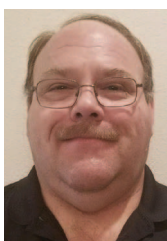


POSITION 5



Rodney Roberts



Lindsey Morrison



Patrick Duhachek



John Chapman



Marti Wajc



Katharine Parker



Shirley Yates

POSITION 4

# Crowded field in Sunset Empire Park and Rec District board races

By R.J. MARX  
Seaside Signal

Seven candidates are on the ballot for two board seats in the May 21 Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District board election.

Four candidates will vie for the Position 5 seat is

held by Rodney Roberts, appointed earlier this year after district board president Alan Evans stepped down after moving out of the district.

Roberts seeks to return to the board for a full four-year term.

Also filing for the Position 5 seat are Lindsey Morrison, Patrick Duhachek

and John Chapman.

The Position 4 seat comes vacant after current board member Edward Hassan announced plans to move outside the district.

Marti Wajc, Katharine Parker and Shirley Yates have filed to fill that seat.

Filing deadline was Thursday, March 21.

Veronica Russell, Jer-

emy Mills and Michael Hinton fill the other three board seats. Each of their terms expire in 2021.

The special district election will take place May 21.

The last day to register for voters will be April 30. Registration cards post-marked by this date or submitted online no later than 11:59 are valid.

# On Spruce Drive, summer construction traffic looms

By R.J. MARX  
Seaside Signal

When the school bell rings on June 14, the last day of school at Seaside Heights Elementary, students will file out and the site will undergo a summer of renovation and construction.

On Monday, June 17, the site will be turned into a six-day-a-week construction site for the elementary school addition. The Heights will be closed to all community access for the summer.

Students from Gearhart Elementary School will be joining Seaside Heights students in fall 2020, superintendent Sheila Roley said at the March meeting of the School Construction Citizen Oversight Committee.

"We had the opportunity to spare Spruce Street from construction traffic, but once school is out, that will change," Roley said.

In advance, Spruce Drive residents will receive a knock on the door from Hoffman Construction, with contact information provided to report concerns.

A benefit of a wetlands permit delay delivered last summer was that to date, gravel and masonry trucks have been using alternate routes, Project Manager Jim Henry said. "That's traffic that didn't have to be delivered through Spruce."

Henry said he expected about 40 to 50 trucks up

## HEIGHTS CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE

Summer 2019 — Seismic upgrade (pending state grant funding) and admin area

June through December 2019 — New gym

January through July 2020 — New classrooms and interior renovations

Spruce per day, six days a week from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

BRIC Architecture is finishing up design development of Seaside Heights to meet elementary education program needs, Henry said. These include classroom types and arrangements, gymnasium and covered play areas, building security and project budget. Work is expected to run through summer 2020.

Meanwhile, construction moves full speed ahead at the middle and high school site. Stormwater management, electrical, gas and sewer line work will be extended to the high school and middle school, and reservoir, concurrent with road construction to the school.

And with delivery of a contract with realty company Norris Stevens, sale of the existing school properties are ready for market.

"It's like being on a speeding train now," Roley said.



Photos courtesy of Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

# Protect the snowy plover

Seaside Signal

Beachgoers are urged to help recovery efforts of the threatened western snowy plover by respecting nesting areas and beach restrictions during nesting season, which began March 15 and runs through Sept. 15.

Beachgoers will see signs and ropes that identify sensitive plover nesting areas and list restrictions, including dogs (even on a leash), vehicles, kites, drones, camping and fires.

Nests, and especially chicks, are well-camouflaged. During nesting season, human disturbances can flush adult plovers away from their nests as they attempt to defend their young from the perceived predator. Left alone too long, eggs or chicks can die from exposure, predators or people.



Recreation restrictions occur in designated plover management areas, small stretches of beach along the entire coastline where plovers are nesting or could potentially nest.

These areas comprise about 40 miles of Oregon's 362 miles of shoreline. Detailed maps can be found on the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department website and on the Siuslaw National Forest website.

On these plover beaches, the dry sand and dunes are closed to all access — except along official trails and on the wet sand — to protect eggs and chicks. Visitors may see roped off areas within these plover management areas, which serve to protect the most sensitive habitat; however, all dry sand on both sides of the rope is closed. Wet sand areas on plover beaches remain open to foot and equestrian traffic. All other recreation is off limits, include walking your dog (even on a leash), driving a vehicle, riding a bicycle, camping, fires, and flying kites or drones.

# 'A very strange animal' recovering at aquarium

Seaside Signal

"A very strange animal" is how the Seaside Aquarium's Tiffany Boothe described it — and she's used to finding pyrosomes, vellela vellela and mola mola along the beach.

But when the aquarium came to the assist of a Pacific snake eel a little after 6 p.m. Thursday, March 14, they made something of a regional first. The Pacific North eels has never been seen before in Washington, and both of the two found along Oregon coast waters died before being spotted.

According to Boothe, a visitor to the Peninsula one mile south of the Cranberry Approach found the fish buried in the sand not far from the water's edge.

Concerned and curious



Tiffany Boothe

**The Pacific snake eel found on the Long Beach Peninsula on March 14.**

about what type of fish it was, she called the Seaside Aquarium.

"When we received the pictures of the animal on the beach, we knew it was something special," Boothe said. "But we also knew that though buried in the sand, it had been out of the water for some time."

The snake eel is usually found at depths between 25 feet and 500 feet, Boothe said.

# Appeals court overturns murder convictions for Seaside man

By BRENNIA VISSER  
The Daily Astorian

The Oregon Court of Appeals has overturned the murder convictions of a Seaside man who was found guilty of killing his girlfriend's 2-year-old daughter, ruling that bite-mark testimony should not have been allowed as evidence at his trial.

Randy Lee Roden was

sentenced to nearly 40 years in prison in 2016 after a jury found him guilty of murder by abuse, felony murder, manslaughter, assault and criminal mistreatment in the death of Evangelina Wing and the abuse of her two brothers.

In a ruling on Wednesday, March 20, the appeals court found the prosecution failed to present an adequate scientific foundation for the expert testimony on bite

marks found on the victims.

While the state conceded that admitting the evidence was an error, the state Department of Justice argued there was little likelihood it influenced the jury's verdicts. The appeals court found that the bite-mark testimony was harmless to Roden's assault and criminal mistreatment convictions, but undermined his defense on the homicide-related counts.

Roden's attorney had mostly blamed Dorothy Wing, the children's mother, for the assault and criminal mistreatment. But he also argued the toddler who died had MRSA — methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus — that brought about sepsis and organ failure, and what appeared to be bite marks were wounds from the infection.

The appeals court reversed the homicide-re-

lated convictions and sent the case back to Clatsop County Circuit Court. The convictions that were reversed are expected to be retried.

District Attorney Ron Brown, who prosecuted Roden, said when he received the news during a meeting, it felt like "a gut punch."

"I didn't hear another word in the meeting," Brown said. "It really did

just destroy my day."

Evangelina Wing's death and the abuse of her brothers stunned the North Coast in 2014. Prosecutors alleged the children were tortured, burned, bitten and caged in the Seaside apartment Dorothy Wing shared with Roden.

Roden had faced the death penalty, and Wing life in prison, in what prosecutors described as among the worst cases of child abuse in the county's history.

## WELCOME HOME VETERANS

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