

Clatsop Care hires private management firm

Nursing home in danger of closing

By ERICK BENGEL
The Daily Astorian

The Clatsop Care Health District Board has hired a Salem-based private management firm to manage the district's day-to-day operations, a decision board members hope will prevent the closure of Astoria's

oldest nursing home.

At a special meeting Friday, the board unanimously approved a contract with Aidan Health Services, Inc. The company will replace CEO Nicole Williams, who was hired by Columbia Memorial Hospital.

The board told an audience of several dozen at Tuesday's regular meeting that Clatsop Care Health and Rehabilitation Center — known as Clatsop Care Center — on 16th Street would shut down next fiscal year

unless Aidan can resolve the facility's financial troubles. The center is projected to end this fiscal year with an operational deficit of \$606,000.

If the care center closed, some residents could be moved to other facilities within the district. The board has discussed selling the Clatsop Care Center building — which it values at \$2 million — but is not actively marketing it.

"We're in crisis mode here. We're in absolute crisis mode. We're react-

ing as fiscally responsible people to try to save the district, in my mind," Jeff Hazen, a district board member, said. "I want to provide good health care — good, quality health care — and the only way we can do that is to keep the doors open and bring in a management company that has great experience turning around facilities to make them work."

Aidan's term begins April 1 and runs through June 2019. The agreement can be renewed in one-year

increments. For now, Jessica Klein, the district's director of human resources, will serve as interim CEO.

"We're not closing in June. We're not going to have that happen, so we've got to step in," Mark Remley, an Aidan owner, said. "And if we have to make tough decisions, we're going to have to make tough decisions for the health of the facility long term."

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ON TO STATE ... AGAIN!



Photos by Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

The Seaside bench cheers after a basket in Round 1 of the 4A State Championship against Cascade on Friday in Seaside.

The Daily Astorian

The state capital of Oregon 4A basketball will once again have a strong presence at the state tournament, with a good chance of scoring a championship sweep. For the fourth time in six years, the Seaside boys will be there, having secured their spot at state with a 68-49 win over Cascade

Friday night at the Gulls' Nest. And the Seaside girls are back for their annual Run at the Ring, as the Lady Gulls punched their ticket to ride for the fourth year in a row, with a 38-31 victory Saturday night at Molalla. Both teams open tournament action Thursday in Forest Grove. Read about the wins on Page 10A



Jeff Ter Har/For The Daily Astorian

The 2016-17 Seaside girls basketball team, four-time state tournament qualifiers.

New kid's librarian knows 'Where the Wild Things are'

Harold expands reading programs

What is the best children's picture book ever written? Suzanne Harold, the new children's librarian at the Astoria Library, submits it is Maurice Sendak's 1963 classic, "Where the Wild Things Are."

"It is possibly the only perfect children's book out there. Most of them have flaws," she said. "Whenever I'm in a book group with other librarians, we'll say, 'Well, there is no perfect children's book!' And then someone will pause and go, 'Except maybe,



Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

Astoria Children's Librarian Suzanne Harold leads a class for children on Thursday at Astoria Library.

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Snow and hail carpet the coast

Winter weather blast continues

The Daily Astorian

Snow will continue through Tuesday morning in Coast Range areas like Jewell and Vernonia, according to the National Weather Service. A winter weather advisory is still in effect until 7 a.m. Tuesday.

Affected areas could see 6 to 12 inches of snow, with the snow level rising to 3,000 feet by Tuesday afternoon.

More than 20 accidents and stalled vehicles have been reported throughout the county since Saturday.

One accident on U.S. Highway 26 early Saturday morning killed a 55-year-old Portland woman. Roberta Ann Lundquist lost control of her Toyota while traveling 36 miles east of Seaside.

Her car slid off the icy westbound shoulder and struck trees before coming to a stop. Lundquist was pronounced dead at the scene, and multiple agencies were investigating for about five hours as one lane of the highway was closed.

Early Sunday morning, Nicholas Allen Tagg, 30, of Astoria, was driving his car when it slid into a ditch on 466 N.W. Warrenton Drive. Tagg allegedly then deserted his vehicle

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Pot lab causes a ruckus in Jewell

School appeals commercial project

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

The battle over a proposed marijuana laboratory less than half a mile from Jewell School reached Clatsop County Hearings Officer Dan Olsen Friday.

The school district, which appealed the project last month, argued the site is not physically or socially suitable for a marijuana business, while Marc Plew, from Happy Valley, argued he has followed the letter of the law.

"My intent is to build a professional, retail/wholesale CO2 botanical processing laboratory," Plew told Olsen.

Last year, Plew purchased slightly more than 1 acre at the southeastern intersection of Oregon highways 202 and 103, the site of a former tavern long since closed and torn down. Plew said the commercial zoning, highway access and quiet, rural setting attracted him to the site.

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