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Sheriff's Office seeks leads on coyote killings

BY MATTHEW NASH
Sequim Gazette

The Clallam County Sheriff's Office is seeking information about the killing and dumping of multiple dead coyotes by the Dungeness River just north of Sequim.

At least 13 dead coyotes were discovered at the bottom of the northwest portion of Ward Bridge off Woodcock Road.

Local walkers and bike riders took notice posting on social media.

Chief Criminal Deputy Brian King with Clallam County Sheriff's Office said residents reached out to the sheriff's office several weeks ago for possible action after contacting the state's Department of Fish and Wildlife.

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Online open house seeks input on Simdars Interchange

BY MATTHEW NASH
Sequim Gazette

An online open house begins this week to comment on pre-design work for the U.S. 101 East Sequim Road Project that could complete the Simdars Road Interchange.

The virtual open house begins Thursday, Jan. 27, and runs through Thursday, Feb. 10, according to Dennis Engel, WSDOT multi-modal planning manager.

A link will go live Jan. 27 at engage.wsdot.wa.gov and the project's site at wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/us-101-east-sequim-pre-design-study.

"We are looking at 14 potential improvements including roundabouts and new U.S. (Highway) 101 on- and off-ramps at the

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Stitching together the colorful pieces

Sequim fiber artist headed to QuiltCon

BY EMILY MATTHIESSEN
Sequim Gazette

Sequim fiber artist Marla Varner will head to Phoenix, Ariz. next month for QuiltCon, held Feb. 16-20, which according to their website is the "largest modern quilting show of its kind," where "each year, thousands of attendees come to see hundreds of modern quilts on display, including a juried quilt show with entries from MQG members around the world.

Varner's large quilts, "Crevices" and "Tiny Bubbles" proceeded her to Phoenix — two of about 600 quilts selected from thousands of entries to be displayed and judged at the convention, which also features lectures and workshops.

In 2020, Varner won the "Quilting Excellence" award for the quilt "For the Love of Squirrels" and in 2015 she won the same award for "Coral Reef." She used the award money to start her business, Penny Lane Quilts in 2015. (View those quilts and learn more about her process at pennylanequilts.com, or her Instagram or Facebook of the same name.)

To be considered a quilt most modern quilting shows require that there must be three layers, according to Varner.

"A quilt can basically be anything that has a top and a backing, and some kind of batting in the middle," she said. "And then it's stitched together by threads, by machine or by hand, so that are three layers.

"I build on the skills and designs of traditional quilting and create unique designs with a modern aesthetic."

Local quiltmaker Pat Oden said modern quilting — or art quilting — is improvisational.



SEQUIM GAZETTE PHOTO BY EMILY MATTHIESSEN

Above: Local fiber artist Marla Varner stands in front of her temperature quilt. Each square is color coded to the high and low temperatures of each day of 2021 in her neighborhood in Sequim, with the smallest quarter circles signifying precipitation. Below: "Tiny Bubbles" a hand- and machine-pieced and hand- and machine-quilted will be shown at the upcoming QuiltCon in Phoenix.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARLA VARNER

"The big difference is that traditional quilting has set patterns ... you follow patterns like following a dress pattern," Oden said. "Most of the time (in modern quilting) they don't use a straight edge even — instead you do a freehand line."

Oden said that it looks more personal than machine-like, calling it a "more painterly look."

Varner makes many baby quilts in the traditional style as well as being recognized for her hand quilting "because it is so beautiful and innovative," Oden said.

"She's very well-rounded as far as her abilities," Oden said. "She uses lots of different colors of thread ... you wouldn't think the threads would make that much of an impression on the quilt, but depending on whether it's a contrast or the same color as the fabric (or the choice of) the diameter of the thread — a thick thread versus a thin thread — lots of things go into it."

She said that these details make

Varner's quilts interesting.

Renne Emiko Brock, who met Varner through her participation in the North Olympic Fiber Arts Festival and a small business workshop series that Brock taught through the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribal Library, said Varner is "highly skilled and methodical in the systems that she has built her art practice on."

Brock added, "While technically her work might be called quilting due to the layers of fabric and stitching, to me it really is more like architecture without the requirement of squared edges or the physics of gravity. Detailed, complex, and to code. There is a

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Owner and county commissioners push for airport water, sewer hookups

BY MICHAEL DASHIELL
Sequim Gazette

When a major disaster strikes the peninsula, long-time owner Andy Sallee said, Sequim Valley Airport will likely become a busy — and critical — location for assistance and recovery efforts.

"The biggest thing is, if we had some big emergency (such as a long-predicted Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake) you're going to have Blyn wash outs," Sallee said. "Basically, we'd be an island."

The prospect of events such as that have Sallee and other airport advocates seeking better options for water, and their push to have the facility hooked up with Clallam County Public Utility District water and sewer by becoming part of the Carlsborg Urban Growth



PHOTO COURTESY OF ANDY SALLEE/SEQUIM VALLEY AIRPORT

Members of U.S. Coast Guard, Clallam County Fire District 3, Port Angeles Police Department and Washington State Patrol participate in a training session at Sequim Valley Airport in April 2021.

Area has gained county commissioner support.

In November, Clallam's three

county commissioners signed letters of support to PUD general manager Doug Nass as well as

Gary Idleburg, a senior planner at the Washington State Department of Commerce.

Calling the airport a "vital local facility," commissioners write that "it serves as an essential component of our regional emergency management infrastructure and plays an important role in both wildfire response capability and in emergency life flights taking off for trauma care in Seattle that isn't available in our rural county."

Clallam County may not expand or offer sewer connections to locations outside of the UGA boundary, commissioners noted, and the county does not currently meet all requirements for expansion of the UGA.

"However," commissioners wrote, "given the important role the

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School directors pick finalists for open seat

BY MICHAEL DASHIELL
Sequim Gazette

Sequim's school board is another step closer to filling out its open seat.

Board directors on Jan. 18 narrowed an initial list of eight applicants to five, each of whom are scheduled to be interviewed at the board's next regular meeting set for

6 p.m. Monday, Feb. 7.

Finalists include: Maren Halvorsen, Jill Hay, Kenneth Jennings Jr., Susanne C. Scott and Sharon Schubert.

"I was excited that there were so many candidates that applied," board president Eric Pickens said.

The school board position was left open when Kristi Schmeck — who

attempted to drop out of the election for the at-large district seat soon after she filed for office in May, then received the most votes in both primary and general election campaigns — resigned her seat in November.

In an application for the open

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