



## Commercial crabbing opens Feb. 16

The commercial Dungeness crab season opens this weekend after a delay of 2 1/2 months.

The opening is for crabbing between Manzanita and the Washington state border.

The season generally starts Dec. 1 and ends Aug. 14. But it was delayed when crabs tested too scrawny.

The ocean and Columbia River commercial fishery is the most valuable single-species fishery in Oregon with an annual harvest of 16 million pounds of crab per season.

The season officially opens Feb. 16 this year, but crab

vessels may set their gear beginning Saturday.

The recreational season is open already, and commercial crabbers expect to do well despite the delay.

Results from recent testing in Washington state indicate levels of the marine biotoxin in still are elevated. All crab harvested in Washington must have the guts removed by a licensed crab processor prior to sale to ensure crab going into the market is safe to eat.

All crab from Oregon's harvest areas have been well below alert levels.

## Awards: Chamber honors cities' top citizens

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our children and our community is revered by many," Warrenton Mayor Henry Balensifer said in making the announcement.

"You've most likely seen this year's winner at City Commission meetings, decorating our downtown corridor, or at any number of community events. He has played an instrumental role for years in the school walkathons, weekend backpack program, Thanksgiving baskets and Christmas Toy Drives."

He serves on the Warrenton Planning Commission and previously served on the Warrenton Business Association.

Moha is an organizer of the Fourth of July celebration, and is active in local youth sports programs and Spruce Up Warrenton, a group of volunteers devoted to improving downtown.

Also honored at the banquet was Corleen Mathews, who received the George Award as the top Astoria volunteer. The award honors someone who consistently steps up to meet community needs instead of "letting George do it."

"Here are a few more things her nominators called her,"



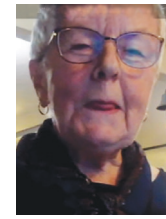
Mike Moha with his wife, Carla, during the virtual event.

Astoria Mayor Bruce Jones said. "(She's) our No. 1 helper, a woman of service, a real hard worker beloved by all, a record keeper, supply keeper, memory keeper, tradition keeper, and the perfect George for our community."

Mathews has played a major role in the success of the Scandinavian Midsummer Festival since its beginning.

She volunteers for the Astoria School District's Christmas Food Basket program and helps with the chamber's Crab, Seafood & Wine Festival and the Great Columbia Crossing.

Warrenton's Main Street Market was named Chamber Member of the Year for service to its customers and the



Mathews

community. "Main Street and its family owners are superb examples of a business with a heart," said Judy Hoff, President of the Chamber Ambassadors. "From our experience, these are people who don't draw a distinction between customer service and community service. They look for ways to make their store and everything within sight better every day."

Normally, the chamber's annual banquet is attended by 200 people or more. This

year's event was held virtually, with participants "seated" in groups with others as if they were at a table.

Using the online meeting platform Remo, those attending paid a small fee and could upgrade their registration to receive party kits that included the ingredients to make a cocktail.

There were fewer attendees this year and the program was shorter than usual.

It was a great platform in honoring deserving members of the community, said David Reid, the chamber's executive director.

"The Richard Ford Award and the George Award are among the most prestigious, highest honors our community can give to the super-volunteers in our midst," Reid said.

"It is more evidence that we live in a truly special place that we have not several, but dozens, of worthy nominees each year. The selection committees have an extraordinarily tough job to narrow that list down. This year's recipients are deserving of this recognition and so much more."

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