



Shades of gold: Readers share their island views of fall colors

YourFidalgo B1

Did you vote? General election is Nov. 2

A3 and A8



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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2021

\$1.50

PUMPKIN PICKERS



PHOTOS BY BRIANA ALZOLA / ANACORTES AMERICAN

Normally, kindergartners get a chance to visit a pumpkin patch to pick out the perfect pumpkin. This year, with no field trips allowed, the PTAs at Mount Erie and Island View elementary schools set up on-campus pumpkin patches so the youngest members of the schools would still get the pumpkin patch experience. Above: William Moyles leads the students in Amanda Cardinale's class at Mount Erie as they carry off their pumpkins. Center row: Anthony Rivas (below, left), Graham Dole and Logan Lambert (below, right) visit the Island View garden, which turned into a pumpkin patch for the day. Bottom left: Julie Riccardi's class peruses the Mount Erie pumpkin patch. Bottom right: Caelyn Hutchings, an Island View student, proudly shows off her choice of pumpkin. See information on Halloween activities on A3.



Boosters get OK as COVID-19 cases rise

BY BRIANA ALZOLA
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COVID-19 booster shots are now available in Skagit County for some categories of people just as the number of confirmed cases has begun climbing again.

Skagit County Public Health reported 459 new cases of COVID-19 for the seven-day period running Oct. 17 through Oct. 23. It marked the 11th consecutive seven-day, Sunday-through-Saturday period with 300 or more new cases and is the highest number over that span.

The previous high during this latest COVID-19 surge was 440 from Sept. 26 through Oct. 2.

There were four deaths and 16 new hospitalizations in the latest seven-

day period. The total since the pandemic began stands at 109 deaths and 605 hospitalizations as of Oct. 23.

From Monday, Oct. 18, to Monday, Oct. 25, Island Hospital saw 30 new positive cases and administered 389 tests. Since March 2020, the hospital has seen 849 positive cases and administered 25,284 tests. One more person died of COVID-19 at the hospital last week, bringing the total deaths there to 10.

On Monday, five COVID-19-positive patients were inpatients at the hospital, hospital spokesperson Laura Moroney said.

Ready for boosters

The state Department

See COVID, page A7

City digs into fine details of 2022 budget

BY BRIANA ALZOLA
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The City of Anacortes continues to move through its budget process, including going line by line through the \$108 million in expenses expected in the next year.

On Monday, the City Council went through all the budgets for the Public Works Department. At the next meeting Nov. 1, it will go through the other departments.

It's a lot of numbers, but it's necessary to make sure the council does its job at being going stewards of public money, council member Anthony Young said at Monday's meeting.

Mayor Laurie Gere said the budget looks pretty standard, except for the sewer outfall proj-

ect expected to cost \$19.5 million, plus another almost \$3 million in other equipment upgrades.

The new outfall is expected to better handle stormwater flow from major storm events and keep untreated wastewater from being discharged into the Guemes Channel.

The city's stormwater and wastewater systems are largely separate. Stormwater is discharged directly into surrounding water without treatment.

However, a couple of areas within the city are served by a partially combined sewer system where both the stormwater and sanitary sewer systems are joined, according to the wastewater treatment plant

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Anacortes Lab takes 3rd in DockDogs world competition

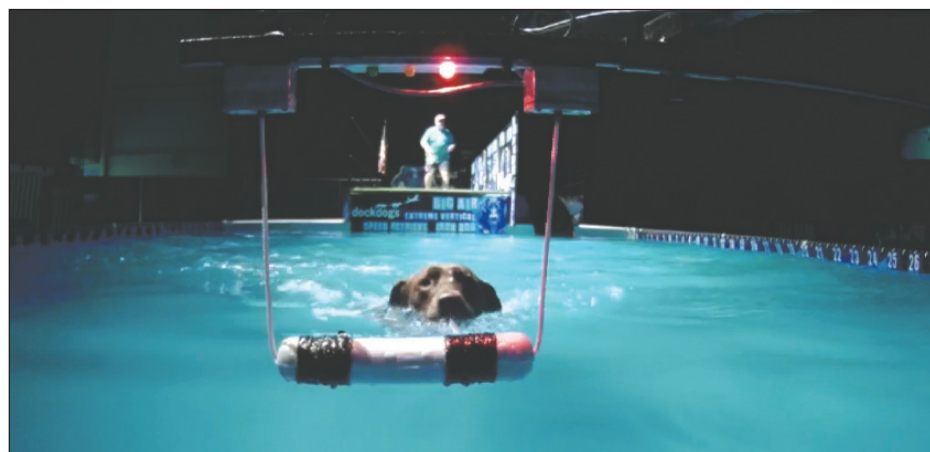
BY BRIANA ALZOLA
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Anacortes has a new world-class athlete.

