

Malakai from 1A

“So when he was 2-1/2 years old, we moved here. And by his third birthday, he had a full, healthy head of hair. It was thick and getting curly and that was definitely an indication of things shifting for him,” Stone said.

Things went along well for the family, for a while, but then the Stones noticed that the simple colds and illnesses that were shrugged off by Malakai’s sisters were a larger problem for Malakai.

“We knew that there was something still going on because he was getting sicker than his sisters and it was taking a lot longer to recover,” Stone said. “Then he had a bout with pneumonia that was very difficult to get rid of, it took three rounds of anti-

otics and we were referred to a pulmonologist.”

Ultimately, that referral led to more tests with more specialists, which led to the diagnosis that only 200 people on the planet have received. Malakai had a severe disease of the immune system.

The diagnosis and the resulting prognosis changed life for all members of the Stone family, most dramatically for Malakai.

In order to combat this highly aggressive disease, Malakai will need to undergo chemotherapy to prepare his body for a bone marrow transplant.

The procedure is long and painful, and pitfalls and setbacks are part of what the Stones have been told to prepare for in the upcoming battle to save Malakai’s life.

The cost of the multi-tiered

treatment plan is unclear at this early stage of the process, but it could reach \$1 million, an unknown percentage of which the Stones will be responsible for paying.

Stone said the family does have health insurance, but the unclarity surrounding the structure and coverage of health care in the country has made the process of who pays for these extremely expensive procedures much less certain.

These unknown numbers are not the immediate concern for Stone, who wants to be able to be with her son during his treatment regimen, which will be taking place in Portland. The time she spends with Malakai is time that she is unable to work, and that will dramatically affect the family’s income.

That is the reason for the Gifts of the Heart Auction —

to allow the Stones the flexibility to be with Malakai, take care of their daughters and household and to pay for the surgeries.

“The response from the community has been overwhelming in the most wonderful way. Mark and I love being a part of this community,” Stone said. “We’ve seen it pull together for other people and we have been honored to be a part of that for others in the past. Now, being on the receiving end of it is very different. It’s hard to ask for help but the community has been amazing.”

Also involved in the fundraising effort, Siuslaw Middle School Principal Andy Marohl is hopeful that the timing of the event will allow residents to come out and help the Stones.

“People can help out in sev-

eral ways. We would love for a lot of people to come to the auction on June 10 and bid on items. We already have over 65 items donated by local businesses and community members, and there are many local businesses that have jars at their counters for people to help donate,” Marohl said.

Donations can be made at “Malakai’s Bone Marrow Transplant” account at Oregon Pacific Bank.

The family has also set up a GoFundMe account for online donations.

In addition, other fundraising options would be welcome as the family will likely need continued support through Malakai’s procedures.

For more information on participating in the Gifts of the Heart Auction, email shannongraham@me.com.

Utilities from 1A

Central Coast Disposal owner Dave Twombly said, “Our half of a percent (increase) on our gross is

going to happen on July 1 regardless of whether we charge the consumer or not. We won’t be able to recoup that if we don’t start billing for that on July 1.”

In other business, councilors voted to approve a bid from Pacific Lamp Wholesale, Inc. for \$42,825 to retrofit the Florence Events Center (FEC) to LED lighting.

FEC Director Kevin Rhodes said, “In 2016, Central Lincoln PUD conducted an electrical audit of the FEC’s existing lighting fixtures and lamps and determined that the FEC qualifies

for a utility savings of up to \$30,000 by replacing the existing incandescent lighting with LED lighting.”

According to Rhodes, Pacific Lamp Wholesale was the only one of three vendors that replied to a request for bid.

“They are considered to be a turnkey lighting contractor and will handle the project from start to finish,” Rhodes said. “PUD’s estimated rebate incentive is \$22,660, leaving a net cost to the city of \$20,165.”

The retrofit would include all lighting except the theater lighting, because Pacific

Lamp Wholesale does not do theatrical lighting.

Rhodes said the nonprofit Friends of the FEC have applied for a matching grant to cover the theater lighting upgrade costs.

He said the FEC’s current budget has allocated \$45,000 for the retrofit and that the theater lighting would qualify for additional rebates.

Rhodes said the estimated electrical bill savings would be \$400 per month, with a return on investment in less than five years.

“This is a smart move and a good investment,” Rhodes said.

Deadlines for press releases are Mondays and Thursdays by noon. Email them to:
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ReVision from 1A

According to Reynolds, the city currently has a funding gap not being met from outside sources of \$2.9 million. FURA has the funding capacity to cover \$1.6 million. That leaves \$1.3 million to be covered by either the city or a combination of other outside sources, including Lane County and ODOT.

“We are still in the process of showing reasons why it makes sense for the county to invest in this west Lane infrastructure project,” Reynolds said. “Commissioners Farr, Bozievich and Leiken were very supportive of the project.”

“If we get more outside (funding), that would buy

down the direct cost to the city and urban renewal,” Reynolds said.

She added that the city is hoping Lane County will cover all or a portion of the current \$1.3 million funding gap.

“In addition to Lane County, we have been working with ODOT. They went to the Oregon Transportation Commission, their funding governing body, to request additional funding for their part of the project, as well as additional funds for the city’s portion,” Reynolds said.

During the May 31 FURA budget meeting, the board will consider the proposed \$7.4 million budget.

For more information on ReVision Florence, visit ci.florence.or.us/urban-renewal/revision-florence.

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