



## FROM FAITH TO FOOD

Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

South Clatsop County Food Bank Regional Manager Karla Gann stands next to stacks of donations recently made by a local church. Gann said the amount of donated goods has increased dramatically since the beginning of the year.

## Seaside church makes significant impact through South Clatsop County Food Bank

By **BRENNA VISSER**  
*The Daily Astorian*

**S**EASIDE — For the past four years, the South Clatsop County Food Bank had always counted on the North Coast Family Fellowship as a steady source for donations.

But at the beginning of this year, regional manager Karla Gann started to see more and more blue bags filled to the brim with food donations. Instead of receiving 500 to 800 pounds of food from the church like she expected, she started getting monthly donations of 800 to 1,400 pounds.

It's called blue bag Sunday. The first Sunday of the month, the congregation of the North Coast Family Fellowship piles fruits, vegetables, canned goods and more into blue bags that read "With Love" on the side, and leave them in the church for the food bank to pick up Monday. This church alone makes up one-tenth of all donations to the food bank.

It's a type of donation Gann rarely sees from a private entity, and she said the impacts are huge.

"We can go from distributing 65 pounds of food to a family at one time to 125 pounds. Before we were able to give out about on average three days worth of food to a recipient," Gann said. "Because of this increase, now I can give out closer to five days worth of food at a time. This helps get people through."



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Donations from the North Coast Family Fellowship to the South Clatsop County Food Bank have increased from an average of 500 to 800 pounds a month to 800 to 1,400 pounds since the beginning of the year.

In Clatsop County, that means helping the 390 to 470 families who come in each month needing food to get by before payday.

"It keeps the money flowing. We are saving \$700 to \$1,000 a month to keep the lights and to build a reserve instead of spending it on building up our food supply," she said. "Everyone here is a volunteer. So it's significant."

### 'With Love'

When John Neagle joined the North Coast Family Fellowship last October, the pastor liked how the ministry had connected with the community through donations to the food bank. So starting in January, he challenged his congregation to do more.

See **FOOD BANK**, Page 4A

**'WE'RE NOT JUST TRYING TO GIVE YOU A CAN OF FOOD; WE'RE TRYING TO SHARE GOD'S LOVE THROUGH THAT CAN OF FOOD.'**

John Neagle | pastor at the North Coast Family Fellowship

## Cannon Beach Academy is a go

Volunteer efforts help charter school meet deadline

By **BRENNA VISSER**  
*The Daily Astorian*

**CANNON BEACH** — Cannon Beach will have an elementary school again.

It's a project that supporters of the charter school have been working toward for almost four years after the old elementary school was closed for tsunami safety reasons and a budget shortfall. But as of Tuesday, the academy, a tuition-free, public charter school offering kindergarten to second

grade, has secured a temporary occupancy permit that will allow the school to open for classes on Sept. 5.

"I'm over-the-moon excited," Amy Moore, the school's executive director, said. "We are blessed to have all of the support from the community."

### The road here

Because the location for the school was secured only two months ago, volunteers, academy board members and Coaster Construction worked down to the wire to meet the Tuesday deadline set by Seaside School District. The last-minute need to find a new location came when the board received an estimate of \$150,000 over the \$90,000

they budgeted for construction costs at the original location on Sunset Boulevard. Costs were driven up because the space would need to be renovated extensively to meet state school fire codes.

The academy was able to find an alternative in the former Preschool and Children's Center at 3781 S. Hemlock St. But by the time lease negotiations with the city finished and the proper permits were in hand, the academy was left with about a month to renovate the building up to code. Installing fire safety equipment, addressing Americans with Disabilities Act access concerns and other general maintenance projects were needed.

See **ACADEMY**, Page 4A

## Oregon reduces penalty for hard drugs

Marquis blasts new law as soft on heroin, meth

By **ANDREW SELSKY**  
*Associated Press*

**SALEM** — A bill signed by Gov. Kate Brown on Tuesday makes personal-use possession of cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine and other drugs a misdemeanor, not a felony.

Oregon joined just a handful of other states in defelonizing drugs under the new law, which was supported by some law enforcement groups and takes effect immediately.

Clatsop County District Attorney Josh Marquis, who spoke out against the idea at the state Legislature, said possession of the dangerous drugs is now as serious as shoplifting or minor vandalism.



Josh Marquis

"The message it sends is this is just not that big a deal," Marquis said.

The district attorney called heroin and meth "scourges" in Clatsop County and communities across the nation. "They're not just a minor problem. They're a huge problem," he said.

Marquis said felony drug possession charges often acted as leverage to steer drug abusers into treatment and drug court. "We know that people don't seek treatment until they either bottom out or they have no choice," he said. "By making it a felony, it does threaten people with some consequences."

See **DRUG LAW**, Page 7A

## Warming center talks focus on neighbors

Good-neighbor agreement sought

By **KATIE FRANKOWICZ**  
*The Daily Astorian*

Downtown merchants and neighbors of the Astoria Warming Center will meet with the center's board this month on a potential good-neighbor agreement.

The Astoria Planning Commission has delayed voting on a one-year conditional use permit for the warming center at First United Methodist Church until the organization's board has met with stakeholders. The discussion could produce an agreement that would outline how the warming center plans to address concerns raised by the Astoria Downtown Historic District Association and neighbors who live near the Franklin Avenue church.

Anne Odom, a mediator who works for the Astoria Library, will guide the Aug. 30 meeting. The meeting is open to the public, but Community Development Director Kevin Cronin said it is intended as a time for the stakeholders to have a discussion, voice their views and come up with an agreement they can "not only live with, but abide with."

See **WARMING CENTER**, Page 4A



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

The Astoria Warming Center at First United Methodist Church is working on a good-neighbor agreement with residents and downtown merchants.