

## IN BRIEF

## Beachgoer dies in Seaside

SEASIDE — A beachgoer died on Saturday afternoon after being pulled into a rip tide in the area off Sixth Avenue, the city said.

Rescuers recovered the unconscious victim, a man in his 50s, from the ocean and took him to Providence Seaside Hospital, along with a teenage female who also got caught in the current.

The man died; the teenager survived, the city announced on Sunday.

Seaside Fire Chief Joey Daniels said the agency's practice is not to release names of deceased individuals.

"We cannot stress the unpredictable dangers of the ocean enough," Genesee Dennis, division chief of prevention for Seaside Fire & Rescue, said in a statement. "Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family for their tragic loss yesterday."

A second water rescue took place off Avenue U later on Saturday afternoon. A 27-year-old woman and a boy reached shore safely.

About 16 swimmers in distress were pulled from the ocean over the weekend, Daniels said.

"Seaside officials wish to remind beachgoers that the Pacific Ocean presents many dangers," the city said in a statement. "Please use extreme caution and always enter the water with others present. Avoid areas prone to rip currents and learn how to escape by swimming parallel to the beach."

A rip tide-related water rescue took place in Cannon Beach, as well, on Saturday. The person did not require medical attention, Cannon Beach Fire Chief Marc Reckmann said in a text.

## Sixth Street viewing platform closed over ferry risk

The Sixth Street viewing platform is closed until further notice.

The city said the historic Tourist No. 2, which capsized near the viewing platform in late July, shifted Sunday afternoon and came to a rest against the base of the platform.

Astoria officials said the viewing platform was closed as a precaution while the city ensures no damage was caused and no hazards are present.

—The Astorian

## DEATH

Aug. 19, 2022

PLUMMER, Betty Ann, 88, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

## MEMORIALS

Friday, Aug. 26

MAKI, William "Bill" A. — Graveside service at 3 p.m., Knappa Prairie Cemetery, 92892 Knappa Dock Road.

WATSON, Eugene R. — Celebration of life from 1 to 4 p.m., North Coast Family Fellowship, 2245 N. Wahanna Road in Seaside.

Saturday, Aug. 27

CASWELL, Dwight Allan Jr. — Memorial service at 11 a.m., Charlene Larsen Center for the Performing Arts, 588 16th St. A reception follows at around 12:30 p.m. at The Loft at the Red Building, 20 Basin St.

## CORRECTION

**Incorrect first name** — Kirsten Norgaard is the owner of Kit's Apothecary. Her first name was incorrectly spelled Kristen in an A1 story Saturday about Kit's moving into the former Abeco Office Systems building on Commercial Street.

## ON THE RECORD

## Trespass

• Savana Rose Ramirez-Mee, 28, of Ocean Park, Washington, was arrested on Thursday on S.E. 13th Place in Warrenton for first-degree trespass, resisting arrest and attempted assault of a public safety officer.

## Theft

• Bianca Maria Cordero, 23, of Ocean Park, Washington, was arrested on Saturday for a first-de-

gree theft that allegedly took place at Fred Meyer in Warrenton. Cordero also had a warrant out of Columbia County.

## DUI

• Jose Andres Valero, 65, of Astoria, was arrested on Friday at W. Marine Drive and Hamburg Avenue in Astoria for driving under the influence of intoxicants.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

## TUESDAY

**Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District**, 5:15 p.m., 1225 Avenue A, Seaside.

**Warrenton City Commission**, 6 p.m., City Hall, 225 S. Main Ave.

## WEDNESDAY

**Astoria Parks Board**, 6:45 a.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

**Astoria School District Board**, 5:45 p.m., Astoria Middle School library, 1100 Klaskanine Ave.

**Clatsop County Board of Commissioners**, 6 p.m., Judge Guy Boyington Building, 857 Commercial St., Astoria.

## the Astorian

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Jessie Wardarski/AP Photo

For generations, Indigenous people have fished for salmon and trout from scaffolds perched just above the sacred water of the Columbia River.

## Columbia River's salmon are at the core of ancient religion

## River is under threat

By DEEPA BHARATH

Associated Press

James Kiona stands on a rocky ledge overlooking Lyle Falls where the water froths and rushes through steep canyon walls just before merging with the Columbia River. His silvery ponytail flutters in the wind, and a string of eagle claws adorns his neck.

Kiona has fished for Chinook salmon for decades on his family's scaffold at the edge of the falls, using a dip net suspended from a 33-foot pole.

"Fishing is an art and a spiritual practice," says Kiona, a Yakama Nation elder. "You're fighting the fish. The fish is fighting you, tearing holes in the net, jerking you off the scaffold."

He finds strength, sanctity, even salvation in that struggle. The river saved Kiona when he returned from Vietnam with postwar trauma, giving him therapy no hospital could.

When he lies on the rocks by the rushing river and closes his eyes, he hears the songs and the voices of his ancestors. The water, he says, holds the history of the land and his people.

"It heals you," he says.

...

From its headwaters in British Columbia where the Rocky Mountains crest, the Columbia River flows south into Washington state and then westward and into the Pacific Ocean at its mouth near Astoria. Just below the confluence with the Snake River, the Columbia's largest tributary, the river turns through the Cascade Mountain Range, carving out the Columbia River Gorge.

