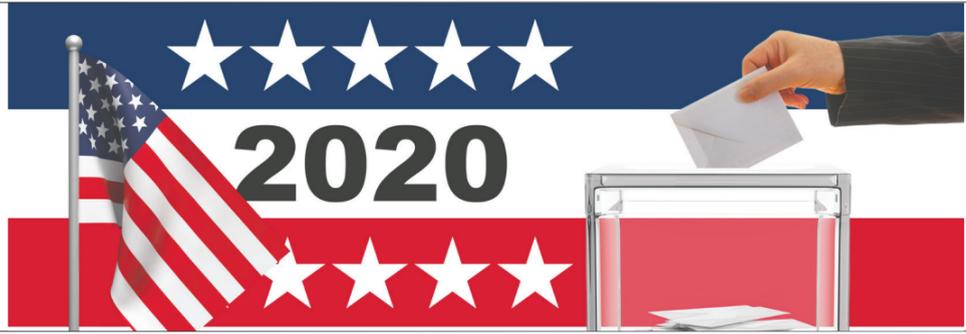


The first round of election results were not available at press time. Check gorskagit.com for updates.



ANACORTES AMERICAN

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WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2020

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BACK TO SCHOOL



PHOTOS BY BRIANA ALZOLA / ANACORTES AMERICAN

It was a cheerful morning outside of Mount Erie Elementary School on Monday, as staff, including Principal Kevin Schwartz, above with second-grader George Armas, and teacher Kim Hoofnagle, right, welcomed students back into classrooms for the first time since March. Students in kindergarten to third grade went back to their classrooms this week, with students in fourth and fifth grades to join them Nov. 9. Schwartz said he was excited to see students back at school.

Balloons adorned several trees outside the building, placed by the PTA as a way to celebrate students' return to school. Masked parents, students and staff members walked students to their classrooms but weren't allowed inside. Anacortes School District Superintendent Justin Irish also stopped by to greet students.



Final days for old Anacortes fish plant

BY RICHARD WALKER
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The nearly 130-year-old waterfront building at Fifth Street and K Avenue is sagging, its sides collapsing as it enters its final death throes.

It will be demolished soon, its story relegated to newspaper archives, museum files and old-timers with long memories.

But what a story it has to tell.

The building is all that remains of what was, at its founding, the first codfish processing plant north of San Francisco. Many of the untreated pilings — eroded by time, tide and critters — were driven by Capt. J.A. Matheson when he built the processing plant in

September 1891.

By October, the former Provincetown, Massachusetts, sea captain's schooner, Lizzie Colby, arrived from the Bering Sea with its holds full of cod, ushering in an era of fish curing and fish canning that would provide jobs for hundreds and fuel the economy of an infant city, according to news stories at the time in the Anacortes American.

"Every ton of fish added to his present capacity means more money for labor, more business for the city, more business for steamboat and railways and a help to the town," the Anacortes American reported on Jan. 12, 1905, when

See *Fish*, page A6



RICHARD WALKER / ANACORTES AMERICAN

The old fish processing plant at Fifth Street and K Avenue is set to be demolished soon.

City gets new line for water treatment

BY QUESTEN INGHAM
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As a line that carries water to serve tens of thousands of people in the region turned 50 years old this year, the City of Anacortes made an investment.

Rather than replace the aging raw water line, which carries water pumped from the Skagit River to the Anacortes Water Treatment Plant on River Bend Road near Mount Vernon, the city added a second line and a new clear well.

The second line will ensure that water can continue to be treated and distributed when the first one, built in 1970, needs maintenance or repairs.

"It provides redundancy," Fred Buckenmeyer, Anacortes Public Works Director said as he and several other city officials watched the new line being installed last week.

Multiple cranes held up the 1,950-foot-long water line as it was being assembled and slowly pulled underneath the Skagit River. The project began this summer and is expected to be finished within a few months.

The new clear well will temporarily store two million gallons of the chlorine-treated water to ensure proper disinfection. The water will then be distributed to cities including Anacortes, Oak Harbor and La Conner, as well as the Swinomish Indian Reservation, the Shell and Marathon oil refineries and Naval Air Station Whidbey Island. Serving over 60,000 people in all, the city treatment plant is a major provider of water in the region.

The new water line will also provide water through intertie connections to the Skagit Public Utility District when needed, such as



QUESTEN INGHAM / ANACORTES AMERICAN

The new raw water line was held up by multiple cranes as it was being pulled through a tunnel dug beneath the Skagit River on Tuesday, Oct. 27.

See *Water*, page A4

