

‘The Sea’ coming to South Roosevelt Drive

Dining at location of former West Lake Restaurant Lounge

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

Pattaporn Lovwatcharasophon returned to the Seaside City Council for the second time in six months, seeking a liquor license for a new restaurant, The Sea, at 1480 S. Roosevelt Dr., the site of the former West Lake Restaurant.

In July, Lovwatchara-



Pattaporn Lovwatcharasophon appears before City Council seeking a liquor license for The Sea, at 1480 S. Roosevelt Dr.

sophon asked and won a beer and wine sales permit at Thai Me Up, across the

street at 1575 S. Roosevelt Drive. The Sea will serve Cajun-

style seafood, the owner said to members of the council on Monday, Dec. 9. She said the restaurant will open in the beginning of 2020. “There are still a couple things to get done in the building,” she said, including interior updates and equipment set-up. Det. Sgt. Guy Knight of the Seaside Police Department reviewed the application, and did not find any disqualifying information or reason to deny the application. The liquor license received unanimous council approval.

Good report card for city

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

“Good report card. Congratulations.” Rick Proulx of Kern and Thompson, LLC, delivered the news of this year’s audit report to the city. “I’m happy to report that our audit opinion is a clean opinion,” Proulx said at the Monday, Dec. 9, City Council meeting. The city is in a strong financial position, he added. According to the analysis, covering the fiscal year ended June 30, the city’s 2019 budget was a

little more than \$45 million, with cash and investments of about \$26 million. Business activities net position increased \$678,000 and the General Fund’s balance stood at \$5.2 million. The opinion confirms that the city’s financial statements for the fiscal year ending June 30 are fairly stated in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and government and standards, Proulx said. “The numbers are accurate and reported correctly,” he said at Monday’s meeting. “There were no deficiencies or abnormalities to report.”

Helping Hands considers Wapato for housing center

By MEERAH POWELL
Oregon Public Broadcasting

Helping Hands announced Friday, Dec. 13, that it is looking to turn north Portland’s never-used Wapato Jail into a mixed-use facility for people experiencing homelessness. Helping Hands Reentry Outreach Centers operates emergency shelters and reentry program facilities in Clatsop, Tillamook, Yamhill and Lincoln counties. It’s hoping to do something similar with Wapato.

Wapato owner Jordan Schnitzer purchased the facility from Multnomah County last year, envisioning it as a homeless shelter. He announced in October that he planned to demolish the building unless he could find funding to support that vision. “We decided that it would be a shame if this was torn down,” Alan Evans, founder and CEO of Helping Hands, said at a press conference Friday.

Evans, who experienced homelessness and addiction for more than 25 years before founding Helping Hands, wants to turn the former prison into the Bybee Lakes Hope Center — a facility that would offer support services from outside partners, an emergency shel-



Alan Evans of Helping Hands Re-Entry Outreach Centers.

ter and a transitional housing program. “I’ve been in a couple prisons in my life and this is not one of them,” Evans said. “This is a building. This is an opportunity, and we believe that we can make a difference here.” Helping Hands’ case statement on Bybee Lakes Hope Center estimates operating expenses for the facility would be about \$1.4 million. Schnitzer said he estimates the nonprofit will need \$3 million to \$4 million in donations to get the project off the ground. He said he’d be willing to commit \$1 million. “You need some big

contributions initially,” Schnitzer said. Although Helping Hands’ current operations near the coast do not rely on any state or federal funds, Schnitzer acknowledged that Wapato is a large facility. He said his hope would be for community leaders to recognize the project’s potential once it begins to gain donations. “Here’s a chance for them to rise to the occasion and to reach out to Alan (Evans) and say, ‘Gee, we didn’t think this thing could work, but by gosh, if you have an organization that’s proven itself and thinks it can, we want to help,’” Schnitzer said. “(Mult-

nomah County Chair) Deborah Kafoury, (Portland) Mayor Ted Wheeler, county commission, Metro council, whoever it is — reach out and see if we can make this dream into reality.” Oregon State Sens. Betsy Johnson and Lew Frederick also attended Friday’s press conference and spoke in support of the project. Schnitzer specifically said that no deals were final yet. “This is just an interim announcement about a new program that has high hopes, high risk, but it’s going to take a lot of steps and a lot of things need to go right,” he said. Schnitzer said he will reevaluate the project — and Wapato’s fate — in the next few months. Evans said Helping Hands will begin to accept donations for the project through its website immediately. He said the nonprofit will have a specific website for Bybee Lake Hope Center up in a few days. “We’re asking business owners who are worried about the people sleeping in their doorways to join our team,” Evans said. “We’re asking other people to join together to see if we can make a difference together as a team.”

Cannon Beach names Reckmann fire chief

By NICOLE BALES
The Astorian

CANNON BEACH — Marc Reckmann, the division chief at the Cannon Beach Rural Fire Protection District, will take over as fire chief. Reckmann, 40, of Forest Grove, will replace Matthew Benedict, who retires at the end of December. Reckmann stepped in as acting chief when Benedict took a leave of absence in May. Benedict announced his plans to retire in October, saying 30 years of fire service has taken a toll on him physically and mentally. He is using the rest of his vacation and sick leave through

the end of the year. Reckmann will serve as interim chief until assuming the role full time. Reckmann has worked for the fire district part time since 2017. He works full time as a shift captain for the Cornelius Fire Department, where he has served for the past 18 years. “I love what I do, but I’m ready for the next stage of my life. I’m ready to come off that engine working 24-hour shifts ... and have a different challenge,” Reckmann said. “I’m looking forward to challenge. There’s a lot of challenges here.” The fire district’s board put together two panels for input made up of volunteer



firefighters and South County officials, including Seaside Fire Chief Joey Daniels, Cannon Beach Emergency Manager Rick Hudson and Cannon Beach Police Chief Jason Schermerhorn. Both panels shared their recommendations prior to the board’s vote. The panels agreed changes need to be made to support the next chief, and communication between the board, chief and volunteers needs to improve. Both panels recommended the board hire Reckmann. “However, it is concerning to the committee that the common denominator of burnout and retiring or resignation between the last three fire chiefs has been centered around their relationship with the district board,” Jordan Spencer said in a statement on behalf of the volunteer firefighters panel.

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