



CONCORDIA NEWS

A free publication of the Concordia Neighborhood Association

March 2022

Hardesty visits Concordia March 2

Meet Jo Ann Hardesty, Portland city commissioner, Wednesday, March 2, at the Concordia Neighborhood Association general meeting. The video conference meeting begins at 7 p.m. Sign-on details are at ConcordiaPDX.org/CNAMeetings.

The commissioner was elected to the Portland City Council in 2018. Her bureau assignments are: Portland Fire & Rescue, Portland Bureau of Transportation and the Office of Community & Civic Life.

CNA Mission Statement

To connect Concordia residents and businesses — inform, educate and report on activities, issues and opportunities of the neighborhood.

Concordia News

This free, monthly publication of CNA will abstain from publishing anything that could be construed as libel.

Copies are delivered to all residences and many community and business locations in the Concordia neighborhood.

Concordia News is printed on 40% post-consumer or better paper, manufactured at a local mill.

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The purpose is to nurture change

By Nancy Varekamp
CNews Editor

FreeDictionary.com describes “community center” as “a meeting place used by members of a community for social, cultural or recreational purposes.”

Members of the Leaven Community describe their brick and mortar center as a place to deepen relationships, cultivate community agency and capacity, and act together.

Leaven’s Ali Ippolito pointed to the organization’s mission on its website, Leaven.org: “to provide a space for igniting the power of relationships to create more equitable, diverse, thriving neighborhoods.”

The partnerships there focus on

“We wanted to make the use of the space flexible.”

— Ali Ippolito



The former Redeemer Lutheran Church is now the Leaven Community Center. It’s home to the Leaven Community and 12 partners. Together, they strive to deepen relationships, cultivate community agency and capacity, and act together. Ali Ippolito serves as space coordinator, as well as Salt & Light Church musician. Photo by Nancy Varekamp

Leaven tenants/partners

- Cascadia Wild, cascadiawild.org
- Center for Diversity & the Environment, cdeinspires.org
- Freedom to Thrive, freedomtothrive.org
- Interfaith Spiritual Center, interfaithspiritualcenter.com
- Kitchen Commons, kitchencommons.net
- KitchenShare NE, kitchencommons.net/projects/kitchen-share-ne
- Northeast Portland Tool Library, neptl.org
- Portland Fruit Tree Project, portlandfruit.org
- Race Talks, racetalkspdx.com
- SWAP, leaven.org/swap-n-work-and-play
- Trash For Peace, trashforpeace.org
- Wild Diversity, wilddiversity.org

facilities to again be on the increase. That includes the Buddhist meditation group that met regularly prior to March 2020.

“We kind of softly re-opened to the public in ways that made sense over the summer – a few concerts and meetings,” she said.

Then there are the 12 full-time tenants whose organizations are housed in the building. “These are our community partners, and they consist of social, racial, environmental and food justice-oriented nonprofits.” (See sidebar.)

Ali continues to value her work in the building, which began 20 years ago as a church musician. She continues to provide the music on Sundays.

“It’s spiritually fulfilling to me to

provide music for others’ spiritual grounding.” The rest of each week, she serves as community center space coordinator.

It’s a job Ali said she loves.

“This is one way I can be a part of social movements that are happening. My entire adult life, this place has sustained me.”



Nancy Varekamp is semiretired from her career in journalism, public relations and – her favorite work engagement – writing and editing targeted newsletters.

Litter pick up set April 2

Ask any of the scores of people who volunteer at Concordia Neighborhood Pick Up events. They’ll tell you they enjoy working together in the fresh air to remove cast offs dropped by passersby and thrown from car windows.

The February event – the third sponsored by Concordia Neighborhood Association and SOLVE – drew 78 volunteers who picked up 2,984 pounds of trash. Add that result to the first two

events and volunteers have removed about 8,000 pounds.

But there’s still plenty of litter out there. The next event is Saturday, April 2, from 9 a.m. to noon. Preregistration is required at SOLVEoregon.org/opportunity/aoC8W0oooooV8boo.

