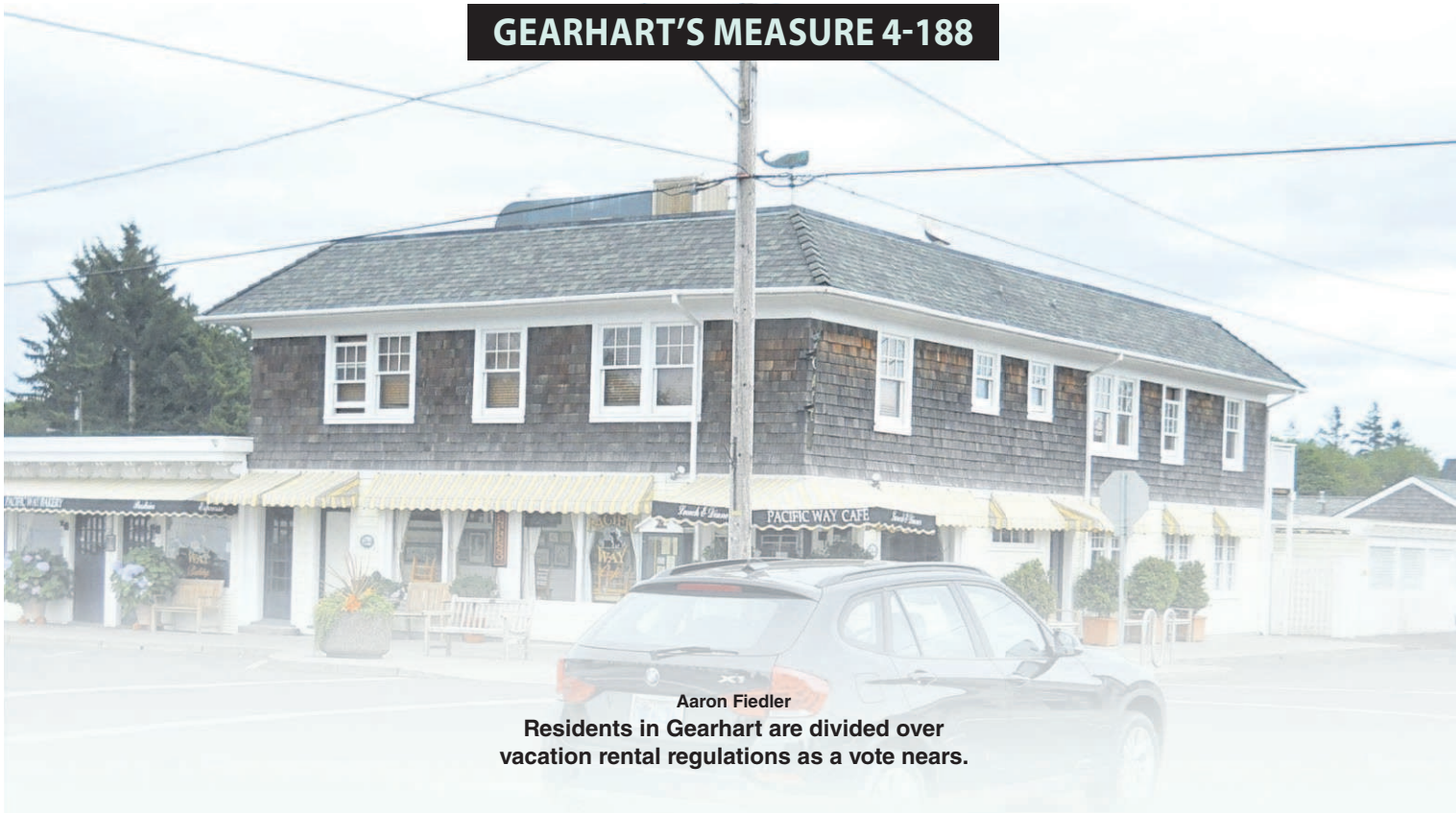


GEARHART'S MEASURE 4-188



Aaron Fiedler
Residents in Gearhart are divided over vacation rental regulations as a vote nears.

From the front lawn to Facebook

FINAL DRIVE BEFORE GEARHART VOTE ON VACATION RENTALS

By **BRENNA VISSER**
The Daily Astorian

GEARHART — Comments are lighting up Facebook. Political signs are being stolen. Clatsop County commissioners are holding their breath until after the election to see how the vote will impact future vacation rental policies. Even Oregon Public Broadcasting has started to report on the election and how it fits with similar policy debates around the country.

Campaign leaders for and against Gearhart's Measure 4-188 — which would repeal short-term rental rules put in place last fall — have noted a level of hostility they've never seen before.

But for Bill Berg, the town's historian and vocal "no" voter, this debate is as old as the town itself.

"It's the same campaign that's been going on since 1918," Berg said. "It's about the integrity of community. What does that look like?"