Trixie, a chocolate Labrador, is a high-flying, speedy dog that recently earned third place at the DockDogs World Championship in Iowa.

Trixie, or Trixie Girl as owner Lennie Williams calls her, competed at the world competition in Iowa last week after qualifying in four disciplines.

She took home third in Speed Retrieve, in which contestants jump from a dock, retrieve a



SCREENSHOT

Trixie swims for her toy, called a bumper, at the end of the pool while owner Lennie Williams looks on during the DockDogs World Championship. Trixie went on to win third in the Speed Retrieve event.

toy at the other end of a pool and swim back to the dock.

Trixie leapt out 21 feet into the pool before she started to swim and ended the swim with a time of 6.282 seconds.

It was a tight race for the top three finishers. The dog that won first place was just .073 of a second faster than Trixie, Williams said.

Williams said he's had labs his whole life, but he and his wife Sheryl got Trixie in 2017 as a puppy, it quickly became clear that she had more energy than any dog he had ever

known. He looked for ways to entertain her and help her burn energy.

They walked, they hiked, they swam.

Then, in 2019, they tried DockDogs.

"She's a natural," he said.

The speed and jumping sport for canines gave Trixie something to focus on.

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Dogs

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There are three disciplines in DockDogs. In Big Air, the owner throws the bumper, or toy, off the end of a dock and the dog jumps as far as it can to catch it.

In Extreme Vertical, the dog jumps up to retrieve a toy hanging over the water off the end of a dock. Then, there's Speed Retrieve.

Williams called the different disciplines long jump, high jump and drag race for dogs.

Each dog is put into a division within each discipline.

Each discipline has three to six of those divisions, Williams said.

Williams and Trixie attend Brown Dog University in Gig Harbor, which has a regulation-size dock and pool.

The owner is in the DockDogs hall of fame and told Williams he had a world champion



Before each race, Lennie Williams takes a moment with Trixie to help her get ready, then says "Fly, Trixie Girl, fly!" before she takes off.

on his hands with Trixie.

In her first year of competition in 2019, Trixie went to the world competition to compete in Big Air.

She made it to the finals, but placed sixth out of six dogs, Williams said.

In 2020, the pandemic meant no world-qualifying events were held in Washington, so Trixie and Williams took the year off.

This year, they competed in multiple events, including those in Washington, in Idaho and in Ohio, where Williams has family.

Trixie qualified in all three categories, plus the Iron Dog contest, which combines all three disciplines.

She did nine total jumps during her first trip to worlds. This year, she did 61.

"Team Trixie Girl" was one of four teams from Puget Sound DockDogs to head to the

world competition.

Practicing for DockDogs means a lot of fetching and a lot of swimming, Williams said.

The best part of competing is spending time with Trixie, Williams said.

"This is our joy, something she and I can have together," he said. "We can disconnect from the world and just do our thing."

She loves hiking and swimming and is a good outdoor dog.

"She's a cuddle bug," he said.

When they go to the competition, there are hundreds of dogs everywhere.

Trixie always stays calm and quiet, even with dogs barking all around them, Williams said.

Trixie is calm, sweet and obedient, and she "loves everybody," he said.

"She has heart," Williams said.

Budget

Continued from page A1

website. Those combined systems — on B Avenue and Q Avenue — have "the potential to allow untreated wastewater combined with stormwater to discharge to Guemes Channel during extreme storm events."

The wastewater treatment plant has an average daily flow of 1.89

million gallons per day and is permitted for up to 4.5 million gallons per day, according to a wastewater treatment plant report. During a 32-hour rainstorm Feb. 3-4, 2018, the plant released 1.7 million gallons of overflow into the channel via the combined sewer outfall, according to the report.

Once the new outfall is installed, two existing outfalls will be abandoned — the current wastewater treatment

plant outfall, which carries treated wastewater to Guemes Channel; and the combined sewer outfall, which carries a mix of stormwater and untreated wastewater to the channel during heavy rains to keep the wastewater treatment plant from being overwhelmed.

With the new outfall, stormwater discharging into the channel is expected to be cleaner.

The Public Works department is also expected to spend another

roughly \$6 million on water system upgrades, including 1.3 million for a pipeline replacement and a \$2 million waterline from Pass Lake. The rest of the money is going to other equipment upgrades.

The entirety of the budget, broken down by line item, is on www.anacorteswa.gov/827/Budget.

— Skagit Publishing staff contributed to this report

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