

THE DAILY ASTORIAN

145TH YEAR, NO. 153

DailyAstorian.com // THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2018

ONE DOLLAR

College restores Alderbrook Hall

Astoria's Alderbrook Hall was built in 1915 as a firehouse.



Clatsop County Historical Society



Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

Clatsop Community College's Historic Preservation and Restoration Program has been restoring the historic Alderbrook Hall since 2016, including the removal of plywood siding to the historic shingles.

A proving ground for students

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

Alderbrook Hall, a bungalow built at 45th Street and Lief Erikson Drive in 1915 as a firehouse and later turned into a community center, has gone through a lot of changes, from the loss of the intricate gables, cornices and chimneys around the roof to the replacement of the shingle siding with the plywood.

Clatsop Community College's Historic Preservation and Restoration Program has partnered with Astoria and used the hall as a proving ground for students, slowly taking the building back in time.

About a dozen students spent last weekend in a workshop refinishing the building's original double-hung Douglas fir windows, stripped of lead-based paint in Portland and refinished with linseed oil and turpentine. Leading the workshop was guest instructor Chris Gustafson, a window restorer who went through the college's program, with help from historic preservation instructors John Goodenberger and Lucien Swerdloff.

"This building is great, because it gives us an opportunity to let students work on a variety of different aspects of a building, all in one building," Swerdloff said. "This is the reality in the world, and this is kind of house-scale, very similar to



Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

Students recently finished restoring the windows on Alderbrook Hall.



Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

Students treated the windows of Alderbrook Hall with linseed oil and turpentine.

a small house."

The college began work on Alderbrook Hall in 2016, detailing the con-

dition and changes to the building and replacing the plywood siding with original wood shingles. Jay Dickason, a recent graduate of the program, restored the building's historic carriage doors and is now an instructional assistant helping oversee the workshops.

For the project last weekend, the city provided \$3,000 to have the windows taken to Portland and stripped of lead paint. The rest of the project was funded by tuition and fees.

The college is helping to preserve several city sites, such as the stained-glass windows of the Ocean View Abbey Mausoleum in Warrenton and the plaster repair workshop next month at the Doughboy Monument in Uniontown.

See RESTORATION, Page 7A

State's child welfare system flawed

Audit documents shortcomings

By ROB MANNING
Oregon Public Broadcasting

Deep within the Oregon Secretary of State's 85-page audit report on the state's Office of Child Welfare is an account from caseworker Bridget Rayburn, 24.

"I love my job, but I feel like it's not sustainable," Rayburn said.

Rayburn said she and her colleagues receive up to 23 new cases a month — six new cases is the recommended amount.

She described feeling "desensitized" and that her "whole perspective on what constitutes abuse has shifted."

Rayburn described "unreal" staff turnover. She and just one other person in her unit had been there for more than a year.

And the emotional toll?
"Someone cries at their desk every day," Rayburn said.

'SOMEONE CRIES AT THEIR DESK EVERY DAY. NOT BECAUSE OF TRAUMA. BECAUSE THEY'RE OVERWHELMED WITH WORK.'

Bridget Rayburn | caseworker for Oregon's Office of Child Welfare

"Not because of trauma. Because they're overwhelmed with work."

The scathing audit took aim at every aspect of a critical agency responsible for the safety of neglected and abused children, from receiving complaint calls to certifying foster homes and investigating families.

The audit reviewed more than a decade of legislative changes aimed at helping some of Oregon's most vulnerable children. It found the Office of Child Welfare, within the state's vast Department of Human Services, has failed to keep up with legal mandates and the increased demand for state intervention.

At the same time, the Office of Child Welfare has faced scandals, like the discovery in 2015 that the Give Us This Day foster home in Portland was running

See AUDIT, Page 5A

Store closings stoke concern downtown

Some caution against overreaction

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

Several recent and upcoming closures on Commercial Street have raised fears of a weakening downtown business core.

Office supplier Abeco Office Systems and specialty gift store Adagio both closed storefronts this week. Home decor shop In the Boudoir and clothing store The Fox & Fawn are fol-

lowing suit next month.

J.C. Penney, the largest retailer downtown, closed last year. The stores are shutting down as the economy across Oregon and the United States is relatively strong, a worrisome sign of what might happen in Astoria when the economy inevitably dips.

But the reason behind each closure is unique, and the Astoria Downtown Historic District Association cautions against overreacting to the ebb and flow of retail.

See CLOSINGS, Page 5A



Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

Several businesses along Commercial Street have either closed recently or will in the near future, including, clockwise from upper left, Adagio, Lee's Attic antique store, office supplier Abeco Office Systems and home decor shop In the Boudoir.