If you missed the CNews feature story about these events, visit ConcordiaPDX.org/2021/12/neighbors-pick-up-concordia-litter.



From the Board

By Peter Keller, CNA Chair



More hires, fewer fires

Hi neighbors. February started out with some unseasonably sunny and warmer weather. Soon the gardeners among us will be out pruning and planting for spring. Similarly, the CNA board has been busy staffing positions being vacated and we are nearly 100% staffed again and ready for 2022!

Javier Puga-Phillips resigned his At Large 4 board position in order to take the SW1 board seat. This made sense because he lives in SW1, and now

For the CNA general meeting March 2 at 7 p.m., Portland city commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty will join us.

we can appoint any qualified Concordian to the At Large 4 board position. If you're interested, please contact me.

Ben Taylor, who recently joined the CNA board in the At Large 5 seat, was appointed as the CNA Land Use and Transportation committee (LUTC) chair, which was recently vacated by Garlynn Woodsong. As an architect, Ben is very interested in land use and transportation and will be a great fit for the position. The monthly LUTC meetings will start again Wednesday, March 16. Please join the meeting if you're interested.

We've been interviewing for the CNews editor position and have several great candidates. We expect to announce the new editor in April.

For the CNA general meeting March 2 at 7 p.m., Portland city commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty will join us. Her office reached out to Portland neighborhood associations offering her attendance and participation in upcoming meetings, and we are excited to have her join us!

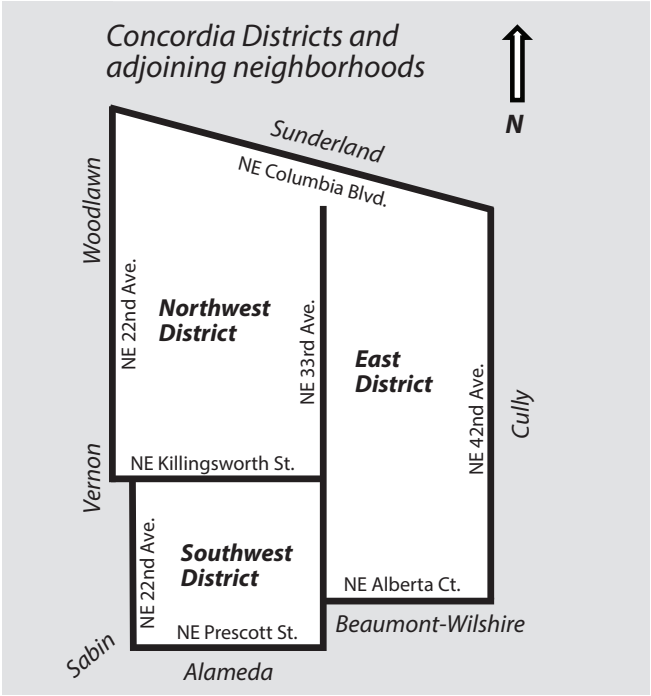
Commissioner Hardesty oversees: Portland Fire and Rescue, Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT), and the Office of Community & Civic Life. She's also the first African American woman to serve on the Portland City Council. We look forward to a positive and productive conversation with her. Please join us!

We held our third Concordia Neighborhood Pick Up on Saturday Feb., 5. See Page 1 for details. We hold these, sponsored by SOLVE, often. Upcoming neighborhood pick ups will be held April 2 and June 4.

Finally, some more positive news about events. We've set a date for the annual CNA Spring Egg Hunt: April 16. Watch for further details on time and location. We've also committed to holding one Concert in the Park event. As in previous years, the plan is to hold the event at Fernhill Park, and the tentative date is July 15.

Feels like spring is right around the corner!

Native Portlander Peter Keller has lived in Concordia since 1997. He runs a small marketing agency with partner Max, out of their home studio. He loves exploring outdoors with and without his dogs.



