

# the Astorian

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## CORONAVIRUS

## Park district candidates take center stage

### Middle school purchase a campaign issue

By R.J. MARX  
*The Astorian*

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Candidate residency in doubt • A2

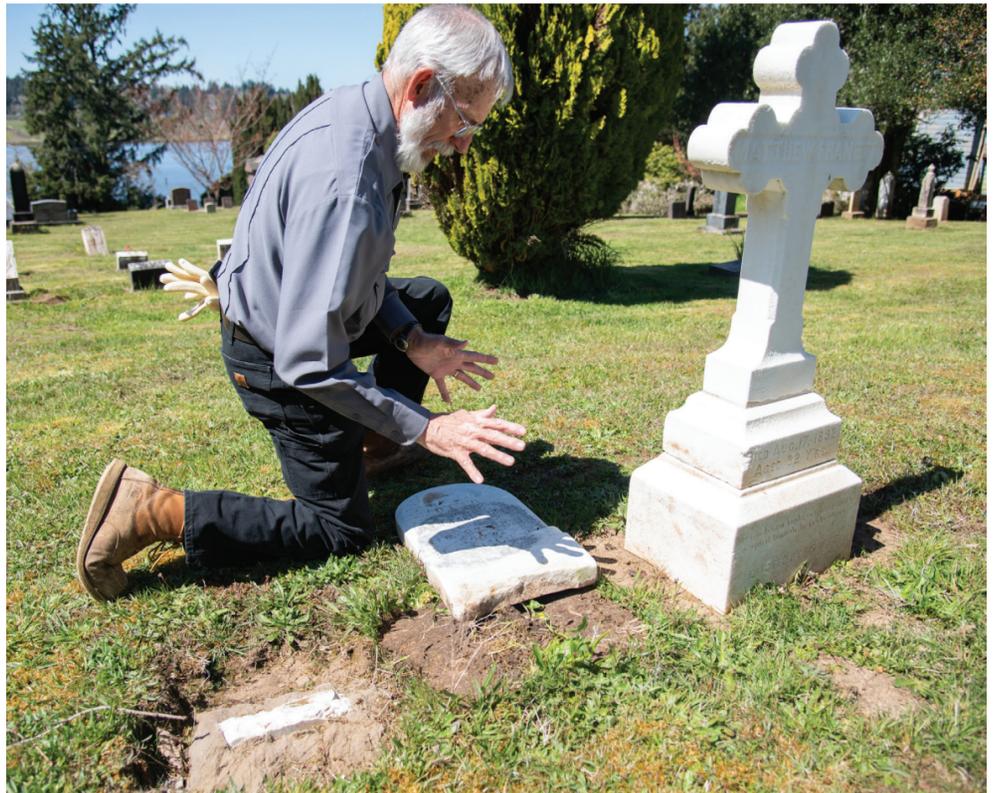
SEASIDE — Ten candidates take center stage in the Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District's May 18 board election.

Candidates have split into two groups, with the five incumbents facing challenges from a slate aligning under the campaign slogan, "It's time for a change."

"I'm joined by four like-minded people who are also

very disappointed with the way the current board has discharged their responsibility to care for SEPRD," John Huisman, one of the challengers, wrote in a letter to the Seaside Signal.

See Park district, Page A2



Photos by Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Mike Leamy discusses repairing a tombstone that has fallen over at Greenwood Cemetery.

## Couple works to preserve stories at historic cemetery

### A restoration project at Greenwood

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ  
*The Astorian*

Mike Leamy pauses on the slopes of Greenwood Cemetery near Olney, places a deliberate hand on the pinnacle of a grave monument from the late 1800s and comments, with an eye out to the horizon but a quick glance back at his audience: "I knew it would be a massive undertaking, but I didn't think it would be such a monumental task."

He chuckles to himself and pats the monument lightly, just in case you missed the pun.

But there's truth folded in with the joke.

