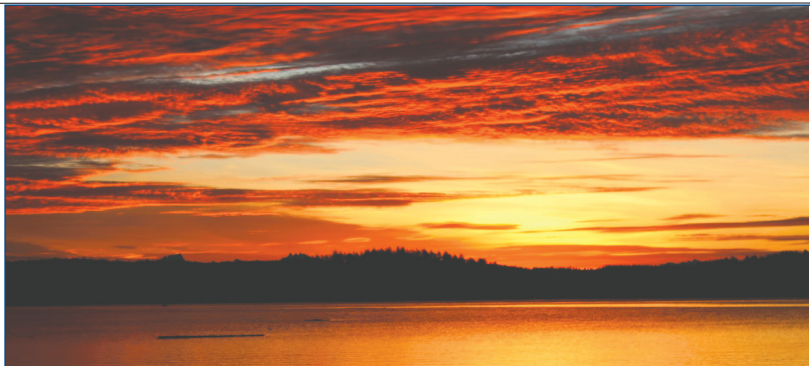


COVID-19 case numbers falling after weeks in hundreds

A3

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TRUCKLOAD OF TREES



KJELL CARLSEN / CONTRIBUTED

Christmas trees now being sold by Kiwanis Sunrisers outside of Sebo's Hardware made a long journey to Anacortes, including a conveyer belt loader at the tree farm in Mossyrock.

Service club sets up tree lot to kick off holiday season

BY BRIANA ALZOLA
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Christmas trees are going up all over the country as the holiday season kicks off in full force, whether harvested in the wild, grown on a farm or put together in a factory.

Many of the trees that will adorn Anacortes homes will be sold here by the Anacortes Kiwanis Sunrisers club. The club has sold trees to raise money to support various local programs and activities for roughly 30 years.

The trees weren't grown here, though.

Last week, a couple of volunteers from the Kiwanis Sunrisers club left Anacortes at 3:45 a.m. in a U-Haul truck to head about 200 miles south to Mossyrock. They watched tree after tree make its way up a conveyer belt to sit on the growing stack inside.



BRIANA ALZOLA / ANACORTES AMERICAN

With the truck filled with 259 varieties of firs and weighing about 18,000 pounds, the club members made their way back to

Anacortes, where another team of volunteers, including club

See *Trees*, page A3

Island Hospital CEO Hall to resign

BY BRIANA ALZOLA
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After two years as Island Hospital's CEO, Charles Hall is stepping down this week, the Board of Commissioners announced Nov. 24.



Charles Hall

The board voted to accept Hall's resignation at a commissioners' board meeting last week and approved a release agreement between Hall and the hospital district. The only information given was that the resignation was for "personal reasons."

Hall resigned in a letter dated Nov. 22 with an effective date of Dec. 3. However, he has been on a leave of absence for four weeks and would remain on leave until his official departure date, officials said.

Hall, reached by phone after last Wednesday's meeting, said he "honors and supports the hospital in the direction that it is going." He had

no further comment.

The board also approved making COO Elise Cutter the interim CEO and approved a pay increase of \$7,000 a month as she takes on the CEO duties as well as her own.

Cutter previously served as interim CEO after former CEO Vince Oliver retired at the end of May 2019.

Board members will decide what will happen next, board member Warren Tessler said after the meeting.

Tessler said Cutter has shown her leadership skills and ability to take on the job, so she's the perfect fit to step back into that role.

Hall joined Island Hospital in early November 2019.

He came with about 25 years of health care experience. He started as a hospital corpsman with the Navy and worked with hospital records, emergency departments, in an ambulance and in operating rooms.

He later worked at a Navy hospital in Washington, D.C., and the Navy hospital ship Comfort.



SHANNON PETERSON / CONTRIBUTED

Sailing team members compete in an Oak Harbor regatta this season.

Sailing team done for fall, awaits spring

BY BRIANA ALZOLA
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Unlike most sports through Anacortes High School, the sailing team doesn't just have one season.

It competes through the fall, takes a break in the harsher winter months and kicks off again in the spring.