CNA Board of Directors

Chair | Chair@ConcordiaPDX.org Peter Keller
East 1 | East1@ConcordiaPDX.org Heather Pashley
East 2 | East2@ConcordiaPDX.org Joseph Fraley
Northwest 1 | NW1@ConcordiaPDX.org Isham "Ike" Harris
Northwest 2 | NW2@ConcordiaPDX.org Amelie Marian
Southwest 1 | SW1@ConcordiaPDX.org Javier Puga-Phillips
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At Large 3 | AL3@ConcordiaPDX.org John McSherry
At Large 4 | AL4@ConcordiaPDX.org Available
At Large 5 | AL5@ConcordiaPDX.org Ben Taylor
At Large 6 | AL6@ConcordiaPDX.org Brittany van der Salm

CNA meeting venues

Phone numbers and/or URLs to attend virtual CNA meetings:

- Facebook.com/groups/ConcordiaPDX
- ConcordiaPDX.org/CNAMeetings

Concordia Neighborhood Association

- Board Meeting**
1st Wednesday of the month, Wednesday, March 2, 6 p.m., venue: see box below, contact Peter Keller, Chair@ConcordiaPDX.org
- General Membership Meeting**
Wednesday, March 2, 7 p.m., venue: see box below
- Social Committee**
If you'd like to volunteer to help plan fun, community building events, contact Javier Puga-Phillips at Social@ConcordiaPDX.org.
- Media Team**
1st Tuesday of the month, Tuesday, March 1, 6 p.m., venue: see box below, contact Gordon Riggs, MediaTeamLead@ConcordiaPDX.org
- Land Use & Transportation Committee**
Wednesday, March 16, 7 p.m., venue: see box below, contact Ben Taylor at AL5@ConcordiaPDX.org
- Finance Committee**
Last Wednesday of the month, Wednesday, March 30, 7 p.m., venue: see box below, contact Heather Pashley, Treasurer@ConcordiaPDX.org
- Community Room Rental**
For info and scheduling, visit ConcordiaPDX.org/community-room-rental or contact Javier Puga-Phillips at CNARoomKennedy@gmail.com.
- CONTACTS**
- CNA Chair**
Peter Keller, Chair@ConcordiaPDX.org
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- CNA Secretary**
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- North Community Safety Team**
Jacob Brostoff & Daniel Franco-Nunez, north.pdxteam@PortlandOregon.gov, 503.823.4064

SUBMISSIONS & ADVERTISING

Submissions to Concordia News: Deadline is the 10th of the month preceding the upcoming monthly publication. Contact CNewsEditor@ConcordiaPDX.org

Submissions to CNA Website: Submit nonprofit news & events to MediaTeamLead@ConcordiaPDX.org

Advertising: Gina Levine, CNewsBusiness@ConcordiaPDX.org, 503.891.7178

MEDIA TEAM

CNA Board Liaisons: Heather Pashley, John McSherry
Media Team Lead: Gordon Riggs, MediaTeamLead@ConcordiaPDX.org, 503.515.8209
CNews Editor: Nancy Varekamp, CNewsEditor@ConcordiaPDX.org, 503.740.5245
CNews Graphic Designer: Gordon Riggs
Media Team: Chris Baker, Erin Cooper, Kathy Crabtree, Keith Daellenbach, Steve Elder, Tamara Anne Fowler, Tami Fung, Gina Levine, Vanessa Miali, Gordon Riggs, Rob Rogers, Marsha Sandman, Nancy Varekamp, Karen Wells, Carrie Wenninger, Tara Williams

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CNA seeks qualified candidates for the Media Team Lead paid contractor position

Put your talents to work by joining the media team as media team lead. Provide a vital function for the neighborhood association by leading the team responsible for the monthly paper, the CNA website and CNA's social media presence, all serving to connect Concordia neighbors and businesses.

For a full description of the duties & requirements of this important contractor position, visit:
ConcordiaPDX.org/get-involved/media-team-lead-position

To apply, contact Peter Keller at: Chair@ConcordiaPDX.org

Concordia Art Works

Here’s just one hidden gem to find locally

By Maquette Reeverts
Alberta Art Works

There are many hidden creative gems to discover in the neighborhood. Here’s one.

