



COMMERCIAL CRAB SEASON STARTS, PAGE 8

LOCAL CHEERLEADERS AT DISNEY PAGE 2

THE NEWS Guard

November 30, 2021

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Hours-long standoff ends with 1 arrest

STAFF REPORT

A Lincoln City woman faces criminal charges following an armed standoff with police that forced evacuation of nearby neighbors.

According to Lincoln City Police, the incident began shortly after 9:30 a.m. Monday, Nov. 22, as officers responded to the Kelok Townhomes in the 200 Block of SE Keel Avenue in Lincoln City. The police officers were dispatched to the scene after receiving a 911 call regarding a female subject who was threatening suicide while armed with a gun.

Additional details indicated that a child was inside the townhome with the female. Arriving officers attempted to talk with the involved female by phone, however she refused to talk with police and hung up the phone. Officers on scene learned there had been a domestic disturbance just prior to dispatch receiving the 911 call and it was confirmed the female was armed with a gun.

Officers began securing the area and evacuating the nearby residents, and a crisis negotiator with the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office crisis negotiator was called to the location to assist. The Lincoln County Tactical Response Team (TRT) also was

activated and the team members began responding to the scene.

While waiting for TRT to arrive, officers held their positions and did not approach the involved townhome in an attempt to allow the situation to de-escalate. Meanwhile, the crisis negotiator continued to attempt to contact the female inside, however, the female would not reply.

Once TRT arrived on scene, a large tactical vehicle was moved up near the front of the involved townhome so a throw phone could be deployed as well as allowing the negotiator to call for the female over a loud speaker. The involved female emerged from the townhome with the child. The child was safely retrieved by TRT members and the female was taken into custody.

The child was turned over to her father. The female, identified as Alexis Keblbek, 25, of Lincoln City, was transported Samaritan North Lincoln Hospital for further medical and mental health evaluation.

Once cleared from the hospital, Keblbek was transported to the Lincoln County Jail where she was lodged on charges of Domestic Menacing, Pointing a Firearm at Another, two counts of Reckless Endangering, and Assault on a Police Officer.



COURTESY PHOTO

Members of the Lincoln County Tactical Response Team take the female into custody following the armed standoff.

Fire leads to 1 arrest



COURTESY FROM LCPD

First responders work to contain this suspected arson blaze in the 3000 block of SW Highway 101 in Lincoln.

STAFF REPORT

A Newport resident is jailed after a suspected arson fire in Lincoln City.

At approximately 9:12 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 21, Lincoln City Police along with North Lincoln Fire & Rescue responded to a car fire in the parking lot of Lincoln City Floor Covering and Black Squid Beer House, in the 3000 block of SW Highway 101. Upon arriving, Officers found a fully involved car fire which was spreading to the nearby business building.

Officers used fire extinguishers to suppress the fire on the

building while awaiting the arrival of fire personnel. North Lincoln Fire & Rescue arrived quickly and fire crews were able to take control of the fire within minutes.

During the subsequent investigation, officers developed information that identifying the suspected arsonist and his vehicle. Approximately 35 minutes after the fire, Newport Police located the suspect's vehicle in Newport.

Diego Cruz, 49, of Newport, was arrested on charges including Arson II, Criminal Mischief I, and Reckless Burning. He was transported to the Lincoln County Jail where he was lodged on the listed charges with his bail set at \$115,000.

Outdoor mask mandate lifted, indoor mandate stands

ZOE GOTTLIEB
Country Media

While Oregonians can now attend outdoor gatherings without facing a mask mandate, the state's indoor mask requirement remains in place.

Oregon Health Authority (OHA) Director Patrick Allen, Health Officer and State Epidemiologist Dr. Dean Sidelinger, and Oregon Department of Education Director Colt Gill outlined new COVID-19 protocols, including a lifting of Oregon's formerly-issued outdoor mask mandate, during a briefing Tuesday, Nov. 23.

Gov. Kate Brown had expended the mask mandate in early August to include outdoor settings, following a dramatic rise in COVID-19 case counts and hospitalizations.

"This rule was implemented back in August at the peak of the most recent surge," OHA Director Patrick Allen said. "This (new) decision, which takes effect immediately, reflects the overall progress we've seen on the COVID-19 threat in Oregon."

Allen attributes the changes to what OHA sees as promising developments in terms of the number of COVID cases, hospitalizations, and vaccination rates.

"Over the past six weeks, we've continued to see a slow but steady decline in hospitalizations and daily cases. Our seven-day moving average of new cases as of yesterday was 822. On September 1, in the teeth of this current surge, that average was 2285," he said. "That's a 64% decrease."

Allen also said ICU bed counts and the number of patients hospitalized with COVID-19 are trending downward, prompting OHA to ease up on restrictions.

