Kids prepare for once-in-lifetime experience

LOOKING SKYWARD

KATHERINE LACAZE/FOR SEASIDE SIGNAL

During an event at the Seaside Public Library on July 27, children use protective eye wear to look up at the sun, in preparation for the upcoming solar eclipse.

A lesson in the eclipse

By Katherine Lacaze
For Seaside Signal

'I see it! I see it!" several children exclaimed, peering skyward through special glasses at the sun from the parking lot outside the Seaside Public Library.

The kindergarten through fifth-grade children, as well as their parents and guardians, were gearing up for the impending Aug. 21 solar eclipse through a series of games and activities hosted by the library July 27.

Through June and July, as part of its 2017 summer reading program, the library offered preschool story times on Wednesdays; a handful of special

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KATHERINE LACAZE/FOR SEASIDE SIGNAL

About 60 children, parents and guardians attended the event, Solar Eclipse: Moon and Sun Experiments, which was put on in conjunction with the 2017 Summer Reading program.

Seaside campus plan clears first hurdle

Planning Commission recommendation headed to City Council

By R.J. Marx
Seaside Signal

The Seaside School District cleared a major hurdle Tuesday night. Members of the city's Planning Commission provided a recommendation that could lead to the building of a new school campus outside of the tsunami inundation zone.

By voting to recommend approval of the district's request for an expansion of the urban growth boundary, the commission paved the way for rezoning 40 acres of the property and annexing an additional 49-acre portion of the property, located at Seaside Heights Elementary School, 2000 Spruce Drive.

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Southeast Seaside seeks a turnaround

Urban renewal plan to receive county review

By R.J. Marx
Seaside Signal

Round one of an urban renewal plan that would involve critical bridge and school improvements in southeast Seaside has moved a step forward.

The Planning Commission determined this month that the report presented by Elaine Howard Consulting met the city's criteria as specified in the master plan. Next step is the City Council, which is scheduled to hear details of the report at the city's Aug. 14 meeting.

The report presents renewal area boundaries and provides cost estimates.

Southeast Seaside's infrastructure goals, prepared in a May goal-setting session, include a pedestrian bike bridge, parks projects and upgrades to unincorporated properties in the area.

Covering almost 560 acres of land along South Holladay, Avenue S from U.S. Highway 101 east and the southern section of Highway 101, the urban renewal district would make up about 21 percent of the city's total acreage and 22 percent of Seaside's assessed value. "One of the places where urban renewal agencies can be very effective is in matching money," City Manager Mark Winstanley said. "If the Oregon Department of Transportation, as an example says, 'We are going to give you money for the Avenue U Bridge, but we are only going to give you 90 percent of the money,' the urban-renewal agency could pay for 10 percent of the project. You might be able to build a bridge early because you are only providing matching money, not the major portion."

Improvements drive funding

Urban renewal is a financing program authorized under state law and implemented locally allowing the use of property tax revenues from city and regional taxing districts to grow the economy in blighted or underdeveloped areas.

Past Seaside urban-renewal plans paved the way for upgrades on the Turnaround and Prom, the city's sewage plant, 12th Avenue improvements and construction of a new library in 2008.

Using tax-increment financing, funding comes through increases in assessed values of local properties.

As new development arrives and existing properties are improved, assessments rise and see property-tax increases. Property taxes on the growth in assessed value in the urban-renewal area are frozen and increases are allocated to the city's urban renewal agency and not the taxing districts. Subsequent improvements can lead to higher home values and in turn higher assessments, ultimately generating more funds for the urban-renewal district.

The most significant funds could be slated for the longer-term, when the money accumulates.

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Sweet Shop launches new tradition

A gathering place in Gearhart

By Rebecca Herren
Seaside Signal

With the building's history spanning decades of different establishments, owner of Pops Sweet Shop Cindy Anderson decided to sell her Gearhart business of nearly 15 years.

In 2016 during a visit to Gearhart, Traci Williams passed the shop with its for sale sign posted in the window and a friend suggested she buy the place; and so she did.

In February of this year, Williams opened the new Sweet Shop to welcoming acclaim. Though the building, interior and menu may look the same, look again. Williams has renovated, remodeled and refurbished both sides of the building. She removed the false

REBECCA HERREN/SEASIDE SIGNAL

New employee trainee Julia Jenkins (left), realtor Craig Weston and barista Evan Uritt enjoy time in the garden outside of the Sweet Shop.

wall and shutters, opening up the closed area to extend the shop's new list of wares.

As with many historical buildings, the Sweet Shop has gone through several transitions. In the

1920s, the business was known as Poppino's Sweet Shop, which operated as a soda fountain, then one side became a high-end beauty

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