Inside Just Bob Café at 24th Avenue and Alberta Street, in the far back, is an unassuming public bathroom. But, at

All of these designs have been inscribed on people’s bodies over the last thirteen years.

a closer glance, the walls are animated with ghostly drawings.

The designs covering all the available space are hand drawn sketches made on thermal paper used by tattoo artists to create transfer stencils. Semi-transparent thermal paper creates a clear image that can then be used as a stencil visible on all skin types and tones.

That tattoo parlor behind Just Bob is the source of the creativity. Using the

transfer paper, artists from Freaks and Geeks Tattoo adhered layer after layer of their past stencils to the walls.

A note from the tattoo parlor on the bathroom mirror reads, “All of these designs have been inscribed on people’s bodies over the last thirteen years.”

Owner of Freaks and Geeks, Jason Sweet has been tattooing since 2002. In 1998, he graduated from California College of the Arts with a bachelor of fine arts degree, with a focus on painting and drawing.

Having tattooed in California and New York, Jason settled in Portland in 2009 and opened Freaks and Geeks Tattoo Studio in 2011. Jason specializes in traditional Americana or Japanese style tattooing.

Find out more:
FreaksAndGeeksTattoo.com.



Michel Reeverts, aka Maquette, holds a master of arts degree in art education, serves Alberta Art Works as director and Alberta Street Gallery as a board member. She is also a practicing artist. Contact her at Maquette@AlbertaArtWorks.org



Tattoo materials make for this ghostly décor in the restroom at Just Bob on Alberta Street. Photo by Maquette Reeverts

CNews Update

The February CNews asked readers to add information to what the newspaper found out about the plaque that commemorates Eddie “The Weatherman” Morgan. The initial report appeared in the Concordia Art Works column at ConcordiaPDX.org/2022/02/concordia-art-works-plaque-commemorates-memorable-neighbor. Thanks to several people from Concordia and Cully, there’s lots more information available. See what they shared at ConcordiaPDX.org/EddieTheWeatherman.





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Have you checked out CNA’s Facebook page?

Keep informed of CNA activities and your neighbors’ comments.



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No two Heart in Hand preschoolers are alike

By Nancy Varekamp
CNews Editor

Local preschoolers have kept Yvonne de Maat – Ms Yve to her students – on her toes for 20 years.

Working with 3- to 5-year-olds never gets old. “I’ve never met the same kid. I respect the gifts and the challenges of each, and no one size fits all.”

That’s what attracted her to the Waldorf method of teaching 30 years ago.

The Holland native moved to the U.S. in 1990, where she trained and began practice as a Waldorf educator. She set down roots in Portland in 2000 and opened Heart in Hand Preschool in 2002 in her home at 5405 N.E. 30th Ave.

“This neighborhood seemed like such fertile ground for this kind of education. It just speaks to people in this neighborhood.”

According to Yvonne, the Waldorf method launches a holistic approach to life.

“Everything is really beautiful, everything is made of natural materials, and it’s a very nurturing environment,” she explained.

She finds the creative approach to play teaches children how to socialize. “The children figure out who they are in relationship to others. They learn to be

‘This neighborhood seemed like such fertile ground for this kind of education. It just speaks to people in this neighborhood.’

– Yvonne de Maat

strong human beings and compassionate human beings.

“If you are happy in your own skin, you can undertake whatever you want,” she explained. “It all starts with confidence.”

Two morning classes comprise Heart in Hand, one taught by Yvonne and the other by Sandra Paz – Signora Sandra. Six children enroll in each.

Yvonne weaves a rhythm into each day. One day a week the children knead and shape sour dough that they bake the next day to make their sandwiches.



Yvonne de Maat is celebrating two decades of Heart in Hand, a Waldorf method preschool in Concordia. At 10 years, she hosted a barn dance. A summer celebration is in planning stages for the 20th anniversary. For details, Heart in Hand alumni may contact MsYvonne@HeartInHandPreschool.com. Photo by Nancy Varekamp

During the six-week mandatory COVID-19 shutdown in 2020, children missed the bread making. So Yvonne offered porch pick up of some of her 27-year-old starter. Along with it went video instructions. Even non-students enjoyed the activity – and the results.