Allen said a lower daily case count, less hospitalizations, and high vaccination rates are all signs Oregon is moving in the right direction, but he stipulates OHA does not have any plans to remove the indoor mask mandate, keeping in mind the rapid transmission of the Delta variant.

"Although the COVID-19 landscape has markedly improved, we are not yet at a point where we can consider relaxing the guidelines on wearing masks in indoor public settings," he said. "The Delta variant remains a significant threat to all of us and especially to the one in five Oregonians who are vulnerable to the disease."

Allen said lifting the indoor mask mandate and transitioning from a pandemic mode to an end-demic mode depends on several factors including the trajectory of cases, the Delta variant, and less hospitalizations.

See MASK MANDATE, Page A3

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WEATHER

TUE.	WED.	THU.	FRI.	SAT.	SUN.	MON.
53°/47°	57°/47°	51°/39°	50°/42°	52°/42°	50°/43°	51°/40°

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Sea port safety study launched

STAFF REPORT

The Coast Guard is conducting a Pacific Coast Port Access Route Study (PAC-PARS) at Yaquina Bay, Coos Bay and Astoria in Oregon and other Pacific Coast seaports.

The PAC-PARS will consider whether existing or additional routing measures are necessary to improve navigation safety due to factors such as planned or potential offshore development, current port capabilities and planned improvements, increased vessel traffic, existing and potential anchorage areas, changing vessel traffic patterns, effects of weather, or navigational difficulty.

Vessel routing measures are implemented to reduce the risk of marine casualties. Examples of potential measures include traffic separation schemes, two-way routes, recommended tracks, deep-water routes, precautionary areas, and areas to be avoided.

The recommendations of the study may subsequently be implemented through rule makings or in accordance with international agreements. The safety study also will be conducted at San Diego, Los Angeles/Long Beach, San Francisco, Humboldt Bay in California and Grays Harbor and Puget Sound in Washington.

Mariners are encouraged to participate in this study by submitting comments and input to the Federal Register. To submit your comment online, go to <https://www.regulations.gov>, and insert Federal Register docket number "USCG-2021-0345" in the "search box". Click "Search" and then click "Comment Now."

The Coast Guard said it will consider all comments and material received on or before Jan. 25, 2022.

For more information about the Marine Safety Information Bulletin or the study, email the PAC-PARS team at "PACPARS@USCG.MIL"



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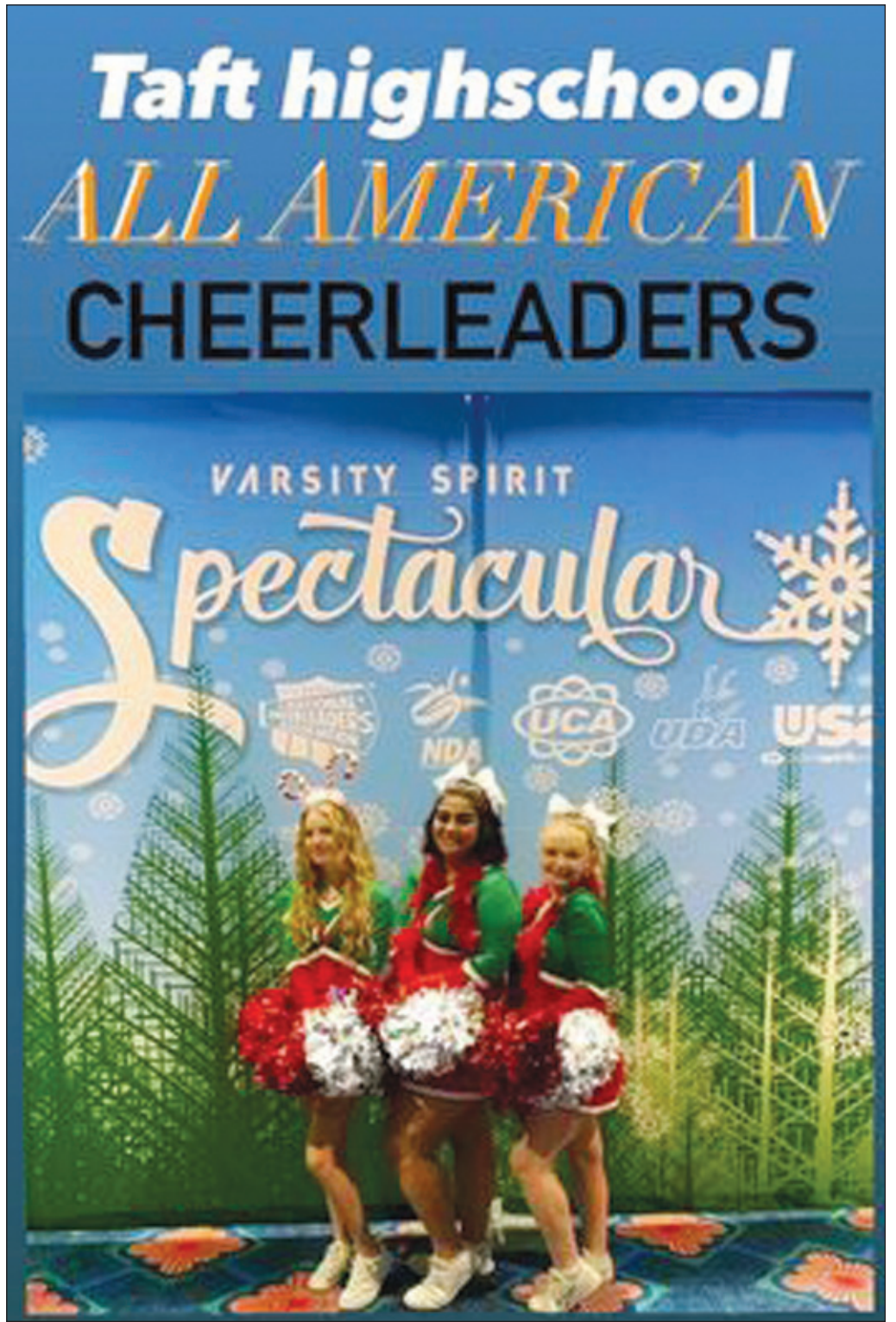
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Local cheerleaders perform at Disney World