The team just finished up its final regatta a few weeks ago and is now off the water until spring. Spring 2022 will be a big

season with the team hosting its own regatta.

The team has a long history here and has competed for at least 20 years, said Pat Barrett, who served as the team's volunteer head coach this year.

Sailing is a "lifetime

See *Sailing*, page A7

Artistic couple paints, travels the world



BY BRIANA ALZOLA
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Next to Alfred Currier and Anne Shreivogl's house sits a specially made art space — complete with two sound-proof studios.

The two artists built it in 2007, with north-facing windows high in the walls to help avoid the glare of the sun on works in progress.

Each can use their own studio without distracting the other.

For the most part, though, the door between them stays open to allow for conversation and ideas to flow back and forth between the couple. When it's closed, some-



CONTRIBUTED / ANNE SCHREIVOGEL

Alfred Currier and Anne Shreivogl are both full-time artists. Their styles are different from each other, but they often paint side-by-side.

one needs to concentrate.

The two work in different styles. Shreivogl tends toward whimsical acrylics with a variety of subjects, many in the form of cats or other ani-

mals. Currier prefers oils and tends to create realistic scenes, such as migrant workers in the tulip fields, for which he is locally known.

The couple doesn't

collaborate on projects often — at least on purpose. But they do influence each other. As they chat and walk back and forth between the studios, they will sometimes notice their works-in-progress taking on similar colors.

A lifetime of art

Both Currier and Shreivogl grew up loving art, and travel had a defining role in their efforts.

As a child, Currier moved with his mother from California to Ohio via train. During the long ride, he started drawing the faces of the people he saw around him.

His love of art and drawing people was born. "It stuck with me," he said.

As an adult, Currier

See *Art*, page A5

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Sailing

Continued from page A1

sport,” he said.
Barrett also called it “chess on the water” because it makes competitors think about each move as they go to make sure they don’t end up in the water.
Though this is a high school team (with several members still at Anacortes Middle School) and students can earn a letter for it as a varsity sport, it is not paid for or sponsored by the School District. It is hosted by the Anacortes Waterfront Alliance, which formed three years ago from the Anacortes Small Boat Center.
The city’s Parks and Recreation Department also helps, and the Anacortes Yacht Club provides classroom space and somewhere for the young sailors to change and get ready for practices.
Many organizations come together to make this experience available to the young people who benefit from it, said Sol Kohlhaas, who will be the Waterfront Alliance’s president next year.
The team goes right into the alliance’s mission of improving access to the water for the people of Anacortes, he said.
“We are building tomorrow’s sailors and boaters,” Kohlhaas said.
Equipment cost can be a barrier to access, but scholarships and other subsidies help the sailing team so no kids are turned away because they can’t afford it. Lowering that barrier gives more people the chance to experience sailing, he said.
The Waterfront Alliance also leads equipment rentals for water equipment and plans to hire a full-time person to serve as the coach.
The team relies on parent involvement and community volunteers.

A young team

This year’s team has two seniors and a couple juniors, but many of its members are in eighth or ninth grade. Some are even younger. Those in sixth and seventh grade can practice and learn the ropes of being on the team, but they can’t yet compete in regattas.
Still, they are enthusiastic about getting out on the water, Barrett said.
“This is a rebuilding year,” he said of his young, growing team.
Cassius Tossavainen, the team captain, said young teams are common right now across the region, but Anacortes does have some experienced sailors in with younger ones.
Tossavainen started out in the city Parks and Recreation Department’s Learn-to-Sail Program. He originally joined because he and a friend were off to summer camp and dropped off the friend’s sibling to take sailing classes. He said it looked fun so he wanted to try it.
“I guess I never stopped,” he said with a laugh.
He’s been on the sail-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS / SHANNON PETERSON

The Anacortes sailing team competed in several regattas this season including the Northwest Interscholastic Sailing Association championship in Portland (above and below) and Sail Sand Point in Seattle (right).



