

Seaside fire marshal takes new role with state

By NICOLE BALES
Seaside Signal

Chris Dugan never envisioned himself as a firefighter until he experienced a house fire.

It was Christmas Eve and Dugan's wife was due to deliver their son. He was working at Reed & Hertig when he received an emergency phone call.

"I thought, 'Oh, we're going to have a baby,'" he said. "No, 'It's your next door neighbor. You have smoke coming out all the ends of your house.'"

When Dugan got to the scene he was stunned.

"When you're that age and you got a fire, you're thinking, 'How am I gonna pay for this?'" he said. "I mean, I lost everything. I got a family, two kids and one on the way, it's Christmas and our house is on fire. What am I going to do?"

He remembers watching the firefighters. Most of them were his age and he recognized them from different businesses around town, but did not associate them with the fire department. After the fire was out, he asked the chief who he had to pay.

"He said, 'Oh, you don't pay anybody. This is a volunteer fire department,'" he recalled.

The concept of a volunteer fire department struck Dugan. A couple of years later, when he saw a sign seeking volunteers outside of the fire department in Seaside, he decided to help out.

"I saw that and I go, 'Wow. They must really be hurting for people,'" he said. "And they were there for me when I needed it. Maybe I'll stop in and see if I can help them out."

"That was a time in my life, and it was a time in



Nicole Bales/The Astorian

Fire marshal Chris Dugan.

society where volunteers were very strong."

Dugan joined Seaside Fire and Rescue in 1989 as a volunteer, and in 2000 was hired as the department's fire marshal, which he saw as a move to making his hobby his work. He said he never looked back.

has not yet replaced Dugan. Fire marshals deal with code enforcement, fire investigations and fire prevention education, and Dugan was the only one in Clatsop County.

It has been a significant gap for fire districts and departments already operating with tight budgets. However, there are moves across the county to find additional funding to hire fire marshals.

Dugan sees the role of deputy state fire marshal as a liaison between local fire districts and departments and the state, as well as someone who can help fill gaps. He looks forward to working with people he already has built relationships with over the years.

Dugan described his career in Seaside as at times exciting, scary, tiring and inspiring. He said seeing people on their worst days can weigh on emergency responders. And, in a small

community, they often know the people needing their help.

He said watching kids' learn at safety fairs and school demonstrations was a rewarding part of the job. He will miss the camaraderie at the fire department and the shared sense of service.

"I'm still going to be part of this fire department," Dugan said. "I'm still going to volunteer as long as my health allows me to."

"This is a volunteer fire department that needs help."

And it's not just Seaside. Dugan said fire districts and departments in the county are in a time of transition, where there are not enough volunteers to manage increasing call volumes and demands.

He said society has changed in a number of ways from when he started volunteering, but he hopes to see people continue to carry on the tradition.

House fire displaces two

Seaside Signal

An overnight fire on 11th Avenue displaced two in Seaside, Seaside Fire and Rescue reported Sunday morning.

"At about 3:30 we got dispatched to a residential structure fire," Lt. Genesee Dennis said.

The north side of the structure was involved, Dennis said. "Right as we arrived also we had a downed power line. That hindered access."

Firefighters gained access through neighboring yards and "knocked down the fire pretty quickly," Dennis said.

Residents were outside the structure, he said, and

declined housing assistance.

Gearhart, Hamlet, Cannon Beach, Warrenton, Lewis and Clark fire departments, along with Seaside Police Department, assisted in the response.

The fire is believed to have started in front outside the building, Dennis said. The fire remains under investigation.



Seaside Fire

Seaside Fire and neighboring agencies responded to an overnight fire on 11th Avenue.

DEATH NOTICE

Walter 'Walt' Weber

April 7, 2021

WEBER, Walter "Walt," 81, of Longview, Washington, formerly of Seaside and Chinook, Washington, died at home. Green Hills Memorial Gardens in Kelso, Washington, is in charge of the arrangements.

OBITUARY

Katelynn Renee Tamez

Warrenton

June 17, 2003 — April 9, 2021

Katelynn Renee Tamez was born on June 17, 2003, in Granbury, Texas, and was the beloved daughter of Darla Bishop and Dan Tamez, and died in Portland on April 9, 2021.

She had attended Sea-

side High School where she was a cheerleader and an awesome volleyball player.

She loved music and the outdoors. She was an amazing mother, daughter and granddaughter.

In addition to her parents, she is survived by her precious daughter, Aviana, her brother, sister, grandparents, aunts and uncles, as well as a large extended family.

All are invited to join

her family for a graveside service on Friday at 2 p.m. at Evergreen Cemetery on Beerman Creek Road in Seaside.

Friends have established a GoFundMe page to assist her family with

memorial expenses for those who would like to contribute.

Ocean View Funeral & Cremation Service of Astoria is in charge of the cremation and burial arrangements.



PUBLIC SAFETY LOG



Seaside Signal

April 5
9:43 a.m., 2400 block S. Roosevelt: A man who came into the lobby asking for food is not a guest at the hotel. Police come. The man is trespassing.

6:39 p.m., 12th and Shore Terrace: A transient camp reported in the area is unable to be located.

April 6
11:16 a.m., 1100 block Avenue E: Caller reports unknown woman in her neighbor's yard. The woman is contacted and advised to stay off private property.

3:46 p.m., Beach and Semaphore 9: Caller reports 13-year-old son missing on the beach. Officers searched the beach without finding

the boy but soon after learn parent and child have been reunited.

7:39 p.m., 1000 block Fourth Avenue: Squabbling roommates are given options and agree to stay away from each other for the rest of the night.

10:36 p.m., 1800 block N. Prom: Caller reports someone illegally entered their vehicle.

April 7
2:23 a.m., 2500 block S. Roosevelt: Police assist visitors to the area locating their hotel.

8:39 a.m., 3100 block Sunset Boulevard: A person reports their car has been illegally entered.

18:24 p.m., Necanicum and Fifth: A person is arrested on a warrant.

April 8

Astoria Warrenton Crab, Seafood & Wine Festival
Presenting Sponsor: **Fred Meyer**
AstoriaCrabFest.com

April 23 - 25, 2021
immersive virtual experience with chefs, artists, wine experts, musicians, vendors & more

Festival Feast Dining Passport
April 23 - May 9, 2021
Astoria & Warrenton restaurant trail inspired by the fest

Passport Partner: **weekend**

This event is produced by the Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce.

COUPON

2 DAYS FREE

Paint Sprayer RENTAL

with purchase of 12 gallons of Miller paint!

Offer good through 4/30/21

MILLER PAINT CO.
SINCE 1890
An Employee Owned Company

FREE Miller Paint color samples FRIDAYS ONLY
(limit 3 per customer Offer expires 4/30/21)

3003 Highway 101 N., Seaside, OR. 97138
503-738-3655
Hours: Monday-Friday 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. • Saturday 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
www.pacificpaintstore.com

LOVE STORIES START HERE

columbiamemorial.org/having-a-baby

COLUMBIA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL