

Outreach: Now accepting applications for liaison

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Paul, who has worked at the Astoria Warming Center for the past several years, and Shannon Turner, of Texas, were hired in April as county-wide homeless liaisons. The positions grew out of the task force and work under Clatsop Community Action.

Viviana Matthews, the executive director of Clatsop Community Action, said the agency and committee that oversees the positions are accepting applications to replace Turner, who resigned.

Matthews said Paul is working with a case manager at the agency until a second homeless liaison is hired.

As of now, Paul is working Monday to Friday and will soon have a cellphone so she can be reached directly.

"She is being connected with a lot of people from Seaside because her knowledge about houseless people is mostly Astoria," Matthews said. "But she is getting to know the population in Seaside, as well, and then move on to Warrenton."

"Essentially, we want the homeless liaison to be connected to all the agencies, to be connected with the police departments from different cities and city councils in trying to come up with housing options for our houseless population — the ones that are ready for it. A lot of them are not ready for housing, but we are giving them the option."

Assistant County Manager Monica Steele said the county wants to work with Clatsop Community Action and the homeless liaisons to gather more data to identify



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

A recent vaccination event at the Astoria Armory offered coronavirus vaccines and clothes, new sleeping bags and wellness kits to the homeless.

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Viviana Matthews | executive director of Clatsop Community Action

the most immediate housing needs.

"Like Viviana mentioned, in some instances, some of the people who are currently unhoused aren't ready to move into certain types

of housing situations, and so trying to identify — just beyond the fact that we need more housing — what type of housing that is, whether that's transitional, whether that's permanent supportive,

whether it's emergency shelter," she said.

Steele said the county also wants to explore options for people who live in RVs but don't have appropriate places to park.

College: Higher enrollment loss than most

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Overall, Breitmeyer told the budget committee that "we're well positioned for this year. The issue and the main concern of all of us moving forward is next year and we certainly can't sustain those lower levels of enrollment."

Enrollment at the college is down by around 37%, a number Breitmeyer called "very significant" at a budget committee meeting this week. The issue has emerged as the primary discussion point among a slate of challengers running for seats on the college board.

Clatsop has seen a higher loss in enrollment than most other Oregon community colleges, in part, administrators say, because of pandemic-related closures and restrictions impacting students who would normally be enrolled in unique programs at the college.

The biggest areas of enrollment loss — from sources like Tongue Point Job Corps Center or the U.S. Coast Guard — are also the easiest to recover and are expected to rebound on their own as organization-specific restrictions ease, said Jerad Sorber, the college's vice president for student success, in a presentation to the budget committee.

He said the college should focus on working with high schools and community organizations to bring in new students, as well as engage with students who may have sat out the last year because they were not interested in online classes.

The good news, Breitmeyer noted, is that revenue from tuition and fees did not take a corresponding dip. The places where enrollment did drop are not necessarily programs that generate as much tuition revenue.

This revenue is still down

by approximately 15% as of April 10, representing a loss of around \$450,000, but the shortfall was covered through federal emergency funds the college received.

Federal emergency funds will continue to provide a bit of a safety net, said JoAnn Zahn, the college's vice president of finance and operations.

The college is also engaged in an evaluation of programs and services. This prioritization process is even more important in light of budget constraints and the uncertainty about future state funding and other revenue sources, Zahn said.

The college made budget reductions of \$1.1 million in anticipation of a shortfall in state funding that never ended up materializing. However, it is still not clear what the college can expect to receive in the future.

College leaders say they will probably not know how

much state support Clatsop will receive until after the college board adopts the budget in June. For now, budget reduction efforts continue.

Parking: 'We need to look at it as a whole'

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More spots could come with a new multilevel parking garage on the site of the convention center parking lot. "The answer is we need more spots," Seaside's Greg Peterson said. "When we do, we get a lot of structure in the back here two, three, four levels? I know that's a big price tag, but how do we solve it?"

Two contractors estimated that it would cost around \$25 million to \$30 million for four floors of parking, Frank said.

In one estimate, the plan puts 160 spaces on each floor, with an average of \$39,000 per parking space. The second estimate puts 749 stalls in the lot at the same price per space.

Resistance to paid parking

Business owners were resistant to paid parking.

