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ONE DOLLAR

LEARNING HAPPENS BEHIND THESE WALLS



Photos by Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Inmates do classwork in the computer lab at the South Jetty High School Monday. More photos on www.dailyastorian.com

South Jetty High School helps young felons find a better way

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — From the outside, the North Coast Youth Correctional Facility looks fairly nondescript, a secluded, walled-in green and beige complex in the woods near Costco. The facility houses a continually rotating population of up to 50 young inmates between the ages of 14 and 21, mostly invisible to local residents.

But inside the walls, employees are engaged on the front lines of trying to prevent some of Oregon's most troubled youths from a further life of crime through drug and alcohol treatment, education and job training.

"We do great work with tough kids," said James Sapper, an Oregon Youth Authority employee who helped start the facility in barracks at Camp Rilea nearly 20 years ago and took over as director in December.

More than two-thirds of the inmates are affiliated with gangs from Portland and Salem, Sapper said, and many have dealt with substance abuse, been taken advantage of by adults and largely lacked role models. His group life

coordinators, guards for the youth offenders, handle their daily living needs.

Joining Sapper Monday for an interview and tour of the facility was Richard Glinert, principal of the South Jetty High School, operated by the Warrenton-Hammond School District within the prison. Glinert oversees the three teachers and five educational assistants who help the high-school-age inmates toward a diploma or GED exam.

The two spoke with pride about the 25 students who, after coming into South Jetty with varying stages of a high school education and personal issues, have earned their diplomas since January.

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Kathy Merritt, a librarian at Warrenton Grade School, holds up a children's book during a presentation about how to read out loud to children. The presentation is part of a program that allows the prisoners to record themselves reading children's books to give to younger members of their family.



La'Braye Franklin speaks during an interview with The Daily Astorian. Franklin came to South Jetty in May as a high school junior needing 12 credits to graduate. He has earned those credits over the last six months and plans to graduate with his diploma in the coming weeks.



Family pursues legal action over suicide

County, CBH failed to protect woman from harm, claim alleges

By DERRICK DePLEDGE
The Daily Astorian

The family of the woman who jumped from the Astoria Bridge in April is preparing a lawsuit against Clatsop County and Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare, alleging her suicide was preventable and that the county and the private mental health provider failed statutory and moral obligations to protect her from harm.

Carrie Barnhart, a 54-year-old mother of six, had chronic mental illness and committed suicide a week after Astoria Police pulled her from the bridge after midnight and took her to Columbia Memorial Hospital, where she was evaluated by Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare and released after two hours.

Astoria Police had responded to suicide threats from Barnhart four times between January and April, and her family disclosed several other instances over the previous year where she had threatened to kill herself.

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Submitted Photo
A makeshift memorial under the Astoria Bridge honors Carrie Barnhart, who committed suicide in April.

Spurned hotelier sues Port over bias

Riverwalk Inn suitor claims family ties thwarted deal

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

Ganesh Sonpatki, the Portland hotelier who has long tried and been spurned in his attempts to assume the lease of the Astoria Riverwalk Inn, has filed suit against the Port of Astoria, which owns the hotel, and the hotel's current operators, Astoria Hospitality Ventures LLC.

Sonpatki's lawyer, Colin Hunter, filed the lawsuit Tuesday in Clatsop County Circuit Court on behalf of the Param Hotel Group, which operates several budget hotels in the Portland metro area. The suit names the Port and Executive Director Jim Knight as defendants, along with Hospitality Ventures owners Chester Trabucco and William Orr. Param seeks relief for the alleged violation of a specific performance, breach of contract, fraud and intentional interference with economic relations.

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Seaside schools score a solid YES

'An exciting time for students and staff,' says superintendent

By KATHERINE LACAZE
EO Media Group

SEASIDE — Nearly 70 percent of voters in Seaside School District 10 passed a ballot measure to renew a local option tax to help fund operations in the district for five years, starting 2016.

According to the third unofficial results from the Clatsop County Elections Office, 3,061 ballots were cast, with 2,127, or about 70 percent, supporting the measure; 939 voters voted no.

"What an exciting time for our students and staff!" Seaside School District 10 Superintendent Dr. Doug Dougherty said in an email shortly after the numbers were in. "Our community has passed its fifth consecutive local option levy for Seaside School District. I'm very grateful to everyone who supported the students in the election."

Steve Phillips, chairman of the district's board of directors, said the local option tax renewal was important because it "allows everyone to move forward in a positive manner."

"Over the next five years, this investment in our students will continue to directly support the classes and the variety of program offerings our students access on a daily basis," Dougherty added.

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