When Leamy and his wife, Lynda, purchased the historic but still active cemetery from the Caldwell family in the early 1980s, they didn't know anything about cemetery management. All they wanted was a place in the country where they could raise their boys and tend to their animals. Greenwood Cemetery, on a hill overlooking Youngs River, was a beautiful and affordable option.

They moved into the house on the property just in time for Memorial Day and the dizzying crush of people and bouquets that descend on cemeteries at that time of year to honor the dead.

Now, decades later, they can tell you the stories of many of the deceased occupants. They are finishing up a restoration project that will ensure some of the oldest parts of the historic cemetery will remain intact for generations to come.

#### A grant

Last year, the couple received a grant through the Oregon Commission on Historic Cemeteries for work to straighten, clean and repair leaning, loose and toppled tombstones in the oldest section.

See Cemetery, Page A5



Danny Miller/The Astorian

John Mattila, with his daughter, Allison, left, and his wife, Mary Ann, was recognized before a game in which Warrenton's home field was named in his honor.

## Legendary Warrenton coach valued hard work

### Mattila dies at 74

By GARY HENLEY  
*The Astorian*

WARRENTON — The announcement from his family came about 8 p.m. on Saturday night. A Warrenton legend had passed.

Former Warriors' football coach, girls basketball coach and teacher John Mattila died of congestive heart failure Saturday at home among family, including Mary Ann, his wife of 34 years, and his daughter, Allison

Mattila-Gascoigne.

Born in Longview, Washington, on April 8, 1947, Mattila was 74.

At one time a coach in football, wrestling and baseball at Tillamook High School, Mattila came to Warrenton and coached football from 1974 to 2011, compiling 252 wins. He had 290 victories coaching girls basketball from 1997 to 2011. He took the Lady Warriors to four consecutive state tournaments, the last two finishing with records of 27-3 and 27-2.

See Mattila, Page A8



ABOVE: Benjamin Young is buried at Greenwood Cemetery. BELOW: A device holds up a gravestone as Mike Leamy repairs it.



## At Gearhart fire, a family affair

### A father-daughter volunteer team

By R.J. MARX  
*The Astorian*

GEARHART — On a Saturday morning in April, Josh Lair and his daughter, Amy, share a common destination: the Gearhart firehouse. Both are fire department volunteers. The job isn't what most people expect.

"You think of firefighters just putting fires out," said Amy Lair, who recently earned her emergency medical technician license. "But there are some intense scenes

that we come onto, and a lot of sad things happen. It's kind of amazing to watch a whole group of people come together for one common cause, and just as volunteers."

Josh Lair and his wife, Liz, moved with their five daughters from the Park City, Utah, area about four years ago. He joined the fire department in 2018.

Amy Lair spent summers and holidays with the family while pursuing her associate's degree in health science at Dixie State University in St. George, Utah. After Amy received her degree, she moved to



Gearhart Fire Department

Amy Lair and her father, Josh.

Oregon to join her family in early 2020.

"Amy's plan previous to her move was to continue her health science degree at the University of Maine, after receiving an academic

See Lairs, Page A2

## A large donation pushes Nordic park closer to reality

### Scandinavian festival plans several events

By EDWARD STRATTON  
*The Astorian*

The Astoria Nordic Heritage Park is closer to the finish line after a Sweet Home couple with local ties bought the naming rights for the entrance.

Tony Larson and Shelly Tack donated \$250,000 for the right to a personalized inscription on the park's grand entrance ramp and stairs.

"This is a one-in-a-lifetime shot to not only say 'thank you' to my great-grandparents, but also 'thank you' to the Astoria community," Larson said.

Larson's great-grandparents emigrated from Denmark to the

Dakotas and moved to Astoria in the early 1900s. Larson said some of his favorite childhood memories were of coming to the Astoria Scandinavian Midsummer Festival from Portland. He has been on the festival's board for several years.

"My dad and great-grandpa would bring me out," he said. "I've got a 50-year love affair with the place, and I'm only 51."

Tack, from Sweet Home, said her great-grandparents emigrated from Sweden to the Upper Midwest before coming to Astoria.