How it started

Gearhart residents are no strangers to political controversy. In the 1970s, the town had a contentious debate about whether a sewer system should be installed in Gearhart. In 2003, residents fought to keep part of the Gearhart Golf Links course from getting rezoned for condominiums. In 2015, some voters tried to recall Dianne Widdop as mayor.

But there is something about the latest measure that is elevating tensions and campaign tactics.

Complaints that out-of-town property managers were unable to promptly reply to public safety concerns led to an increased call for regulation, particularly a requirement for 24-hour owner contact information.

The city crafted rules detailing occupancy limits, parking rules, property management contact information and capped registration to existing short-term rental properties.

But property owners David Townsend, Joy Sigler, Brian Sigler and Sarah Nebeker interpreted these rules as the city's way of phasing out short-term rentals altogether, and filed a challenge in March seeking a ballot initiative that would repeal and replace the ordinance.

Social media has been a major component in this election, with the opposition producing video testimony of residents and debates happening in the comment sections of community Facebook pages.

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School board taps facilities specialist

Lindstrom appointed to fill board vacancy

By **EDWARD STRATTON**
The Daily Astorian

The Astoria School Board on Monday unanimously voted to appoint Matthew Lindstrom, a facilities manager for Columbia Memorial Hospital, to finish the last year and a half of the term of Shawn Helligso, who resigned from the board earlier this month.

The six candidates for the appointment included Lindstrom, school psychologist Heidi Wintermute, Clatsop County Historical Society's Sam Rascoe, juvenile prevention specialist Darcy Cronin, stay-at-home parent Samantha Peterson and attorney Kimberly Chaput.



Matthew Lindstrom

School board members Jeanette Sampson, Jenna Rickenbach, David Oser and Grace Laman interviewed each candidate about their experience, goals, approach to conflict management and understanding of a school board's role. Each candidate was given a copy of the school district's strategic plan, a one-page guidebook defining the district's goals and driving much of its decision-making.

See **LINDSTROM**, Page 4A

Reaching to the Heights

Real estate opportunity or geologic risk in Seaside?

By **R.J. MARX**
The Daily Astorian

SEASIDE — Eight properties bound for auction at the Heights at Thompson Falls offer oceanfront views and a mountainside location outside of the tsunami inundation zone.

Priced from \$35,000 to \$59,000, the lots could present quite a bargain as the county's residential market values are listed substantially higher. The landscape includes the Necanicum estuary and 28-mile-long Necanicum River, the Neawanna River, at least 10 creeks, the ocean, the old timber mill ponds, mud flats, waterfalls and even a prehistoric underwater canyon.

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Realty Marketing/Northwest
View from an auction property at the Heights at Thompson Falls.

Local options for Medicare dwindle

CareOregon downsizes in Clatsop County

By **EDWARD STRATTON**
The Daily Astorian

Ron Beazely recently learned CareOregon will no longer offer Medicare Advantage. The letter was a shock, since he relies on Social Security for income and pays only \$34 a month for health care premiums. He could face a spike when he is forced to switch health plans in January.

Beazely, of Cannon Beach, is among 300 Clatsop County seniors looking for an alternative as Care-

Oregon, following national trends, concentrates coverage in urban cores.

Jeanie Lunsford, a spokeswoman for CareOregon, said the move is about better serving the majority of customers in Clackamas, Columbia, Washington and Multnomah counties.

"It's really that it's a very small program, and we had a really small population in Clatsop, and it made more sense to focus in the metro area," she said.

The move leaves someone like Beazely with two Medicare Advantage plans in Clatsop County — Moda Health and FamilyCare. CareOregon will keep its Medicare Advantage Plus program in Clatsop County for lower-income customers also supported by Medicaid, the gov-

ernment health insurance program for the poor and disabled.

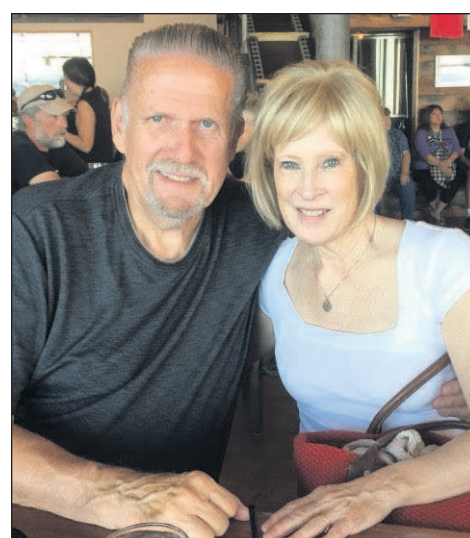
Public and private

Medicare is a federal health insurance program for people 65 and older. The plan covers hospital care and outpatient treatment and offers other services such as prescription drug coverage through supplemental policies.

More than 7,800 seniors were on traditional Medicare in Clatsop County as of August, according to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

Another 2,343 people were using Medicare Advantage plans, with coverage provided by federally approved

See **MEDICARE**, Page 7A



Ron Beazely and his wife, Jan, began searching for a new Medicare plan after their existing provider, CareOregon, announced it will leave Clatsop County by the end of the year.