ing team for the past two years and now leads classes with the Learn-to-Sail Program.
“When I went to my first day, I didn’t think I’d be here, this far into this sport,” he said.
Being a captain on this team is unlike any other sport, Tossavainen said. The equipment alone is a lot bigger and plentiful than in most sports. He checks on the boats often and during storms has even been known to sit on stuff to make sure it doesn’t blow away before it can be tied down, he said.
Anacortes has the only high school team in Skagit County, so when competing, the team has to travel to compete in regattas in other areas.
Last season, things were a bit strange, but they are getting back to normal this year, Tossavainen said.
A place for everyone
The best thing about being on the sailing team

is that there is a place for everyone, he said. Some competitors want to come out and learn to sail, but don’t care as much about racing.
“If you don’t love competing, you can still come practice and be ready for your next adventure,” he said.
That sets sailing apart, he said. People can find their own joy in it, whether they want to be out on

the water on race day or not.
Freshman William Peters joined the sailing team four years ago and plans to continue sailing for a long time.
“I like the support the coaches give us and the competitiveness of the sport,” he said.
Lucas Varnasse, a sixth-grader, took a Learn-to-Sail class before joining the team.



“Sailing can be complicated,” he said. “You have to learn to move the boat, how to rig it and de-rig it, and how to take care of the boat.”
Aeden Peterson likes how challenging sailing can be and how it requires team members to think fast. He has been sailing for about five years and has been on the Anacortes team for two.
Peterson likes sailing

so much that he checks at every college he’s interested in to see if there is a sailing team.
Eighth-grader Colton Hong said joining the sailing team just made sense because Anacortes is a waterfront town. He loves traveling to go to regattas around the region.
“I thought it was a unique opportunity for me to join the sailing team,” he said.

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH: OCTOBER 2021



Rachel Lambert


The Island Hospital Employee of the Month for October is Community Education Coordinator/Interim Volunteer Coordinator Rachel Lambert.

Rachel’s contributions to the community education, community relations and volunteer services teams are countless. Her efforts were instrumental in standing up the vaccine clinic last winter, coordinating classes for the Well Journey Adventure last spring, and assisting with projects on the marketing team when needed; all while performing her duties as a community education coordinator. Rachel has also served as the interim volunteer coordinator for the last 18 months, ensuring clear, consistent communication with the volunteers was upheld when the position was vacant. She takes her job seriously and always goes the extra mile to help her colleagues, setting them up for success. We like to refer to Rachel as “The Sweeper” because she uses her talents to help so many different departments within our organization.


Since her arrival in 2019, Rachel has characterized Island Hospital’s Promise to consistently provide the best customer service to our patients, families, guests and colleagues. Congratulations and thanks for being an inspiration, Rachel!

 ISLAND HOSPITAL

Rachel enjoys working at Island Hospital, and you can, too! For rewarding career opportunities, visit: www.islandhospital.org



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Anacortes Senior College

WINTER TERM SCHEDULE
January 11- February 17, 2022
CLASS TIMES: 4-6PM
Location: Anacortes Middle School

DETAILED COURSE AND INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND ON THE WEBSITE AT WWW.SENIORCOLLEGE.ORG.

TUESDAY CLASSES
Memoir Writing - 6 weeks
Exploring Washington’s Geology - 6 weeks
Bugs, Bugs, Bugs and Other Insects - 6 weeks

THURSDAY CLASSES
The Evolution of Our Solar System - 6 weeks
Three Good Movies: Cooking and Eating - 6 weeks
Math: “PHUN” ‘n “PHROLIC” - 6 weeks
The Tankers of Puget Sound - 3 weeks (Feb 3-17)

A 6-WEEK CLASS IS \$30; 3-WEEK CLASS IS \$20

All students, instructors and volunteers must be vaccinated and wear masks while in the school building in accordance with CDC and Skagit County Health Department guidelines. Class sizes are limited to provide for adequate spacing in the classrooms.

Online registration opens Monday, December 13, at 10am at www.seniorcollege.org

Registration assistance: December 13, 10am-noon at the Anacortes Senior Activity Center

FOR INFORMATION CALL: 360-503-1255 OR EMAIL: INFO@SENIORCOLLEGE.ORG.