

## Officially open



Members of the Warrenton-Hammond Historical Society want the public to know the little museum across from City Hall is up and running. If the sign is out, the museum is open and you're welcome to come in.

# Memorial gets some much-needed protection

*The Columbia Press*

The memorial in Seafarers Park adjacent to Hammond Marina stands as a testament to those who lost their lives saving others.

So it's been hard for some to see park visitors and some campers using it to dry their clothes or to prop up a cooler full of beer.

The Triumph Memorial honors the five U.S. Coast Guard members who died in 1961 while rescuing the fishing vessel *Mermaid*, which broke a rudder during a severe storm.

City leaders decided it was time to rescue the memorial.

Warrenton's Public Works Department got a great deal on rope from the state surplus office in Salem, according to



Photo by Rick Newton

City crews installed a protective fence around the Triumph Memorial in Seafarers Park in Hammond.

Operations Manager Kyle Sharpsteen. Pacific Power donated poles and city workers installed them this week.

"I just wanted to thank the Public

Works people for completing the surround for the memorial at Seafarers Park," Commissioner Rick Newton said. "It looks really good; way better than I thought it would."

Initially, the monument stood at the location of the Point Triumph Condos, which overlooks the site of the tragedy. It was moved to the park and rededicated there in May 1991.

"In memory of the valiant crew of the Coast Guard Motor Lifeboat *Triumph* who, on the night of Jan. 12, 1961, during a severe storm, made the supreme sacrifice while assisting the fishing vessel *Mermaid* on Peacock Spit," the memorial reads.

Those who died: John L. Culp, John S. Hoban, Joseph E. Petrin, Ralph E. Mace, and Gordon Sussex.

There was one survivor on the Coast Guard lifeboat. Two fishermen from the *Mermaid* also drowned.

## Heat blamed for 63 deaths in Oregon

Last weekend's extreme heat led to the deaths of 63 Oregonians, according to the State Medical Examiner's Office.

Several death investigations still are in progress and final causes of death

have not yet been determined.

Warrenton's high was 101 degrees on Sunday, according to AccuWeather.

No deaths were reported in Clatsop County, but Multnomah had 45.

## Wildfire training was just in time DNA: Child will be given proper burial, family says

Firefighters across the state as well as members of the Oregon National Guard just finished wildland fire recertification last week and already they've been called up to fight a large wildfire.

Gov. Kate Brown declared the Wrentham Market Fire in Wasco County a conflagration, which cleared the way for the state fire marshal to mobilize firefighters and

### Downtown group hires new leader

The Astoria Downtown Historic District Association has hired an interim executive director.

Former Astoria City Council member Jessamyn West will serve in the position through the end of 2021.

After a failed search for a permanent director, the

equipment from other areas to assist in battling the blaze.

The fire outside Dufur has burned more than 10,000 acres.

Task forces from Multnomah, Washington and Yamhill counties reported Wednesday for a briefing and assignments. Additional resources from other areas were expected to be called up.

board voted to close the search temporarily, secure an interim with the skills needed to lead the organization, and reopen the search at the end of the year.

West is an owner of the Oddfellows Building and director of the Astoria Art and Movement Center.

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In 2018, the Oregon State Police Medical Examiner's Office was awarded a grant to perform innovative DNA techniques on unsolved unidentified skeletal remains cases.

The toddler case was recognized as one that could be resolved by phenotyping and investigative genetic genealogy provided by OSP's vendor lab, Parabon Nanolabs.

The first report using genetic material determined the child was of Northern European descent, with fair skin, brown eyes, and brown to light blonde hair.

Last October, a DNA profile suitable for comparison to genealogy databases was extracted.

Several relatives to the un-

identified boy were found. Searching their family trees eventually led to the immediate family members of the boy who then provided information regarding his identity.

During an interview with a potential relative, the man said he'd had a younger half-brother named Stevie, who was born with Down syndrome.

The child was born in New Mexico, but mysteriously vanished during a brief stay in Oregon in the early 1960s, the man said.

New Mexico's vital records are kept private, so investigators had to make a formal request of any children named Stevie or Steven born in late 1960 or early 1961 to a woman who'd been identified

through genetic genealogy.

The New Mexico records department discovered a birth certificate for Steven Alexander Crawford born Oct. 2, 1960, in Las Cruces.

The family member submitted an oral swab for kinship inference testing. The results were definitive; the deceased boy and the DNA donor were half-brothers, sheriff's officials announced Monday.

Officials have not yet released a cause of death or who is suspected of killing the boy. His mother is no longer living.

Based on genetic and circumstantial evidence, the Jackson County Sheriff's Office plans to release the body to family members in New Mexico, who plan to give him a proper burial.