"It's something we're both really proud of, that our families came here ... that they made that sacrifice for future generations," she said.

See Park, Page A8



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OBITUARIES

### Maradee Ann Davis Greenbrae, California Feb. 12, 1943 — March 16, 2021

It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of Maradee Ann Davis after a courageous 19-month battle with pancreatic cancer.

Maradee was born in Boise, Idaho, on Feb. 12, 1943, to Allen Davis and Verna (Miller). Maradee was raised in Astoria and graduated from Astoria High School in 1961.

After a divorce from her first husband, she broke free and became an independent, free spirit. During this period, she traveled mostly by herself and explored Europe multiple times over the next decade or so, with her favorite destinations being Paris and the Greek islands.

In the meantime, she earned a doctoral degree in epidemiology from the University of Texas Medical School. During this period, she lived in Texas for eight years.

In 1983, she landed her dream job as professor of epidemiology at the University of California, San Francisco School of Medicine. In 1987, she began a relationship with Rich Swanson, who developed into the love of her life, and they married in 1992.

Since most of her family lived in Oregon, she spent a lot of family events with Rich's family, and she developed loving relationships with them. Annual summer trips to Bend to vacation with her biological family were filled with fishing, golf and lots of fun.

Her generosity was felt by many. For 25-plus years, she annually grew pumpkins for at least 10 lucky kids. She also took her nieces and nephews on trips wherever they wanted when they graduated from school.

Rich and Maradee shared an interest in film, theater, travel and socializing with family and friends. This led to annual trips to Lake Tahoe,

Pacific Grove, California, and Ashland.

They attended the Mill Valley Film Festival in California for 25 years, and in retirement would see 30 films at the festival. Their travels took them to Europe, Canada, the Caribbean, many trips to Maui and almost all of the 50 states.

At 60, Maradee fulfilled a lifelong dream when she performed in the chorus of the musical "Sweet Charity." She had so much fun she performed in another half-dozen shows over the next decade.

The women she performed with became her close circle of friends. During the summer, this group could be found pretty much every Friday listening to music while sipping wine and eating good food.

They could also be found enjoying events at Dry Creek Vineyard. They were known for finding any reason to throw a party. One of Maradee's favorite parties was celebrating the Academy Awards.

Maradee and Rich had more fun together than you can imagine. Maradee was deeply loved by her family and friends, and will be greatly missed.

Maradee is survived by her husband, Rich Swanson; brother, Tighe Davis (Connie); niece, Julie Davis (Chris); nephew, Ryan Davis (Emily); great-nieces, Karley Gauthier and Audrey Davis; and great-nephew, Larson Davis.

The family would like to thank the Kaiser San Francisco oncology staff, including her oncologist, Dr. Tilak Sundaresan, and Dr. Margaret Tempero, of the University of California San Francisco, for their expert care.

Donations in Maradee's name can be made to the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network.

A celebration of life will be held as soon as it is safe to do so.



Maradee Davis

### Joyce Ann Shellabarger Knappa Nov. 9, 1939 — April 8, 2021

Joyce Ann Shellabarger passed away peacefully in the comfort of her home on April 8, 2021. She is finally free from pain, and in fishing paradise with her best catch, "Pa."

Joyce was born on Nov. 9, 1939, in Grand Junction, Colorado, to Avery Lucille King and William B Bishop.

At the young age of 18, Joyce met the love of her life, Stephen Shellabarger. They married on Aug. 15, 1959, in Las Vegas. They had two children, Stephen and Deirdra.

In 1976, Joyce and Steve moved their family to

Knappa, where they bought their first home. In 2000, Joyce's dream of having a log cabin came to life.

After a lot of planning, hard work, beers and direction from the "project manager" herself, the Maija tree house was to be their forever home, and where both Joyce and Steve lived and passed away.

Joyce was a devoted wife, mother, grandma and great-grandma.

Joyce enjoyed gardening, collecting, playing her games on her computer and spending time with friends and family.

