



Clark County Fair canceled A4



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DOGPAW REACHES OUT AT LUCKY DOG PARK

Monthly cleanup and information event raises awareness of off-leash parks, importance of picking up after your dog

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Among the usual commotion of dogs running, playing, sniffing, and “doing their business” with their owners nearby at Lucky Dog Park in Brush Prairie on May 8, several volunteers and members of the park’s chief operators were busy either picking up the results of said business, clearing brush along fencing, or using tools for park maintenance.

Others manned tables with information about DOGPAW, which founded and runs the parks, as they signed parkgoers up to become members and provided information about what impact the parks have on Clark County as a whole.

The event was one of DOGPAW’s monthly beautification events, which apart from picking up poop, also serves to get parkgoers acquainted with who main-

tains the free resource for those looking to let their dogs run free.

DOGPAW operates four off-leash parks across Clark County, with Lucky in Brush Prairie and Kane Dog Park in Hockinson located in North County. All of the parks are named in honor of local police K9s.

In 2021 the group approved a new contract with Clark County to help maintain the parks.

Running through 2025, the contract states the county will take on some of the responsibilities the organization used to handle itself, including mowing and maintenance of the paths, DOGPAW President Sally Jenkins said.

DOGPAW pays for dog waste disposal, which includes the bags found around the parks for patrons to use, and also regulates behavior at the parks by establishing rules and posting them on-site.

DOGPAW saw some challenges in maintaining its operations in recent years. Conversations with the county presented the scenario where DOGPAW would fold, and discussions centered around whether or not the fixtures of the community could be maintained by public resources, Jenkins said.

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Chauncey, the Cavalier King Charles Spaniel owned by DOGPAW President Sally Jenkins, greets DOGPAW Treasurer Donna Clark during a cleanup event at Lucky Dog Park in Brush Prairie May 8.



DOGPAW President Sally Jenkins adjusts the Canines for Clean Water bandana around the neck of her dog Kaiju during a cleanup event at Lucky Dog Park in Brush Prairie May 8.

Clark County colleges get millions in funding in capital budget

Clark College campus in Ridgefield, WSU V life sciences building among funding targets

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North County is slated to see funding for a variety of projects in the state’s coming biennium as the recently-approved capital budget has dollars for colleges, infrastructure, and a new library in Woodland, among other items.

Substitute House Bill 1080 passed the Washington State Senate April 25, appropriating \$6.3 billion in spending for capital projects statewide. Of that amount, more than \$118 million will go toward projects benefiting North County. Gov. Jay Inslee still has to sign the bill before the appropriations are official.

The two largest sums of money were for Clark County’s two colleges. Clark College is slated for more than \$53 million for its Boschma Farms campus set to be built on Ridgefield’s east side. The campus has been in development for several years, with the funding in this year’s capital budget going toward the construction of the first 70,000-square-foot building which will serve as an advanced manufacturing center for the college.

Washington State University

See **BUDGET** on Page A13

Battle Ground man discovers relatives through DNA testing

Lee Cutbirth will meet his biological half-sister for the first time at the age of 63

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Battle Ground resident Lee Cutbirth added some love and long lost family members to his life this year.

Born in Torrance, Calif. in October of 1957, Cutbirth spent the first few years of his life thinking he had no biological brothers and sisters. Until he was adopted by Norm Cutbirth at the age of nine, Cutbirth and his cousin, Michael Heiller lived with a few different family members in southern California.

“Mike and I lived with my (biological) mother and (biological) father for just a short time,” Cutbirth said. “Mike was still a baby when we were given to my grandparents.”

Now 63, Cutbirth lives in Battle Ground with his wife, Allison. In 2007, Cutbirth was diagnosed with retinitis pigmentosa, a rare hereditary disease that causes the eyes and vision to degenerate, resulting in vision loss and impairment. Cutbirth has been legally blind since 2016. He retired after nearly 40 years in the food industry.

Due to his condition, Cutbirth learned he was eligible for a study at the Oregon Health and Science University, barring one unique exception.

“Part of the requirement for the study is that you have to have DNA available for both sides of the family,” Cutbirth said. “I didn’t have that.”

At the urging of his wife, Cutbirth looked into DNA testing companies. After reading the privacy statements of several, he decided to give 23andMe a shot.

“I also wanted to see if I could find any relatives on my father’s side,” he said. “Good news is, I found my relatives. Bad news is,

the family story of my biological father is rather awful.”

After sending in his DNA sample, Cutbirth was contacted through the 23andMe website by Joan Singleton, a first cousin he had never met.

Finding out about new family members wasn’t a completely new experience for Cutbirth. When he was in his 30s, he and Heiller learned they weren’t cousins. Rather, the duo shared a biological mother and likely the same biological father, John Edward (Jack) Lawless.

“My biological father wasn’t a peach,” Cutbirth said. “He was a womanizer.”

Singleton is the daughter of Jack Lawless’ brother, Walter, and reached out to Cutbirth in an attempt to connect with her newly found cousin. In an email from Singleton, Cutbirth learned he had a few family members he had never known about, including his half-sister, Geraldine “Gerry” Piper.

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Battle Ground resident Lee Cutbirth discovered a long lost half-sister through 23andMe DNA technology.



Geraldine ‘Gerry’ Piper connected with Cutbirth through a mutual family member on 23andMe.

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