Taft high school has three all American cheerleaders that went to Florida this weekend to cheer in the spirit spectacular parade at Disney world.

Pictured left to right: Kallin swope(sophomore), Makayla Sanchez(senior), Grace Stahl(sophomore).

Three Taft 7-12 High School all American cheerleaders joined hundreds of others in Florida to cheer in the Spirit Spectacular Parade at Disney World.

Taft sophomore Kallin Swope, senior Makayla Sanchez and sophomore Grace Stahl made the journey. According to a WDW Magazine blog, The Varsity

Spirit Spectacular at Disney World features hundreds of high school cheerleaders and dancers from around the country dancing down the parade route at Magic Kingdom Nov. 19-22.

The three Taft students are among more than 800 high school cheerleaders and dancers from across the country that represented the camp brands of Varsity Spirit in the Varsity Spirit Spectacular at the Walt Disney World® Resort in Orlando, Florida.

The individuals invited to perform are part of a select group of captains, co-captains and officers who attended a Varsity Spirit summer camp this summer hosted by Universal Cheerleaders Association (UCA), Universal Dance Association (UDA), National Cheerleaders Association (NCA), National Dance Alliance (NDA), United Spirit Association (USA) and Urban Cheerleading Experience (UCE), according to Varsity Spirit.



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Police Blotter

The police blotter relates to the public record of incidents as reported by law enforcement agencies.

All individuals arrested or charged with a crime are presumed innocent until proven guilty. Information printed is preliminary and subject to change.

For specific details about cases listed, contact the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Lincoln City Police

Nov. 19

8:38 a.m. Police responded to an ordinance violation in the 1500 block of 14th Street following a report of a man living in a white van between the Outlet Mall and Sea Haven Apartments. The report was added to the police log for patrol during the camping ordinance hours.

3:12 p.m. Police took a report following a reported car break-in in the 1000 block of SE Highway 101. A backpack was reportedly taken from the vehicle.

10:07 p.m. Officers responded to a report on an assault in the 1700 block of NW 44th Street. Complainant reported being attack. Suspect left prior to police arriving. The victim was evaluated by North Lincoln Fire & Rescue medics. A report was taken.

Nov. 20

10:11 a.m. Police took a report of criminal mischief in the 1100 block of SW 15th Street following a report that a mailbox had been damaged and a vehicle window had been broken.

7:25 p.m. Police took a theft report in the 800 block of SW

51st Street after it was reported that a male had walked into a business and took an employee's backpack. Police reviewed the incident that had been caught on surveillance footage.

Nov. 21

02:48 a.m. Extra police patrols requested in the 4000 block of Logal Road following citizen complaints of increased thefts.

4:16 p.m. Police made a traffic stop at NW 21st Street and North Highway 101. Vehicle driver was cited for driving with no insurance and suspended license. Vehicle was towed.

6:23 p.m. Police responded to the 1500 block of NW 40th Street following a report that a firearm had been stolen from a hotel room.

6:45 p.m. Officers warned a dog sitter following ongoing

complaints of a dog at large in the 1700 block of SE Mast Avenue.