It’s old-fashioned play at Heart in Hand. Children build tiny houses and airplanes, participate in puppet plays, engage in crafts and join in on games.

Signora Sandra, who grew up in Mexico, offers Spanish immersion in her classroom. Sara Harkness – Ms Sara –

offers craft lessons in both and teaches parent-child classes..

“There’s no screen play here, or radios even,” Yvonne pointed out.

The feedback she receives is positive – from parents and grown students.

“I still get invited for graduation parties, and I show up with photo albums and some stories,” she reported. “They all remember baking the bread and the chickens I used to have.”

Has she welcomed any second-generation students? Not yet, she said. “That would be amazing.”



Nancy Varekamp is semiretired from her career in journalism, public relations and – her favorite work engagement – writing and editing targeted newsletters.

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Save the Date!

CNA Annual Spring Egg Hunt
Saturday, April 16 at Fernhill Park

Games and face painting start at 9 a.m.

The hunt begins at 10 a.m. SHARP. Don’t be late – it ends in a flash!



Adult volunteers are needed to:

- stuff 6,000 plastic eggs with candy on Friday, April 15 at 1 p.m.
- hide 6,000 candy-filled eggs on Saturday, April 16 at 7:45 a.m. at Fernhill Park

Interested in helping out?

Please contact Javier Puga-Phillips at Social@ConcordiaPDX.org or call or text 323.573.1516.

Watch for details in the April CNews!

Sponsored by Concordia Neighborhood Association



Nature offers haven in urban, industrial area

By Mac Larsen
CNA Media Team

Whitaker Ponds Natural Area sits just northeast of Concordia. It's a hidden gem that provides two wetland ponds for birdwatchers, nature enthusiasts and anyone trying to get away from city life. "Having these little pockets of natural area here is really valuable when you're

Educators face a school bus driver shortage and other obstacles amid changing pandemic precautions. Education programs like the ones at Whitaker Ponds moved online and, eventually, back to classrooms. Despite these challenges, educators like Jennifer see a thriving interest in Portland's local nature and wildlife. "I have seen every day that I'm there,

"It feels great to be in a place where you can hear a woodpecker or see a beaver dam or just listen to water moving. I feel really grateful that I get to do that for my job."

– Jennifer Starkey

surrounded by all of this industry and urban infrastructure," said Jennifer Starkey. She is the education director for the Columbia Slough Watershed Council. Before the COVID-19 pandemic shut businesses and schools, a visit to Whitaker Ponds was typical for local elementary students. Under normal circumstances Jennifer and the council run a program called Slough School, which lets students interact in local ecosystems with the earth sciences curriculum they're taught in the classrooms.

families with their kids," she said. "I had an event in October called Boo in the Slough. It was something I had always wanted to do, just have a Halloween party. "Families showed up with their kids, and so many of them said 'I've never heard of this place before.'" The hidden nature of Whitaker Ponds, according to Jennifer, is part of its appeal – as is its transformative history. Before it was a city natural area, the ponds were treated as a dump. Through plenty of work, investment



The hidden nature of Whitaker Ponds is part of its appeal, as is its transformative history. Photo by Gordon Riggs

and collaboration with the city and partners like the Native American Youth and Family Center, the watershed council has elevated all eight of its sites for conservation and education. "It feels great to be in a place where you can hear a woodpecker or see a beaver dam or just listen to water moving," Jennifer pointed out. "I feel really grateful that I get to do that for my job." As the pandemic continues to complicate in-person gatherings, the watershed council plans to increase events at all watershed areas this spring and summer. Details for events at Whitaker Ponds and the Columbia Children's Arboretum

are posted at ColumbiaSlough.org/events. If you're curious about Whitaker Ponds, Jennifer offers this advice: "Come on down. Leave your dog at home."



Mac Larsen is a graduate student at the University of Oregon, pursuing a master's degree in journalism. He grew up in Concordia neighborhood and can be found frequently on Alberta Street, complaining about all the construction.

