conceptual and could change if voters approve an \$8 million bond measure in November.

During a City Council work session Friday morning, interim City Manager Paul Benoit said the designs by Hennebery Eddy Architects of Portland helped the city see what is possible for

the space and establish a \$10.6 million budget for a project.

"I think generally we're going to shake that clean," Benoit said, likening the process to an Etch A Sketch drawing toy. "We know sort of the general direction, but through working with an architect, engaging the public — really now knowing that we have a budget to do a project — what is it going to look like? What are we going to achieve? What does the public want to see?"

"I just want to assure the public that as we go through schematic design, that there's going to be tremendous opportunity for input."

The City Council will likely approve

a resolution in August to place the bond measure on the November ballot, along with the ballot title, question and summary.

A point of debate

Renovating the 55-year-old library on 10th Street has been a City Council goal for years, but also a point of debate.

In 2013, Ruth Metz Associates, a library consulting firm based in Portland, conducted a renovation study, which identified community needs after seeking public input.

See Library, Page A6

Resident physician gives back to hometown

Nhan grew up in Seaside

By **R.J. MARX**
The Astorian

SEASIDE — Bao Tran Nhan is back in her hometown.

The Seaside High School graduate returns as a resident physician with Providence.

"My family grew up very poor in Vietnam and actually emigrated from Vietnam," she said. "I came to Seaside when I was 5. I saw a lot of poverty."

Her parents, Ti-Ti Le and Kevin Nhan, became a success story, owning and operating A-Nails Seaside.

Even at a young age, Nhan wanted to serve the community.

"I wasn't quite sure how to help people the best," she said. "It wasn't until my grandma got sick when I was in high school where I realized how much health can impact someone's life. Her oncologist was able to treat her with such compassion and such care. He was able to kind of lead her through a really tough time."

She received experience in medical and dental clinics and at the foundation where she worked on fundraising campaigns. "I was like, 'Hey, this is something I might pursue,'" she said.

Nhan was also a busser at Pig 'N Pancake, a member of the Seaside High School golf team, manager on the swim team and percussionist and pianist for the high school band. She graduated as valedictorian and was voted prom queen in her senior year.

Nhan received her bachelor's



Bao Tran Nhan on the Prom after medical school graduation.



with a major in biochemistry and a minor in biology from the University of Portland.

"I actually liked to study," she said. "I love school. To be honest, I think it was something that I really excelled in. Whenever I studied, I loved kind of feeding my mind. My curiosity encouraged me to even study more, so it was rather easy for me."

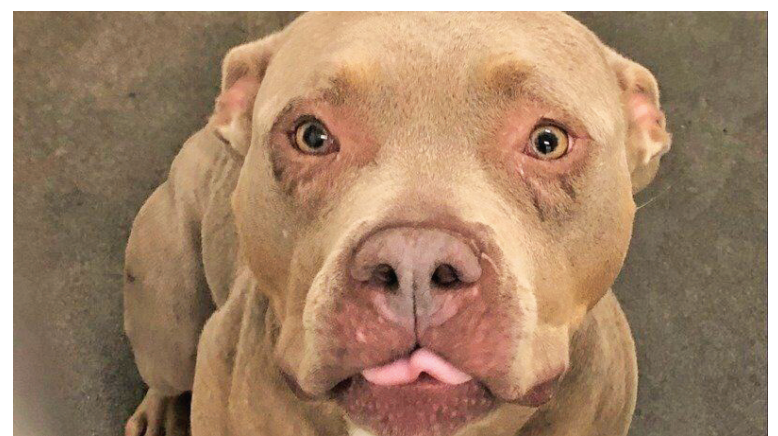
She attended the University of

Colorado School of Medicine near Denver, where she lived and studied for four years.

It was more difficult than she thought — even for someone who likes to study. "It was quite rigorous and tough, but I'm really grateful for the education I got there," she said. "There were just so many nice people. I'd stayed around Oregon for most of my life — nice to see what's out there."

After medical school, Nhan returned to Portland, where she is one of 21 physicians participating in the Providence Oregon Family Medicine Residency program.

See Nhan, Page A6



'Layla,' a pit bull adopted from a Cowlitz County shelter, killed a cat in Astoria in June.

Dog owner fights city euthanasia order

A pit bull killed a cat

By **ETHAN MYERS**
The Astorian

Six months after losing his dog, James Mayer was finally ready to get another one.

A pit bull named "Layla," deteriorating at a shelter in Cowlitz County, caught his eye.

"I was finally ready. I thought I had the capacity to help another dog," Mayer recalled. "Layla came across my feed and I was like, 'Oh man, that dog is beautiful and she needs help. This is the one.'"

Little did Mayer know that just a few weeks later he would be fighting to keep Layla alive after she killed a cat in Astoria.

In August, he will go before the Circuit Court to appeal a euthanasia order from the city.

Layla was staying with Mayer's girlfriend, Kristin Hooper,

in Astoria in June. While Mayer and Hooper are from Portland, Hooper stays on the North Coast while she works shifts at Columbia Memorial Hospital as an emergency department nurse practitioner.

One morning, Layla bolted out the door and took off before Hooper could corral her. Layla ran several blocks before she came upon "Jack," a 12-year-old cat. The encounter left the cat with fatal injuries.

Astoria police arrived to find Layla chasing another cat. They took statements from witnesses before impounding the dog.

Under city code, animals at large that kill other animals are designated level five, the highest level of dangerousness. With some exceptions, the law also states that animals receiving that classification shall be euthanized.

See Dog, Page A6



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