"I think the business model for the downtown community is built in large part around having free public parking," business owner Wayne Poole said. "It's scary to me that we might really

change our image, or Seaside, and the cost to employees and business owners."

Lodging owner Ruth Swenson said paid parking could drive visitors away.

"Once you start throwing, 'you're gonna pay to park here,' 'you're gonna pay for this, you're gonna pay for that,' yeah, you're gonna lose people," she said. "People want to stay where they're comfortable, where they can afford to take their kids to the arcade, or buy a hot dog or ride the carousel once. We need to look at it as a whole."

Ter Har said he did not want Seaside to be a leader in bringing paid parking to the North Coast. Paid parking could also have the unintended consequence of pushing drivers into surrounding areas where there is no fee. "As a city and business community, we need to think about our neighbors or our

local residents that have their homes in the surrounding areas, to try not to put a strain on them to lose the parking in front of them," he said.

"We're opposed to the paid parking and the parking lot," Poole said. "You know, we've worked so hard to get people here. We built our downtown business community around having free public parking."

The parking group's next step is to consider options and consequences, Posalski said. "We're talking about decentralized parking as being the solution," he said. "It would be worth talking to some people coming to town and see if that would be a solution."



County reports six new virus cases

The Astorian

Clatsop County has reported six new virus cases over the past few days.

On Friday, the county reported three cases.

The cases include a male between 10 and 19 living in the northern part of the county. The others live in the southern part of the county and involve a female between 10 and 19 and a woman in her 20s.

All three were recovering at home.

On Thursday, the county reported three cases.

The cases involve two females between 10 and 19 and a woman in her 40s living in the northern part of the county.

All three were recovering at home.

The county has recorded 961 cases since the start of the pandemic. According to the county, 24 were hospitalized and eight have died.

Craft3: 'That's kind of an irreplaceable experience'

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"It's one thing to walk through the galleries and look at pictures and look at little small artifacts," Jones said. "But to actually be able to go on a ship that was a working ship on the Columbia River Bar and walk through the space and see where the crew ate, where they slept, to see the bridge, see the engine room — that's kind of an irreplaceable experience."

The museum raised 40% of the project cost privately before applying for the Murdock grant, Jones said. It still has to raise \$307,000 for the rest of the work and has applied for grants through the National Park Service and the state Cultural Resources Economic Fund.

The lightship overhaul was endorsed by the Cultural Advocacy Coalition, which is lobbying the state Legislature for around \$305,000 to help the museum, part of a \$9.5 million ask for 11 cultural construction projects around the state in the coming two-year budget cycle.

Craft3 received a \$234,000 grant from the Murdock Charitable Trust to hire new lending staff to assist underserved entrepreneurs.

"The grant from M. J. Murdock Charitable Trust will support a new position at Craft3 that helps our commercial loan applicants and customers navigate resources within the community to improve the resilience of their businesses," a spokesperson for the lender said in a statement. "We expect to announce a hire in the next few months."

The lender has spent the past several years developing a new loan program launching this year focused on marginalized groups less able to gather the cash equity necessary for traditional financing or access new markets because of systemic racism.

The Murdock grant comes on the heels of a \$10 million donation to Craft3 from MacKenzie Scott, a philanthropist, author and ex-wife of Amazon owner Jeff Bezos.

CLATSOP CARE HEALTH & REHABILITATION CENTER

An update from your local nursing home

As a not-for-profit community supported organization, it's very important to us to keep the community informed of what's happening in our facility. That's why we've decided to share updates each week in the local paper.

EXPANSION TO VACCINATIONS

In an ongoing effort to protect our community and the community at large, Clatsop Care Center is offering anyone who comes in contact with our facility the opportunity to be vaccinated.

We're now able to offer COVID-19 vaccines on an ongoing basis to incoming residents, their visitors, family, and staff. Through our partnership with Consonus Pharmacy, we're able to order the COVID-19 vaccine and administer them on site with the help of our staff nurses.

This Tuesday we successfully administered 6 doses of the Pfizer vaccines to residents and staff! This new development helps us keep our residents, staff, and community safe.

Clatsop Care Center completed the initial round of vaccine clinics in December, January, and February with Walgreens Pharmacy (pictures below).



Thank you for your continued support!

for more information, please visit www.ClatsopCare.org

CLATSOP CARE HEALTH DISTRICT