Letter to the Editor

To the Editor:

The State of Oregon is considering lifting the current indoor mask mandate. Consider this: If the state removes the mask mandate, who is most impacted? In particular those of us who are transit dependent, elderly, disabled, poor, caregivers, youths, young mothers, children and BIPOC. TriMet and other public transit providers absolutely must continue to maintain and enforce the mask mandate for transit-dependent customers – to protect riders and TriMet staffers. Wearing masks minimizes exposure and harm. Residents who are calling for lifting the mask mandates are making the most noise and complaining of mask fatigue. Fatigue is real. So is our current public health pandemic. Shouting they are tired of wearing

masks and that they want to get back to normal is not a compassionate or moral course to follow. It is a slap in the face to our BIPOC families, friends and neighbors – the most vulnerable among us. If Oregon Health Authority (OHA) supports Black Lives Matter and health equity, then stand with us! Stop throwing us under the bus! OHA must not cave to the pressure of the few and the privileged. Please share your opinions with community leaders and encourage everyone to make comment at COVID.19@dhs.oha.state.or.us, 503.945.5488 or Oregon Health Authority, Attn: COVID-19 Feedback Team, 800 N.E. Oregon St., #930, Portland, OR 97232. Thank you for listening to and hearing my concerns.

– Karen Wells

CNA respects the views and beliefs of all Concordians, and their cultures and faiths. The views expressed by these writers do not necessarily reflect the views of CNA. Submit letters (250 words maximum) to CNewsEditor@ConcordiaPDX.org.

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JRJ features tastes of owners' Oaxaca roots

By Javier Puga-Phillips
CNA Board Member, SW1,
CNA Social Committee Chair

JRJ Skillets brings traditional Mexican flavors to Concordia.

The owners are proud of their Mexican roots, and they are incorporating Oaxaca's flavors into their menu. "I like to recreate the flavors of my childhood and share them with my clients," Ramiro Eusebio Sanchez said.

JRJ combines the first initials of Ramiro and his fellow entrepreneur, José Cruz Lopez and José Juan Trejo Resendiz. They opened their doors at 2529 N.E. Alberta St. in October.

Ramiro is the main chef, and he is responsible for the menu and day-to-day operations. Most of JRJ's salsas & mole are modeled after his mom's cooking.

"My mother is the biggest inspiration, teacher and critic of my food," he pointed out.

However, the restaurant also offers American items such as biscuits and

gravy, and burgers.

A best seller and recommended by the chef are the chilaquiles with green or red sauce and over-easy eggs. Also popular are carnitas and carne asada. "The enchiladas of mole are a must have," José Cruz said.

Ramiro immigrated to the U.S. at the age 16. At 35, he has nearly two decades

"My mother is the biggest inspiration, teacher and critic of my food."

— Ramiro Eusebio Sanchez

of experience pouring into JRJ.

"I have worked in all aspects of the restaurant business. I've been a dishwasher, waiter and manager." He found Portland to be the right city for him and Concordia the perfect spot for his long-time dream to open a restaurant.

As a business owner, Ramiro understands the importance of quality and feedback, and he believes they set JRJ apart. Owners import from México many of the key ingredients that cannot be found in the U.S., like chilies and spices – while using as many fresh local vegetables as possible.

"The quality can be tasted. We care, from the flavor and presentation of our plates to the presentation of our staff," Ramiro reported

"We want to offer excellence in taste, plating and quality," he pointed out. For instance, the coffee is an original blend available only at JRJ. In addition, he takes to heart every review left on Yelp.com, and he invites all Concordia neighbors to visit, try the food and share their feedback online.



Look for mimosas and cantaritos on the menu at JRJ Skillets soon. Ramiro Eusebio Sanchez and his business partners expect to serve those in March, while continuing to offer cuisine from their homeland. Photo by Nancy Varekamp

JRJ owners are in the process of acquiring an alcohol license, and they are hoping to have their fresh mimosas and tasty cantaritos on the menu in March. "We use fresh-squeezed juices, not concentrate" Ramiro promised.

The full menu is available on JRJSkillets.com.