It's a spectacular canyon, 80 miles long and up to 4,000 feet deep, with cliffs, ridges, streams and waterfalls. For thousands of years, Native American tribes in this area have relied on Nch'i-Wána, or "the great river," for its salmon and steelhead trout, and its surrounding areas for the fields bearing edible roots, medicinal herbs and berry bushes as well as the deer and elk whose meat and hides are used for food and ritual.

Yet the river is under threat because of climate change, hydroelectric dams and industrial pollution. Warming waters linked to climate change endanger the salmon, which need cooler temperatures to survive.

Hydroelectric dams on the Columbia and its tributaries have curtailed the river's flow, further imperiling salmon's migration from the Pacific upstream



Associated Press

Hydroelectric dams, like the Bonneville Dam, on the Columbia River and its tributaries have curtailed the river's flow, further imperiling salmon migration from the Pacific Ocean to their freshwater spawning grounds upstream.

to their freshwater spawning grounds, and threatening millennia-old spiritual traditions that bind these Native communities together.

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"We are the salmon people, or river people," says Aja DeCoteau, the executive director of the Portland-based Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, which represents the interests of the four Columbia River treaty tribes — Yakama, Umatilla, Warm Springs and Nez Perce — in policy, advocacy and management of the basin. "Without water there are no fish, plants or herbs."

Each year the tribes honor the salmon, roots, berries, deer and elk — which they believe were originally placed in the land for their sustenance — with what are known as "First Food ceremonies." In their creation story, the salmon, deer, elk, roots and berries offered to provide sustenance to humans, and humans in turn were given the responsibility by the Creator to care for these resources.

Elders speak of how streams flow from the mountains sanctified by the prayers of ancestors who went there to commune with the spirits. These rivulets then flow down and merge with the Columbia. If Nch'i-Wána is the main artery of the land, those streams are like the veins that feed it. So even the smallest creek is vital and sacred.

At communal meals, tribe members typically begin and end with water — "You take a drink of water to purify yourself before you eat and you end the meal with water to show respect for what you've eaten," DeCoteau says.

Tribes also use the river's water and rocks for rituals such as sweat lodge purification ceremonies, held in low, dome-shaped structures where river rocks are heated along with herbal medicine.

"After you sweat and pray, there is also the practices of jumping in the river to cleanse yourself," DeCoteau says. "It's hard to continue practicing these rit-

uals when the river is so contaminated."

...

Bill Yallup Jr. was 6 when Celilo Falls "drowned," as he puts it.

Known as Wyam to Native people, the thundering cascade was a sacred place where for 15,000 years Indigenous tribes netted salmon as the fish jumped upstream. It was also their economic nerve center, with the salmon trading for all manner of goods from feathers to copper to wampum, beads crafted from shells.

The falls fell silent in 1957 when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers erected The Dalles Dam, flooding the area and creating the Celilo Lake reservoir.

Young salmon, or smolts, swim down the Columbia to the ocean, where they grow for between one and five years. Then they migrate back upstream to spawn. Some are caught and become a source of sustenance for the people, and others die and become one with the environment. The cycle repeats over and over.

"The sacredness of this river," Yallup says, "lies in the sacrifice the salmon make each time they fulfill their promise to come back."

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It was worries over the spring salmon's disappearance from the river that inspired Elaine Harvey to get her bachelor's degree in aquatic and fishery science. She is also concerned for spe-

cies like the Pacific lamprey, which has "been around since the dinosaurs" but today faces possible extinction.

Now a fish biologist for Yakama Fisheries, Harvey says what keeps her up at night is the "race to harness green energy" that has brought multinational corporations to the Columbia River.

"Wind turbines and solar farms are impacting our archeological sites, cultural resource sites, wildlife and fish," she says, pointing to a sacred mountain near the John Day Dam that the Native people call Push-pum. "Our root fields are on that mountain. We could lose access to our food."

Harvey says she will never leave the river because that's what she was taught by her elders.

"We have a real, deep connection to all these places. Our blood line is here."

Harvey's cousin, Bronsco Jim Jr., was appointed mid-Columbia River chief when he was 21 and in that capacity performs longhouse services, first food ceremonies and funerals.

Sunlight streams into the longhouse during a recent ceremonial meal with elders at historic Celilo Village. Jim is wearing shell earrings and a beaded necklace with the pendant of a horse's silhouette honoring his ancestors who rode them.

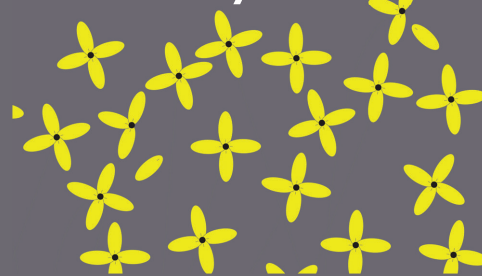
In Native families that inhabit the Columbia basin, education about First Foods begins at home and continues in these longhouses, accompanied by teaching and ceremony. Deeply held beliefs also dictate the rules of food gathering.

Community members are required to wait for that first feast to honor each food before they head out to harvest it. In the longhouse and out in the mountains, the food-gathering is accompanied by song.

"These songs and ceremonies are part of everything we do," Jim says, adding that losing them could cost his people their spiritual identity.

"They feed our body and soul."

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