



## GEARHART

# New firehouse bond off ballot

### Complaint by residents delays vote

By R.J. MARX  
Seaside Signal

A bond measure to finance a new firehouse in Gearhart will not be on the November ballot because a court hearing on a complaint challenging the \$13 million request extended past the election filing deadline.

Clatsop County Clerk Tracie Krevanko said she would pull the bond measure from the ballot after speaking with the secretary of state's office about the timing of the legal challenge.

In the complaint filed in Circuit Court by residents Jack Zimmerman and Harold Gable in late August, the two asked the court to suspend the bond measure until costs for the project are determined.

Krevanko said since the court was not set to hear the challenge until Thursday, the measure will need to be refiled for a future election.

Gearhart is working with planners to bring the 30-acre Cottages at Gearhart subdivision off Highlands Lane into the city's urban growth boundary in a land swap for acreage in the city's "no-build" zone near the ocean. The land would be used for a firehouse and police station.

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# Hospitals receive help from military

### National Guard arrives in Seaside and Astoria

By R.J. MARX  
Seaside Signal

The Oregon National Guard arrived last Friday to provide assistance to Columbia Memorial Hospital in Astoria and Providence Seaside Hospital, which have seen more coronavirus patients during the surge of the delta variant.

The increase in virus cases and hospitalizations over the past several weeks has caused stress to the region's health care network.

"We welcomed 13 Ore-

gon National Guard service members on Friday and provided an orientation to the hospital," Providence spokesman Mike Antrim said. "They began working as extra nonclinical hands as access monitor/temp screeners, transporters, and environmental services support. They will be helping for four weeks."

The hospital remains busy in inpatient units. "We have not had to activate our surge plan at this time and as of today we have three COVID inpatients," he said.

In August, Gov. Kate Brown announced the deployment of up to 1,500 National Guard personnel to support health care workers across the state.

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R.J. Marx

Kriste York, Chloe Cox, Richard Basch, Kiane Reys, Bill Westerholm, Emily Sills, Blake Baugher and Alex Ramirez Cruz at the proposed site of the welcome pole.

# Students lead tribal welcome pole project

## Honoring and preserving native heritage

By R.J. MARX  
Seaside Signal

Students at Seaside High School will be extending a welcome to all to their new campus.

Working with teachers Bill Westerholm and Kriste York, the students in the Clatsop-Nehalem tribal history class plan to install a 20- to 40-foot-tall cedar pole on the roadside along the driveway between Pacific Ridge Elementary School and the high school and middle school. The pole will not only greet visitors but provide awareness of the region's Native American heritage.

"This is kind of the seed that's been planted between Seaside High School and the Clatsop-Nehalem tribal history and collaboration with the tribe," Westerholm said.

Richard Basch, vice chairman of the Clatsop-Nehalem Con-



Students experience a canoe paddle experience in the estuary.

federated Tribes tribal council, served as a consultant to the summer school class.

The pole will be carved by Guy Capoeman, now chairman of the Quinalt Indian Nation. In 2016, Capoeman designed the

sculpture along the bank of Ecola Creek at the edge of Ne Cus' Park. That statue faces the ocean, as tribal members once did when they greeted their guests.

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# On the North Coast, a collaborative approach to elk

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ  
The Astorian

State Sen. Betsy Johnson and more than a dozen other stakeholders, including timberland managers, mayors, hunters and conservationists, signed off in August on the first unified approach to dealing with urban elk on the North Coast.

Elk herds in the Clatsop Plains, an increasingly developed area that stretches from Warrenton to Gearhart and includes part of Seaside, have grown over the years, leading to concerns about safety and conservation. Community debates about the best way to address elk-related issues have often been divisive.

The declaration of cooperation that the Clatsop Plains Elk Collaborative signed Wednesday is the result of a multiyear effort to get on the same page.

The document lists a number of strategies and commitments to address the elk. The recommendations include increased educational outreach to visitors and residents about living



Elk in front of Gearhart City Hall.

Neal Maine/PacificLight Images

with elk and how to avoid interactions with the wild animals, the possibility of opening elk hunts in new areas, changes to local rules and policies, land use questions, fencing, enhanced wildlife corridors and an elk festival in Warrenton, among others.

The elk festival would be one of the easiest things to accomplish right away, Warrenton Mayor Henry Balensifer said. But communities are unlikely to see an immediate

change in how officials address elk-related safety and nuisance concerns. The process of vetting, researching and implementing the strategies and proposals could take several years.

### Oregon Solutions

Gov. Kate Brown designated the elk collaborative as an Oregon Solutions project in 2019, an important tag that boosted the priority of the work and opened the door to state funding. The

toolkit the group developed will help others in Oregon who face similar wildlife conflicts, the governor wrote in a letter of appreciation to the members last week.

"This feels like the end, but it is really the beginning of very hard work," Johnson, D-Scappoose, said in her own remarks to the group.

Each stakeholder has agreed to their own list of

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# Gearhart pursues draft ordinance banning all fireworks

By R.J. MARX  
Seaside Signal

The City Council heard a plea support a ban on fireworks.

"Yes, fireworks could be a tradition. But fireworks cause harm to many in our community," Bebe Michel, a resident, said at last week's meeting. "Our freedom to shoot off fireworks ends when it causes harm to others. With freedom comes responsibility and consideration for each other. Let's look for better ways to celebrate."

Michel's comments echo those heard from other residents in July. In response, city staff put together a draft ordinance banning fireworks.

Violators would be subject to a maximum fine of \$500 per day.

Possessing or discharging any fireworks would be prohibited without the written permission of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department manager of the beach area.

The ban would not extend past the urban growth boundary. That would mean the Palisades, the Highlands and the beach would not be affected, City Administrator Chad Sweet said.

The ban could prohibit sparklers, wheels and torches, along with aerial devices like rockets and Roman candles. Firecrackers, noisemakers and "chasers" that travel along the ground could also be prohibited.

In correspondence, police and fire officials opposed the ordinance.

"The City Council can pass an ordinance or not, but it will not stop the discharging of illegal fireworks," Police Chief Jeff Bowman said. "The logic of making something illegal so it will stop illegal actions does not make sense."

Families normally are not reckless in nature as they don't want any of their family members or

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