Nota del editor: Artículo disponible en Español, visita ConcordiaPDX.org/JRJSkillets.



Javier Puga-Phillips holds the Southwest 1 position on the Concordia Neighborhood Association (CNA) Board of Directors, manages rentals of the McMennamins Kennedy School Community Room and chairs the CNA Social Committee. He is a real estate professional locally, and he is a published author and motivational speaker in Latin America and Spain.



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News from the NET

COVID-19 has taught valuable lessons

By Erin E. Cooper
Concordia/Vernon/Woodlawn
Neighborhood Emergency Team

As we finish up a second year of living with the COVID-19 pandemic, it's important to reflect on lessons learned, and to consider how those can be applied to disasters in the future.

Although COVID-19 has been a longer and slower disaster than what we expect from fires, tornadoes or major earthquakes, the same principles can be applied to our planning.

On the personal level, living with lockdowns and quarantine has taught

In our communities, the pandemic has shown us the importance of helping – and receiving help – from our neighbors.

us the importance on stocking up and having essential foods and medicines on hand whenever possible.

Supply chain problems – leading to empty shelves at the grocery stores – have shown the value of local farmers and businesses that have remained available through the pandemic.

On a larger scale, the struggles of our health care system to respond to the pandemic have shown several ways the system could improve and prepare for the future. The shortage of masks, gloves and other personal protective equipment has taught us it is not sufficient to have only enough onhand for the short term.

Planning will be needed in the future to determine where larger stockpiles of these items can be stored, and how

production can be increased locally in case of another global event.

In our communities, the pandemic has shown us the importance of helping – and receiving help – from our neighbors. In a disaster, government agencies and large-scale nonprofits struggle to respond quickly to changing needs on a large geographic scale.

Connecting with our neighbors has allowed for faster assistance for specific needs, directly from person to person. In a life-threatening situation like a major earthquake, we will be rescuing – or being rescued by – these same neighbors.

Building and maintaining these relationships – even when the pandemic is over – will build our resiliency for future disasters.



Erin E. Cooper is a marine biologist living in Woodlawn. She spends a lot of time thinking about disasters and has been a NET member for many years. Contact her at OceanListener@gmail.com.

Strategy shifts position Bolt well in pandemic

By Nancy Varekamp
CNews Editor

It’s been two years of change for Bolt Fabric Boutique, although you wouldn’t know it to gaze at the bright sewn samples in the window

“Bolt had this teeny, tiny online store at the beginning of the pandemic, and it was essential to shift a lot of our sales initially to online.”

– Anne Lagomarsino

or walk inside.
After 15 years since opening the shop on Alberta Street – and the 2018 move to 4636 N.E. 42nd Ave. – Gina Cadenasso in December sold the natural, sustainable fibers store to employees Bitty Eagan and Anne Lagomarsino.

Both are longtime seamstresses. Anne began early in life, but said her interest became more intense in her 20s. Bitty learned to sew as a child from her grandmother, who worked as a costumer for Warner Brothers before being hired away by Lucille Ball.

Anne has worked at Bolt for 2-plus years and her interest in owning a business piqued when she learned Gina intended to sell. “I couldn’t manage to be a business owner by myself,” she said.

Bitty, an employee for 3-plus years, was all in. In fact, that same grandmother left her an inheritance that provided Bitty’s buy-in. “It seemed the perfect thing to do.”

Bolt had made it through the first

20 months of the pandemic, and the two were confident the business model – including BoltFabricBoutique.com – would continue and thrive.

“Bolt had this teeny, tiny online store at the beginning of the pandemic, and it was essential to shift a lot of our sales initially to online,” Anne recalled. “Bolt had to shift a lot of the ways we did business.

“The most essential was Gina researching and implementing the system necessary to track and sell inventory both online and in person. Now we have customers all across the U.S.”

During the early days of the pandemic, masked Bolt employees carried fabric selections and notions to masked customers on the store’s porch, she added. Many customers were making masks.

“One of the things that’s really important to us is to be available to our customers, even people who were not our customers [previously],” Bitty explained. “A lot of people were home and were desperate for things to do. A lot of people learned how to sew.