09:12 Police responded to the 3000 block of SW Highway 101 following multiple 911 calls of a car fully engulfed in flames. One subject was arrested and charged with arson, criminal mischief and reckless burning.

Nov. 22

09:14 a.m. Police responded to the 1500 block of SE 3rd Street following reports that a female with a firearm was threatening to kill herself. A juvenile was reportedly inside the residence with the female. Following police negotiations, the female was taken into custody. The woman was charged with menacing, reckless endangering, assault on a police officer and assault 4.

08:08 p.m. Police responded

to the 17000 block of NW 44th Street following a report from the business security of a male entering the business with an unleashed dog. The male had been told by security that the animal had to be leashed and it had to be a service animal. The male was arrested and take to the Lincoln City Police Department. The male was cited for trespass and released.

Nov. 23

05:28 p.m. Officers responded to a crash in the 2100 block of NW Highway 101. One driver was taken into custody for DUII, reckless driving, reckless endangering and assault with a vehicle.

05:45 p.m. Officers arrested a subject after he reportedly fled from a traffic stop being conducted by police in the 1300 block of NW 21st Street.

Subject was charged with elude on foot and interfering.

Nov. 24

07:50 a.m. Police took a report of a theft following an alleged vehicle break-in in the 4100 block of Highway 101. Complainant said stereo equipment and camping gear was missing. Minor damage to the vehicle was also reported.

08:27 a.m. Police received a report that a male had stabbed himself in the face with a scalpel. Officers made contact with the male who was then transported by Pacific West Ambulance to Samaritan North Lincoln Hospital.

Nov. 25

06:01 p.m. Police took a report in the 6300 block of SW Inlet Avenue of theft after a complainant said tools were missing his garage.

Commemoration of the attack on Pearl Harbor

The 80th anniversary of the attack on the U.S. Naval Fleet in Hawaii at Pearl Harbor will be commemorated with a brief ceremony at 11 a.m. Tuesday, December 7, at the Don and Ann Davis Park at the west end of Olive Street in Newport.

Survivors of the surprise attack will be honored as will those who were lost.

Those attending are requested to observe social distancing and to properly wear face masks. Survivors' families, all veterans, and the general public are invited.

On December 7, 1941—the date that President Roosevelt declared would “live in infamy”—over 2400 people died when the US Navy fleet suffered a devastating air attack, leading to the United States' entry into World War II.



Mask Mandate

From page 1

“We’re going to need to be at a place where we have much less transmission of disease, much less hospitalization. We’re still sitting at over 90% of hospital beds full, same thing with ICU beds. A large portion of those ICU beds occupied by largely unvaccinated people. We need to get out of this phase and get to something that looks a lot more like the flu.”

Allen said a bad flu season kills 600 Oregon in a year, while COVID-19 claimed over 5000 as of Nov. 22.

Allen continues to recommend mask wearing for the unvaccinated, elderly and the immune-compromised, people are high risk of contracting the disease and people living with someone in one of those categories.

Allen also issued a recommendation for school districts to transition from lengthy quarantines to a test-to-stay option for students exposed to COVID-19.

Test to stay allows students to attend school in person as well as extracurricular activities (with certain restrictions), as long as they test negative. Test to stay allows students and staff to participate in in-person learning as safely as possible while lessening the burden of quarantine on students and their families, teachers and school administrators.

“We know the critical importance that school attendance has on student success,” Oregon Department of Education (ODE) Director Colt Gill said. “Using test to stay as part of a layered set of protocols in schools will keep students and educators in classrooms, maximizing days spent in school learn-

ing, growing and thriving. It’s important to remember that if an individual is vaccinated and exposed to COVID-19, they do not have to take a COVID-19 test to stay in school or quarantine.”

OHA Director Patrick Allen said the indoor mask mandate remains in place for the future.

“We have not set targets,” he said.

How Test to Stay Works

The following information is from the Oregon Department of Education.

Test to Stay is available only for unvaccinated asymptomatic individuals who were exposed in indoor and outdoor school settings where universal masking is fully in place, according to a release from the state.

Indoors and outdoor exposures are reviewed for proximity and duration of exposure. Test to Stay may not be used following extracurricular exposures because masking in these settings is optional and the risk of transmission within the cohort is greater and may not be used following community or in-home exposures.

Test to Stay allows unvaccinated individuals to be tested twice during the seven days following exposure. First, as soon as the exposure has been identified, with a second test occurring between days 5-7 following the exposure.

Test to Stay is a form of modified quarantine, which allows individuals to attend school during their 7-day quarantine period. However, individuals participating in test to stay are expected to maintain quarantine outside of classroom settings.

Students and staff participating in test to stay may

participate in school-related extracurricular activities during their 7-day quarantine period but must wear face coverings at all times during these activities.

