

## County may seek pause on psilocybin

A freeze would provide time for review

By ERICK BENDEL  
*The Astorian*

As Oregon drafts regulations to license psilocybin for therapeutic use, Clatsop County is weighing whether to follow other counties and cities across the state and ask local voters in November to approve a temporary two-year ban.

Voters in Oregon passed Measure 109 in November 2020 to legalize psilocybin — also known as “magic mushrooms” — to treat depression, anxiety, trauma and other mental health challenges for people 21 and older at licensed service centers.

Oregon is the first state in the country to allow the drug. The ballot measure passed in Clatsop County 55% to 45%.

The Oregon Health Authority plans to issue final regulations in late December, shortly before the state begins accepting licensing applications in early January from aspiring manufacturers and people looking to dispense psilocybin.

Counties and cities have the option of asking voters to approve a two-year moratorium on psilocybin manufacturing and service centers or a permanent ban. Local governments can also adopt time, place

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## Elevator at apartment complex for seniors repaired

Outage at Owens-Adair lasted six weeks

By NICOLE BALES  
*The Astorian*

The sole elevator at Owens-Adair, an affordable housing complex for seniors and people with disabilities, is running again after being out of operation for the past six weeks.

Residents of the four-story, 46-unit complex at Exchange and 15th streets near downtown have been without access to the elevator since a power outage on June 7. The outage affected more than 7,400 Astoria area customers.

The Northwest Oregon Housing Authority, which owns the building, could not locate a supplier for the part needed to restore operations to the elevator. Ultimately, an elevator company had to fabricate a new part.

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Constance Waisanen and her dog, 'Tucker,' at home in Astoria.

Lydia Ely/The Astorian

## 'I thought I would try the hardest things I knew'

Waisanen, a financial adviser and engineer, has built a life and legacy on the North Coast

By ABBEY McDONALD  
*The Astorian*

When Constance Waisanen accepted a job as a chemical engineer in Clatskanie after college, she thought she would spend a few years in the region before moving on.

Instead, four decades later, she found herself at her son's backyard wedding in Knappa. Her other son and his family, who also live locally, were part of the small gathering. Her garden provided the flowers for the ceremony.

In the time in between, she built a life and legacy in engineering and finance and became an influential contributor to the North Coast.

Waisanen grew up on a dairy farm in Moose Lake, Minnesota, a small town southwest of Lake Superior. During school breaks, she baked cupcakes and made hearty meals to bring the crews in the field.

"It was a really idyllic childhood," she said. "It was safe for kids to just wander. I'd get on my horse in the morning and go riding, and not come back until dinnertime."

As a young adult, she spent some time living in the woods in what she described as "self-imposed poverty." She and her friends would venture out

for groceries once a week and hike back to their tents in the forest.

She had fun for a while, but got tired of staying idle.

"I thought I would go back to college. And — I think it's still true today — for women to have any kind of equal earning power we need more education than men. It's just the truth," she said. "So I thought I needed to get some kind of career. So I thought I would try the hardest things I knew."

### 'Numbers do not come easily for many people'

Waisanen took calculus, chemistry and physics classes at the University of California, Davis, and discovered she had a knack for math and science. She graduated with an engineering degree in 1979.

The Georgia-Pacific Wauna Mill hired her as a chemical engineer right after graduation. Her job was to ensure wood chips were chemically balanced and effectively transformed into paper.

Waisanen didn't intend to stay long, thinking any promotion would require moving from mill to mill around the country. To her surprise, she kept climbing the ladder in Clatskanie.

After 27 years, her momentum halted when she couldn't climb any higher at Georgia-Pacific while stay-

ing in the community she now called home.

So, to the surprise of her colleagues and to herself, she made a jump to finance.

"I mean, numbers come easily for me, obviously, so that part was not daunting or frightening," she said. "But what I realized is that numbers do not come easily for many people, particularly when they're associated with money, which has so much emotion attached to it for us."

In 2006, she began working as a consultant for Thrivent, a Fortune 500 financial services organization headquartered in Minneapolis and founded by Lutherans.

"I think a lot of my co-workers thought I was crazy. They thought, 'Oh, you're gonna fail miserably at this,'" she said. "But it's a career that's really about people. And you just have to have enough understanding of the numbers, and how stuff works and how you can put together a plan for people. And that's the engineering side."

She's content with her decision. Her office overlooks the Columbia River at Pier 39. As she spoke and watched a train of geese float by, her dog "Tucker" — a sizable mixture

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## At a summer camp, children hear lessons on Chinook history and culture



Don Abing, of the Chinook Indian Nation, talks with children at a summer camp at the Wildlife Center of the North Coast.

Alexis Weisend/The Astorian

### Junior naturalists at the wildlife center

By ALEXIS WEISEND  
*The Astorian*

Don Abing, of the Chinook Indian Nation, tapped his chin so the children would remember to pronounce "Chinook" with a "chin" and not a "shin."

He told them that Chinook people used Oregon ash trees for canoe paddles, never hunted spiritually important brown or white pelicans, fashioned tools out of elk and deer bones and kept dogs as pets.

Abing's lessons on Chinook history and culture Wednesday morning were part of a junior naturalist summer camp for third-through-fifth graders at the Wildlife Center

of the North Coast.

"They're our neighbors ...," he said of the children. "We need to make sure that our original culture, as well as our contemporary culture, is knowledge that is shared so that there would be peace and cooperation and understanding of values."

Abing explained the Chinook Nation's connection to nature and how they cared for the land for thousands of years.

"The Chinook Indian Nation were, for millennia, the original caretakers and stewards of the soil you are now sitting on ... of the trail you just came from, of the air you're just now breathing," he said.

He advised the children to leave no trace where they walk. He said after the Chinook would hunt and gather, the last people to leave would look to make sure the trail

was not disturbed.

Abing also shared the Chinook Nation's effort to restore federal recognition, which would give the roughly 3,000 members access to federal programs and resources. He asked the children to speak to their parents and gave them a link to a petition, which they scribbled down in their notebooks.

The Chinook were recognized by the federal government in 2001 at the end of the Clinton administration, but the status was rescinded under the George W. Bush administration in 2002.

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