“I think it’s really empowering to make the things that you use,” she added

“We’ve noticed a lot of different types who come into the shop,” Anne said. “It seems to be appealing to all different kinds of people.” For instance, more men are sewing their apparel.

Bitty reported an increase in transgender customers shop there nowadays. “It’s hard to find clothes if your body’s not the stereotype, all different sizes and shapes.”



Bitty Eagan (left) and Anne Lagomarsino were part of the Bolt team that helped weather the storm of Covid-19 business restrictions. They bought the store from founder Gina Cadenasso in December. Photo by Nancy Varekamp

Want to get involved locally?

Care about transportation or land use issues affecting our Concordia neighborhood?

The Concordia Land Use & Transportation Committee meets on Wednesday, March 16 at 7 p.m.

Just show up or contact Ben Taylor at LandUse@ConcordiaPDX.org. Sign-on details are at ConcordiaPDX.org/CNAMEetings.

Info: ConcordiaPDX.org/lutc



Nancy Varekamp is semiretired from her career in journalism, public relations and – her favorite work engagement – writing and editing targeted newsletters.

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Community events calendar



Wednesday, March 2, 7pm
CNA GENERAL MEETING
Location: See concordiapdx.org/get-involved/upcoming-meetings
Jo Ann Hardesty, Portland city commissioner, is scheduled to visit with Concordians and answer questions. She currently oversees: Portland Fire District, Portland Bureau of Transportation and Office of Civic & Community Life. A first-term commissioner, she is running for re-election. The board's regular monthly meeting precedes this session at 6pm.
Details: portland.gov/hardesty



Saturday, March 5, 9am
STEWARDSHIP SATURDAY
Location: Columbia Children's Arboretum, NE 6th Drive
Columbia Slough Watershed Council & Portland Parks & Recreation sponsor this workday to install native plants to improve habitat. Tools, snacks, hot coffee, water, restrooms provided; work involves bending, stooping, walking on soft, uneven ground.
Details/reservations: columbiaslough.org/events-list/stewardship-saturday-at-the-columbia-childrens-arboretum

Saturdays 10am-noon, March 5, 12, 19, 26
Mondays 4-6pm, March 7, 14, 21, 28
ST. CHARLES FOOD PANTRY
Location: 5310 NE 42nd
"Shop" at the food pantry Mondays & Saturdays this month, or request contactless delivery of food boxes. The 9.53-square-mile service area is 28th to 82nd & the Columbia River to Mason, including Dignity Village.
Details: stcharlespdx.org/food-help.html, svdpdxsc@outlook.com

Sunday, March 6, 10am-3pm
FREE COVID-19 VACCINE EVENT
Location: Alder Commons, 4212 NE Prescott
No health insurance required, immigration status does not matter, interpretation service available in English & Spanish. No appointment required for vaccine; however, call 503.238. 5790 to reserve free transportation.
Details: aldercommons.org/calendar



Thursday-Sunday, March 17-20, times TBD
ST. PATRICK'S DAY CELEBRATION
Location: McMenamins Kennedy School, 5736 NE 33rd
Live music is being planned for enjoyment by all ages.
Details: mcmenamins.com/events/231576-st-patricks-day-celebration-at-kennedy-school

Saturdays, March 19 & 26, 2-4pm
FOOD PANTRY
Location: 5209 NE 22nd Ave. Sharon Seventh Day Adventist Church hosts its food pantry the last two Saturdays each month with restrictions & strict adherence to physical distancing procedures.
Details: sharonsda.net, office@SharonChurch.comcastbiz.net



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Linear arboretum tour on tap



Have you seen plaques like this? They dot Ainsworth Street's median and parking strips for a 1.5-mile stretch. You're invited to learn what the Ainsworth Linear Arboretum is, and who began creating it – and why – in 2005.

Jim Gersbach, founder of the arboretum and member of the Concordia Tree Team, is scheduled to lead a 90-minute walking tour Saturday, April 16. Look for details from Jim in next month's CNews.