The Test to Stay protocol is an option available to all Oregon schools to administer. Tests are offered at no cost to participants. Student participation requires the permission of a parent or guardian. Close contact students and staff have the option of following LPHA recommendation for length of quarantine if their family does not want to participate in test to stay.

The change in the outdoor face coverings rule means local school districts, charter schools and private schools will set local requirements for use of face coverings outdoors. Extended close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual outdoors could still lead to exposure requiring quarantine, so local decision-makers need to consider the best use of physical distancing, face covering and other protocols to prevent exposure and the impacts of quarantine on student learning.

Testing is one of several components aimed at reducing the chance of spreading COVID-19 in schools along with face coverings indoors, physical distancing, improved ventilation and vaccination of students and staff. Vaccines are the single most important factor in slowing the spread of COVID-19. Being vaccinated helps keep staff in front of students and, now that vaccines are available to everyone over the age of five, it also keeps students in class as well.



METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

State health officials have lifted the Oregon outdoor mask mandate. The indoor mask mandate remains in place.

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999 Public Notices

NG21-150 IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE STATE OF OREGON FOR THE COUNTY OF LINCOLN IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF:

CHARLES THOMAS RIDDLE, Deceased. Case No. 21PB09545 NOTICE TO INTERESTED PERSONS NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that VALARIE A. RIDDLE has been appointed personal representative. All persons having claims against the estate are required to present them, with vouchers attached, to Personal Representative, VALARIE A. RIDDLE, at the address below, within four months after the date of first publication of this notice, or the claims may be barred.

All persons whose rights may be affected by the proceedings may obtain additional information from the records of the court, the personal representative, or the attorneys for the personal representative. ADDRESS FOR PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE: c/o Attorney David V. Cramer, OSB #992479 Zantello Law Group 2941 NW HIGHWAY 101 LINCOLN CITY, OR 97367 DATED AND FIRST PUBLISHED: NOVEMBER 30, 2021.

NG21-152
PUBLIC NOTICE

The Lincoln City Police Department has in its physical possession the unclaimed personal property described below. If you have any ownership interest in any of that unclaimed property, you must file a claim with the Lincoln City Police Department within 30 days from the date of publication of this notice, or you will lose your interest in that property.

The personal property is described as: electronics, cell phones, knives, bikes, ammunition, documents, books/notebooks, wallets, purses, backpacks, suitcases, clothing, rain gear, keys, household goods, tools, valuables, personal hygiene items, RC Car, firearms, credit/debit/rewards cards, identification, toys, sporting equipment and service awards.

Contact: Lincoln City Police Department; 1503 SE East Devils Lake Rd; Lincoln City, OR 97367; 541-994-3636 to submit a claim. Published November 30, 2021.

This notice is published in accordance with ORS 98.245.

999 Public Notices

NG21-147
In the Circuit Court of the State of Oregon for the County of Lincoln Probate Department in the matter of the estate of Raymond A. Drayton, Deceased. Case No. 21PB08558 Notice to interested persons. Notice is hereby given that the undersigned has been appointed personal representative. All persons having claims against the Estate are required to present them, with vouchers attached, to the undersigned personal representative at PO Box 1022 Lincoln City OR 97367, within four months after the date of first publication of this notice, or the claims be barred. All person whose rights may be affected by the proceedings may obtain additional information from the records of the Court Personal Representative: Angela Dee Ware PO Box 1022 Lincoln City OR 97367. 541-992-1173

NG21-148
Estate of James Alan Daum, Notice to Interested Persons (Case no. 21PB09518). In the Circuit Court of the State of Oregon for the County of Lincoln, Probate Department. In the Matter of the Estate of James Alan Daum, Deceased). Notice is hereby given that Jessica Long has been appointed personal representative. All persons

999 Public Notices

having claims against the estate are required to present them, with vouchers attached, to the personal representative in care of her attorney, Elin Severson, at: Severson Law, 1500 NW Bethany Blvd., Suite 200, Beaverton, OR 97006, within four months after the date of first publication of this notice, or the claims may be barred. All persons whose rights may be affected by the proceedings may obtain additional information from the records of the Court, the personal representative, or the attorney for the personal representative. Dated and first published on November 23, 2021. Jessica Long, Personal Represent-

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tative. Elin Severson, OSB #134824, Severson Law, Attorney for Personal Representative, 1500 NW Bethany Blvd., Suite 200, Beaverton, OR 97006.