She had the best sense of humor, and was always making everyone around her laugh. Her stories of camping, frog gigging, gold panning and bottle finding are forever cherished in our hearts.

Joyce was preceded in death by her husband; parents; daughter, Deirdre; and

brother, Larry Kuhuski.

Joyce is survived by her son, Stephen Shellabarger (Sabrena); sister, Debi DeLano-Bergren (Tom); brother, Frank Kuhuski (Betty); brother, Michael Bishop; grandchildren, Shandy Moreland (Kent), Kristy Keller, Ashley Keller and Little Star Rider; and eight great-grandchildren, Jake, Brook, Treven, Bryson, Blake, Zaeleigh, Jacob and Kinslee.

A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements.



Joyce Shellabarger

## Cemetery: Greenwood is a perpetual care cemetery

Continued from Page A1

As the Leamys note in a video about the restoration they began last year: 130 years can do a lot of damage.

Opened as a cemetery in 1891, Greenwood also houses monuments, markers and remains from Hillside Cemetery — formerly Pioneer Cemetery — in Astoria that date back to even earlier years. Some of Astoria's founders, previously buried in Astoria cemeteries, now rest in Greenwood.

Subject to wind, weather and tree roots, monuments and markers tumble as materials deteriorate and soil shifts or tree roots intrude and moles tunnel. Passing elk herds have trampled through at least one monument.

Under the terms of the grant, the Leamys set out to restore 45 monuments. They have since exceeded that goal; they restored more than 60.

"We've got the bug," said Lynda Leamy, adding, "We always wanted



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Greenwood Cemetery overlooks Youngs River.

to do something but there was never time."

### Still active

The cemetery may be historic, but it is still active, with more than two dozen services a year and around 6,000 spots still available. Mowing occupies much of the Leamys time in the warmer months.

Now, not only do the restored graves look better and present less of a safety hazard, they're also easier to mow around. In some cases, the Leamys have unearthed things they never expected were lurking underground: a poem engraved at the base of a monument that had sunk into the ground; decorative work around other monuments; entire markers.

Mike Leamy also got to deploy a device of his own invention, the four-cornered multiadjustable monument jack. This lifter grips and raises a monument and holds it in place while Leamy works below to level the monument's foundation.

It is a far better option than the pry bars and cheater pipes he had had to wrestle with in the past.

"Once it is assembled around a monument, one person can raise a memorial weighing more than a ton or two," he said.

The Leamys had hoped to draw on a volunteer force to help with the "monumental task," but the coronavirus pandemic changed those plans. Instead, cemetery staff

— mostly Mike Leamy — tackled the bulk of the work, with volunteers pitching in here and there.

It is worth all the effort, the Leamys say. There were safety considerations some of the old monuments are little more than rocks stacked on top of each other. Mike Leamy barely has to nudge one leaning monument to angle it back off of its base.

The ins and outs of preserving historic markers and monuments presented a big learning curve, Mike Leamy said, but it has only motivated him to learn more about the stories of the cemetery's residents.

Greenwood is a perpetual care cemetery, which, Mike Leamy says, mostly means you're "perpetually at it." But through their tireless work, the Leamys feel they are engaged in the important task of preserving stories.

They have a map of every plot in the cemetery. On that map, there are many unmarked graves or graves where the occupants are noted as "unknown."

Still, Mike Leamy said, "Every stone here represents someone's story. There might be documentation or someone who remembers them, but some of them took their stories with them. But their remains are still here."

And that's a type of story, too.

**The Harbor**  
Where violence ends and hope begins

**The Soup Bowl is Saturday, May 1st at 7 pm, and tickets are almost sold out! Tickets can be bought on our website, [harbornw.org/soupbowl](http://harbornw.org/soupbowl)**

Buy them now to secure your Soupons, and free one-of-a-kind bowl by Richard Rowland. Proceeds go to benefit survivors of domestic and sexual violence in Clatsop County.

However- even if you don't get a ticket in time, you can still attend the event for FREE! Just email [Jordan@harbornw.org](mailto:Jordan@harbornw.org), to get the link for the event. Hope to see you there!

