



EDWARD STRATTON — The Daily Astorian file
Medical assisting student Kiri Fabela checks 5-year-old and future kindergartner Deveonn Anglin’s blood pressure at last year’s P-3 Early Learning Council’s Early Childhood Health and Education Clinic at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center.

School: Preschool and Early Childhood Fair coming April 11

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On April 11, the council will hold a Preschool and Early Childhood Fair at Warrenton Grade School from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Parents will be able to meet preschool and early childhood providers and learn about their curriculum, philosophies, tuition and more. The fair, sponsored by NW Parenting and the Astoria Moms Club, is free and includes an activity area for kids.

“We want to get information to the people not sending their children to preschool for whatever reason,” said Dan Gaffney, a retired principal from Seaside and the face of the council, reporting on what the council’s doing with its funding.

The council is in the midst of organizing its second annual Early Childhood Health and Education Clinic, which comes to the Astoria Armory April 14 and the Seaside Civic and Convention Center April 22. The clinic, for preschool-age children 3-5 years old, provides parents and guardians information about their child’s development as it relates to health and education guidelines.

It includes screening exams for motor movement, speech and cognitive development, as well as hearing, vision, height, weight, physical and dental exams. In addition, parents will have an opportunity to talk with professionals about their child’s typical nutrition, behaviors and review their immunizations.

The clinic is for everyone, as kindergarten has changed substantially in the last three to four years, Gaffney said. It’s funded by the Northwest Regional Education Service District’s Early Learning Council. The two clinics fall during the Week of the Young Child, April 12 to 18, by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Kindergarten Ready

The Oregon Department of Education has released two kindergarten assessments over the past two years. In general, Clatsop County’s incoming kindergartens exhibited as much or more interpersonal skills and self-regulation as the state average. Most met or exceeded the state average in early literacy and mathematics. Knappa kindergartners struggled in English and mathematics.

“The bigger challenge seems to be whether they’re comfortable away from parents, whether they’re good with kids their age,” Gaffney said, adding that some parents struggle to get their kids socially acclimated for school.

In addition to the big events, retired kindergarten teacher Diane Dieni is training people to run 20 kindergarten-readiness workshops around the county, in English and Spanish, with about 15 families per event. Upcoming workshops include April 25 at the Seaside Public Library, May 2 at WGS and May 16 at the Astoria Public Library.

The council has produced fliers and booklets focused on what it means to be kindergarten-ready in Clatsop County, including that kids can:

- Say their full name;
- Recognize numbers one through 10 and verbally count at least 10 objects;
- Identify basic shapes and eight colors;
- Match and sort ties into groups by color, shape or likeness.

“We’re just trying to equip parents and caregivers with the kinds of things that’s going to help prepare kids for kindergarten,” Gaffney said, stressing the parent’s role in teaching their child.

The council wants to build on the involvement seen in Head Start, a free preschool for children in low-income families, Gaffney said.

For instructors, the council’s trying to coordinate preschool teacher visits to nearby kindergarten classes, and vice versa. “Then we can more clearly define what people are doing, and make the transition as smooth as possible.”

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retired principal from Seaside and the face of the council, reporting on what the council’s doing with its funding

Rosenblum: Talk touched on her other work with cybercrime



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Speaking about common consumer complaints, Rosenblum mentioned motor vehicle sales and how her office settled with a car dealership in Bend. Rosenblum said she was able to personally give checks back to impacted customers from that case.

“I got to hand some of them their checks and some thought it was a scam,” she said. “We always tell them if it sounds too good to be true it probably is. Well, this is one time there was an exception to that.”

Her talk touched on her other work with cybercrime, sexual assaults and overseeing public record requests. By the end of her talk, she fielded

questions from the audience.

The final question of the night focused on her lawsuit against Oracle Corp of Reedwood City, Calif. The state of Oregon contracted with the computer software giant to create the Cover Oregon health insurance enrollment site. The failure of the Cover Oregon site to function was a hallmark of Kitzhaber’s third term. One fallout of that setback was Rosenblum’s decision to sue Oracle.

Rosenblum was asked if the lawsuit was just a cover-up for Kitzhaber, to which she said absolutely not, earning cheers from the crowd.

“They are the ones that ripped off the people of the state,” she said.

Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum gave a talk titled “A midterm assessment from Oregon’s chief law enforcement officer” during the Columbia Forum. Following the speech, Rosenblum answered questions from the audience.
JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

Insurance: ‘... We feel that the city is responsible for some damage. Their infrastructure failed.’

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Meanwhile, “the yard is a mess” and “part of the garden got washed out,” Douglas Hadley said.

The Hadleys’ homeowners insurance may cover some of the structural damage, like the compromised posts, but that “still leaves a lot of other damage,” he said.

‘Matter of principle’

Factoring in the money spent from travel expenses and lost rental income, the Hadleys estimate the total

financial impact is approximately \$15,000 and growing.

Yet the city’s insurance company, Citycounty Insurance Services (CIS), which is headquartered in Salem, has told the Hadleys that the company will not pay for any of that amount.

“We’re in continuing conversation with them,” he said. “Up to now, they have not provided any coverage.”

The city itself is no longer part of the conversation, City Attorney Tammy Herdener said.

“CIS may not want to involve the city,” she said, adding that, if there’s a settlement, it will happen between the property owners and CIS.

The Hadleys are awaiting a formal estimate from their insurance investigator.

Herdener said that “it’s not out of the ordinary” for cities to have tort and property damage claims filed against them. Cannon Beach averages about two claims a year, she said: “Sometimes less, sometimes more, sometimes none.”

Because it is an active claim, representatives from CIS were not allowed to comment. Grassick declined to speak on the record regarding the case, and City Manager Brant Kucera could not be reached for comment.

The Hadleys have retained a lawyer. “It’s become a matter of principle to some extent, because we feel that the city is responsible for some damage,” Douglas Hadley said. “Their infrastructure failed.”

Gearhart: City still owes \$7.6 million on water plant

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Instead of paying \$1.14 per \$1,000 assessed valuation, taxpayers will pay \$1.05 per \$1,000 for the water system, Schwab said.

She recommended that the city refinance the bond before May, when interest rates are expected to rise again.

The refinancing option does not extend the life of the loan, Schwab said; it still will be retired in 2025.

The city passed two bonds to pay for the system, which was completed in 2012. In addition to the \$4 million bond voters approved in 2005, another \$7 million bond was approved in 2011. That bond won’t be available for refinancing until 2021.

The city still owes \$7.6 million on the water plant. It still has yet to receive full water rights from the state Water Resources Department and continues to purchase water from the city of Warrenton for 3.5 months every year.

In other business, the council:

- Adopted an ordinance allowing medical and recreational dispensaries in the city’s commercial zones. The dispensaries cannot be located within 1,000 feet of another marijuana dispensary nor within 1,000 feet of a school, training facility or recreation facility attended primarily by children.
- Tabled a proposed ordinance regulating fences until the full council is present. Councilor Sue Lorain was absent.
- Heard comments from members of the audience, including Harold Gable, chief petitioner of a recall election targeted against Mayor Dianne Widdop, and former City Councilor Joy Sigler. Gable and Sigler criticized Widdop’s references made about a recorded conversation and forwarded emails in a letter written by Widdop that appeared Tuesday in The Daily Astorian. Widdop did not respond to the comments.

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