NG21-147 In the Circuit Court of the State of Oregon for the County of Lincoln Probate Department. In the matter of the estate of: Raymond A. Drayton, DECEASED. Case No. 21PB08558 NOTICE TO INTERESTED PERSONS. Notice is hereby given that the undersigned has been appointed personal representative. All persons having claims against the Estate are required to present them, with vouchers attached, to the undersigned personal

999 Public Notices

representative at PO Box 1022, Lincoln City OR 97367, within four months after the date of first publication of this notice, or the claims may be barred. All persons whose rights may be affected by the proceedings may obtain additional information from the records of the Court of the personal representative. Angela Dee Ware, Personal Representative, PO Box 1022, Lincoln City OR 97367 541-992-1173.

NG21-143
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE STATE OF OREGON FOR THE COUNTY OF LINCOLN In the Matter of the Estate of: DONALD WAYNE KAISER, Deceased.

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Case No. 21PB09338 NOTICE TO INTERESTED PERSONS NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that KAREN S. BONDLEY has been appointed personal representative. All persons having claims against the estate are required to present them, with vouchers attached, to Personal Representative, KAREN S. BONDLEY, at the address below, within four months after the date of first publication of this notice, or the claims may be barred. All persons whose rights may be affected by the proceedings may obtain additional information from the records of the court, the personal repre-

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H6514

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Adventist Health
Tillamook

OPINION/OBITUARIES

THE NEWS Guard

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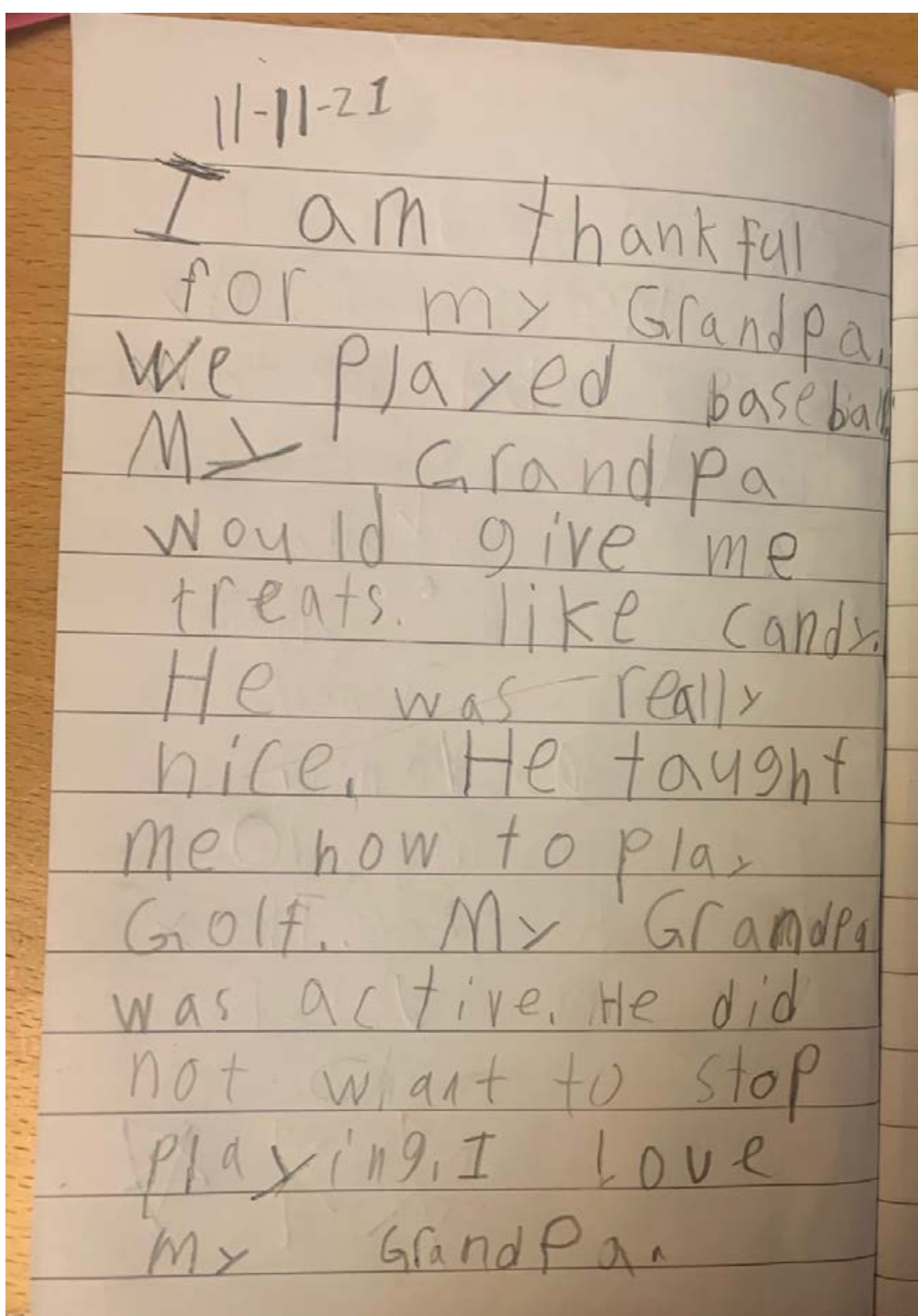
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Options for submitting obituaries:

