Shutdown: 'We have to just hope for the best'

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About 43,000 enlisted Coast Guard members deemed essential employees are working without pay. That includes 1,870 active-duty personnel and 130 civilians in the Coast Guard's District 13, which includes Sector Columbia River. Local estimates have about 1,500 in and around Astoria affected by the stoppage in pay.

Spouses speak out

Those serving in the Coast Guard are reluctant to speak publicly about their views of the shutdown. But some spouses are opening up about their struggles, and about how the community has rallied in their time of need

Jennifer Siems, a substitute teacher whose husband is an operations specialist aboard the Coast Guard cutter Alert, which is out on patrol, has been stocking up on food for her two sons, while making sure she has enough gas to make it to

"Of course this happened at the worst time of the year, right after Christmas, which meant there were two weeks I didn't get to work because of Christmas vacation," she said. "So, I will have a paycheck coming this month, but it won't be very big."

The Coast Guard internally found a way to pay personnel one last time in late December. But Adm. Charles Ray, vice commandant, has said no more stopgaps are in the offing.

"I think most of us took all of our last paycheck and paid as much of our bills as we could," said Michelle Somers, whose husband is stationed at Air Station Astoria. "Then at the end of the month, you have to decide: Do you pay your bills or do you buy groceries?'

Coast Guard families



Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian A 47-foot motor lifeboat from the Coast Guard's Station Cape

the week. (For more inforaround the country have been depending on pop-up mation, visit tinyurl.com/ food pantries and other bethelightpantry) community efforts to help

Disappointment patrols in January.

provide daily essentials.

organizing a pop-up pan-

try Saturday and Sunday

at the Astoria Masonic

Lodge for all Coast Guard

other furloughed federal

teers with a group called

Be the Light are collect-

ing donations throughout

She and other volun-

families,

employees.

retirees and

"We are looking for the community to step up, and Stacey Benson, whose they have tremendously," husband is stationed on Benson said. the cutter Steadfast, which is also out on patrol, is

Help from the community

A list of businesses offering free products and services — from coffee, pizza and vitamins to yoga classes, concerts and haircuts — has been circulating among Coast Guard families.

The Astoria Moose Lodge is offering a "Come support Our Coast Guard Community" benefit for employees affected by the federal government shutdown from 5 to 8 p.m. today. The event includes a turkey dinner with fixings for \$15, a raffle and an auction. All proceeds support Coast Guard families.

Several entities are providing other support to federal employees affected by the government shutdown. Wauna Federal Union is offering no-interest loans. The American Legion is offering onetime grants of up to \$1,500 for eligible households. In addition, Coast Guard Mutual Assistance is offering low- or no-cost loans to service members.

The Astoria School District is offering free school lunches and waiving activity fees for children from families impacted by the shutdown.

"Astoria School District is committed to supporting families affected by the federal government shutdown," Craig Hoppes, the school superintendent in Astoria, said in a news release.

Siems said she and others have been regularly checking to see the status of two congressional efforts to pay Coast Guardsmen through the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio, D-Oregon, sponsored the Pay Our Coast Guard Parity Act in the House. U.S. Sen. John Thune, R-South Dakota, sponsored similar legislation, the Pay Our Coast Guard Act, in the Senate. Neither have made it beyond introduction.

"It's better to just stay positive and think about what we're doing for each other and how we're coming together," Siems said. 'We can't dwell on what might happen. We have to just hope for the best."



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare operates the crisis respite center in Warrenton.

Probe: 'Nothing rose to the level of discipline'

Continued from Page A1

Baker, who was placed on administrative leave in late December pending the investigation, returned to work on Monday.

The reason behind Baker's leave was not publicly disclosed by the agency's board. The board also did not publicly explain the investigation's findings in announcing Baker's

The confidential report was obtained by The Daily Astorian.

The Oregon Health Authority is conducting a separate investigation into the incident at the crisis respite center and is expected to share the findings with Clatsop County, which contracts with Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare for mental health treatment.

"So we welcome that investigation and, yes, we want to learn from this incident," said Lt. Kristen Hanthorn, the acting board chairwoman, who leads the Clatsop County Sheriff's Office Parole

and Probation Division. "But the initial issue that the majority of the board wanted to determine was whether or not Amy was available. And she was. She took the call. They talked out the incident. It was resolved that night by calling law enforcement.

"So nothing rose to the level of discipline or anything else for our employee.'

Hanthorn said board would not "Monday morning quarterback" the exchanges between Baker and the respite center's program manager, who felt confident enough to disagree with Baker's initial instruction.

"And, ultimately, they came to the right answer,' she said.

Baker said the incident highlighted some areas for improvement in the agency's backup on-call process.

"I could have handled it a lot better," she said. "And that's not a reason that you would ever put an executive director on leave."

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Bill: Has drawn criticism from journalists

Continued from Page A1

The public records law the large number of exemptions — more than 500 – that have been carved out

over the years. The bill has drawn criticism from journalists, including The Oregonian's Gordon Friedman, who first reported on the legislation and balked at the requirement of stating with particularity the records he seeks.

"As a requester I often can't do that because I don't know what records exist only that I would like to request records pertaining to a topic," he wrote on Twitter.

Boone's legislation records bills this legislative session. Others would reduce public records fees from state agencies by half, award attorney fees against public bodies that don't respond to requests in a timely manner, explore creating a chief privacy officer position and prohibit using personal email for official business.

The state House on Monday also passed several new rules related to transparency.

The first will require

all amendments submitted to policy bills bear the name of a member or stake- to bring greater transparhas also been criticized for is one of 11 new public holder group. The second ency to the business of the will require that all committee bills bear the name of a member or stakeholder group that has requested the bill, effective Jan. 22. The third will require at least one hour to pass during the short legislative session before the House can act on a bill returned with changes

from the Senate.

"This is a positive step House, said state Rep. Paul Holvey, D-Eugene, in a news release. "These rule changes are in the public interest and will provide Oregonians a better understanding of which legislators and stakeholders are proposing bills in the Capitol."

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You are invited to

GOOD NEWS CLUB



At First Baptist Church of Astoria (Corner of 7th and Commercial) (503)325-1761 Beginning Wednesday, January 16th 6:30pm-8:00 pm K-5th Grade

It is a time of learning about Jesus, singing songs, and having fun with your friends!

THE DAILY **ASTORIAN**

(5:15) ★★ Constantine ('05) Rachel Weisz, Keanu Reeves.

Downunder Horseman

(5:30) Cattlemen LandLeader TV

162 RFD

Evening listings TUESDAY

(:05) Futurama

Product Showcase

LandLeader TV

Cattlemen to Cattlemen

(:35) Futurama

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[:45] ★★★ Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1 (2010, Adventure) Emma Watson, Rupert Grint, Daniel Radcliffe

To Be Announced | Ag PhD