The 17th Annual Soup Bowl is brought to you by Cannon Beach Vacation Rentals, Columbia River Coffee Roasters, Andrea Mazarella with Vesta Realty, and Catriona Penfield with Seaside Attorneys.

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**SEVEN-DAY FORECAST FOR ASTORIA**

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
57 43	61 44	63 47	59 47	58 43	57 43	57 44
Cloudy	Rather cloudy	Mainly cloudy	Periods of rain	Showers possible	Showers possible	Cloudy

**ALMANAC**

Astoria through Sunday

**Temperatures**

High/low ..... 54/43

Normal high/low ..... 58/42

Record high ..... 83 in 1941

Record low ..... 29 in 1955

**Precipitation**

Sunday ..... 0.06"

Month to date ..... 1.12"

Normal month to date ..... 4.50"

Year to date ..... 33.93"

Normal year to date ..... 29.34"

Forecasts and graphics provided by **AccuWeather, Inc.** ©2021

**UNDER THE SKY**

**Tonight's Sky:** Full "Pink" Moon (8:31 p.m.).

Source: Jim Todd, OMSI

**SUN AND MOON**

Sunrise today ..... 6:08 a.m.

Sunset tonight ..... 8:19 p.m.

Moonrise today ..... 9:31 p.m.

Moonset today ..... 6:41 a.m.

Full	Last	New	First

Apr 26 May 3 May 11 May 19

**TODAY'S TIDES**

**Astoria / Port Docks**

Time	High (ft.)	Time	Low (ft.)
1:40 a.m.	9.1	8:29 a.m.	-1.1
2:37 p.m.	7.7	8:27 p.m.	1.3

**Cape Disappointment**

Time	High (ft.)	Time	Low (ft.)
1:16 a.m.	9.2	7:34 a.m.	-1.3
2:11 p.m.	7.8	7:33 p.m.	1.4

**Hammond**

Time	High (ft.)	Time	Low (ft.)
1:27 a.m.	9.5	7:55 a.m.	-1.4
2:22 p.m.	8.1	7:56 p.m.	1.1

**Warrenton**

Time	High (ft.)	Time	Low (ft.)
1:35 a.m.	9.5	8:13 a.m.	-1.0
2:32 p.m.	8.1	8:11 p.m.	1.4

**Knappa**

Time	High (ft.)	Time	Low (ft.)
2:17 a.m.	9.3	9:30 a.m.	-0.9
3:14 p.m.	8.0	9:28 p.m.	1.1

**Depoe Bay**

Time	High (ft.)	Time	Low (ft.)
12:28 a.m.	9.3	7:04 a.m.	-1.6
1:25 p.m.	7.8	7:02 p.m.	1.2

**NATIONAL CITIES**

City	Today	Wed.
Atlanta	83/63/pc	83/64/pc
Boston	68/52/pc	64/52/t
Chicago	85/64/pc	72/49/t
Dallas	80/70/t	83/65/t
Denver	53/37/sh	56/38/c
Honolulu	84/70/pc	83/70/sh
Houston	82/73/c	87/72/c
Los Angeles	67/53/pc	81/60/s
Miami	83/74/pc	84/74/s
New York City	68/57/pc	85/64/pc
Phoenix	73/57/c	84/63/s
San Francisco	64/49/s	69/50/s
Wash., DC	83/64/pc	89/69/pc

Weather (W): s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, l-ice.

**REGIONAL FORECAST**

Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.

City	Today	Wed.
Baker City	65/31/pc	70/37/pc
Brookings	57/43/pc	58/46/pc
Ilwaco	56/45/c	58/46/c
Newberg	66/40/c	74/45/pc
Newport	54/41/c	58/44/pc
North Bend	57/42/c	60/44/pc
Roseburg	72/42/c	79/46/pc
Seaside	58/40/c	62/44/c
Springfield	72/40/c	78/46/pc
Vancouver	67/42/c	73/46/c