- **Death notice:** Includes the person's name, age, town of residency, and info about any funeral services. No Charge. Add a photo \$25.
- **Standard Obit:** The cost is \$75 for the first 200 words, \$50 for each additional 200 words. Includes a small photo at no extra cost. Add \$25 for each additional photo.
- **Option for a 50% off pick-up (no changes)** for an obit within 2 weeks of original publish date.
- **Display Obit:** \$9.50 p.c.i. Add color for \$5.00 p.c.i. Includes a small photo at no extra cost.
- **Obit includes placement online.**

OBITUARIES

Hal Fowler



Hal Fowler was a family man, loved by everyone he met and a pillar of his community.

Hal was born on February 28th, 1950 in Pocatello, Idaho. He grew up skiing and playing sports and was drafted right out of high school to play for the San Diego Padres, Minor League team. Hal later got into golf and attended the University of Idaho. He came to Gleneden Beach as an assistant golf pro at Salishan where he met his wife Barb on a blind date. They later purchased Devil's Lake Golf

Club where he was the teaching pro for several years. Hal was always known for living life to the fullest and never having a "real job". After selling the golf course, he started dabbling in television (TV10) and radio where he broadcasted all the Taft High Tiger sporting events. He loved it so much he bought KBCH and KCRF and was the morning DJ for many years.

In Lincoln City, Hal was a president of Rotary, a co-founder of the Gleneden Beach 4th of July Parade, and was president of the Kids'

Committee, which worked to build three new schools in the Lincoln County School District, one being the current Taft High School. He served as president of the Lincoln City Chamber of Commerce for two consecutive years where he was instrumental in securing their present location.

Hal was an extremely kindhearted, patient man who never got flustered. The only time you would see him lose his cool was while coaching a basketball or little league team when the ref or umpire made a "bad" call. His competitive



spirit will live on through his children and grandchildren.

In 2004, Hal and Barb followed their kids to Southern California and settled in La Quinta, CA. Since their move, Hal was a huge presence in the La Quinta Resort golf community. In the past 18 years Hal finally got to live in year-round sunshine, spend time with his kids and grandkids, and travel the world with his best friend and wife Barb. He never wanted to slow down and was always on the move. The week before his passing they were hiking in the Mojave Desert and having the time of their lives. If he wasn't at the golf course you could find him skimming the pool, tinkering outside or admiring his golf shirt & hat collection. Hal always lived by the 5 P's

Patience, Persistence, Perseverance, Passion, and Purpose. Because of this, his legacy will continue to live out their dreams and never give up.

Hal was preceded in death by his father Heath and mother Helen. He is survived by his wife Barbara, sister Heather and husband Mike, brother Brent and wife Christine, daughter Meghann and husband Andy, son Brian and wife Sandra and grandkids Madeline (10), Drew (8), Ollie (6) and Maxwell (2).

Hal passed away suddenly at home in La Quinta, CA on Sunday, November 7th, 2021. His life was cut way too short, and he will be missed by all who loved him. He was truly a class act and a great man to all those who knew him.

Oregon DMV warns of text scam

If you are issued a refund by DMV, you will receive it through the mail or directly back on your payment card. The agency will

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All are welcome... see you soon!

Sea otters attracting crowds

JEREMY C. RUARK
 jrurark@countrymedia.net
DAVID RUPKALVIS
 worldnewseditor@countrymedia.net

Crowds are gathering at various points along the Oregon Coast to see a new visitor.

At Yaquina Head over the past weekend, folks gathered to watch a sea otter groom itself and eat purple sea urchins, near the rocks of the Oregon Islands National Wildlife Refuge.

Since 2007, there have been 50 total sea otter sightings recorded on the Oregon Coast. There is a 900-mile gap between populations in Washington and California.

Sea otters have been missing from the Oregon Coast for over 100 years, due to 17th and 18th century fur trades and hunting. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is finishing a study to look at the possibility of reintroducing the sea otters to the coast.

"Oregon is the only state along the Pacific Coast that does not have a sea otter population anymore," USFWS Field Service Officer Michele Zwartjes said. "They were eliminated in

the early 1900s due to hunting for the fur trade."

The USFWS has been tasked by Congress to do the feasibility study that will review the cost, impact and ability to introduce sea otters along the coasts of Oregon, California and Washington. Congress gave the service through the end of 2021 to produce the study.

"Our final report is going to emphasize that more study is needed," Zwartjes said.

"Much of the population in existence today is a result of reintroductions that occurred in the 1960s, including one in Southern Oregon along Port Orford," she said. "It lasted about 10 years, and the even had pups. Some believe they migrated north and joined the California group."

Zwartjes said in the last decade there have been 24 documents sightings of sea otters in Oregon, most solo males moving south from Washington. There is a strong population of river otters in Oregon, and they can sometimes be seen resting on the beach.

As part of the study, the Fish and Wildlife Service has



COURTESY PHOTO FROM RAM PAPISH

This sea otter has been spotted near the shoreline along the central Oregon Coast.

talked to fishermen, fish processors and many others to prepare a report for Congress. She said the fishing industry has voiced some concern, primarily the impact if the population booms like it has in Alaska.

Sea otters do not eat fish, and Zwartjes said along the Oregon coast they would likely feed on sea urchins, Dungeness crab and clams. And if they were brought in,

they could help heal the kelp forests, which have struggled to regain a footing after a heat wave and a die off of starfish led to a massive increase in purple urchins.

"They have a very beneficial impact on the kelp forest," Zwartjes said. "Because the otters eat the urchins, it allows the kelp to regrow, so they have a very beneficial impact on the kelp beds."

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Commercial crab season Dec. 1

For the first time since the 2014-15 season, the ocean commercial Dungeness crab fishery opens as scheduled Dec. 1 along the Oregon Coast.

Commercial crab vessels can set gear Nov. 28 (the presoak period) in anticipation of the first pull of ocean crab pots on Dec. 1.

In partnership with the Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission and the commercial Dungeness crab industry, ODFW tests crabs out of Oregon's six major crabbing ports beginning in early November. This year, crab tested from Oregon's crab harvest areas have high meat yield and are well below domoic acid alert levels.

Commercial Dungeness crab is one of Oregon's most iconic and valuable fisheries, contributing millions to our coastal communities. The commercial ocean Dungeness crab fishery opening has been delayed the past six seasons due to either low meat yield or domoic acid levels above the threshold for safe consumption.

Although last year the season was delayed in stages (harvest opened Dec. 16 south of Cape Falcon and Feb. 15, 2021 north of Cape Falcon), fishermen still brought in 12.2 million pounds of Dungeness crab coastwide with an ex-vessel value of \$60.6 million dollars.

Recreational Dungeness crab harvest in the ocean off Oregon also opens Dec. 1 as scheduled in all areas. Recreational crab harvesting in bays, estuaries, and on beaches, docks, piers, and jetties is currently open coastwide. Recreational crabbers should always call the Shellfish Hotline (800-448-2474) or visit the ODA Recreational Shellfish Biotxin Closures webpage before crabbing.

For more information about Oregon's shellfish marine biotoxin monitoring, call ODA's shellfish safety information hotline at (800) 448-2474 or visit the ODA shellfish closures web page.



COURTESY PHOTO FROM TONY LATINO JR. - KPOC PHOTOGRAPHY

A Lincoln County commercial crabber found time to snap this photo of the rough ocean waters during a trip to sea in 2020.

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Dollar Tree has kept prices at \$1 for 35 years but that is now changing

The company has announced it will shift to a \$1.25 price point for a majority of its items at all stores nationwide, including the Lincoln City location, by the end of the first quarter of 2022.

"We have begun rolling out the \$1.25 price point at all Dollar Tree stores nationwide," Dollar Tree President and CEO Michael Witynski said in a press release. "The continuing expansion of our key strategic initiatives, including Dollar Tree Plus, Combo Stores and the H2 format, are all going well and on, or ahead of, plan. I am very proud of our team's ef-

forts – especially those in our stores and distribution centers – to serve our customers by delivering incredible value on everyday products."

Witynski states in the release that it is the appropriate time to shift away from the constraints of the \$1 price point in order to continue offering "extreme value to customers." The decision is permanent and not a reaction to short-term or transitory market conditions, he said.

The new price point will allow the reintroduction of customer favorites that were previously discontinued due to the constraints of the \$1 price

point, the release reads.

In September, Dollar Tree announced its plan to add additional price points above \$1 to all Dollar Tree Plus Stores on a test-and-learn basis to selected legacy Dollar Tree stores. There was positive customer feedback and store performance during the initial testing phase, according to the company.

The new price point is expected to be introduced into more than 2,000 additional legacy Dollar Tree stores in December with the rollout completed at all stores by the end of the first fiscal quarter of 2022.

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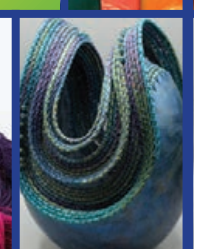
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