



Agencies partner on warming center

Low-barrier shelter to open in December in Seaside

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

A new warming center in Seaside will give homeless people an alternative to sleeping outside in the cold.

The 15-bed, low-barrier shelter on S. Roosevelt Drive will open on Dec. 1. The outreach is a combined project between Helping Hands Reentry Outreach Centers, the city, Clatsop Community Action and the Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District.

The warming center was announced in a year of prioritizing homeless issues, with the goal of transitional and permanent housing for people in need. Recommendations from city, county and nonprofit leaders delivered to the City Council prior to Monday's meeting sought to define and implement strategies to address homelessness.

See Warming center, Page A3

Vista Ridge II addresses flooding, landslide fears

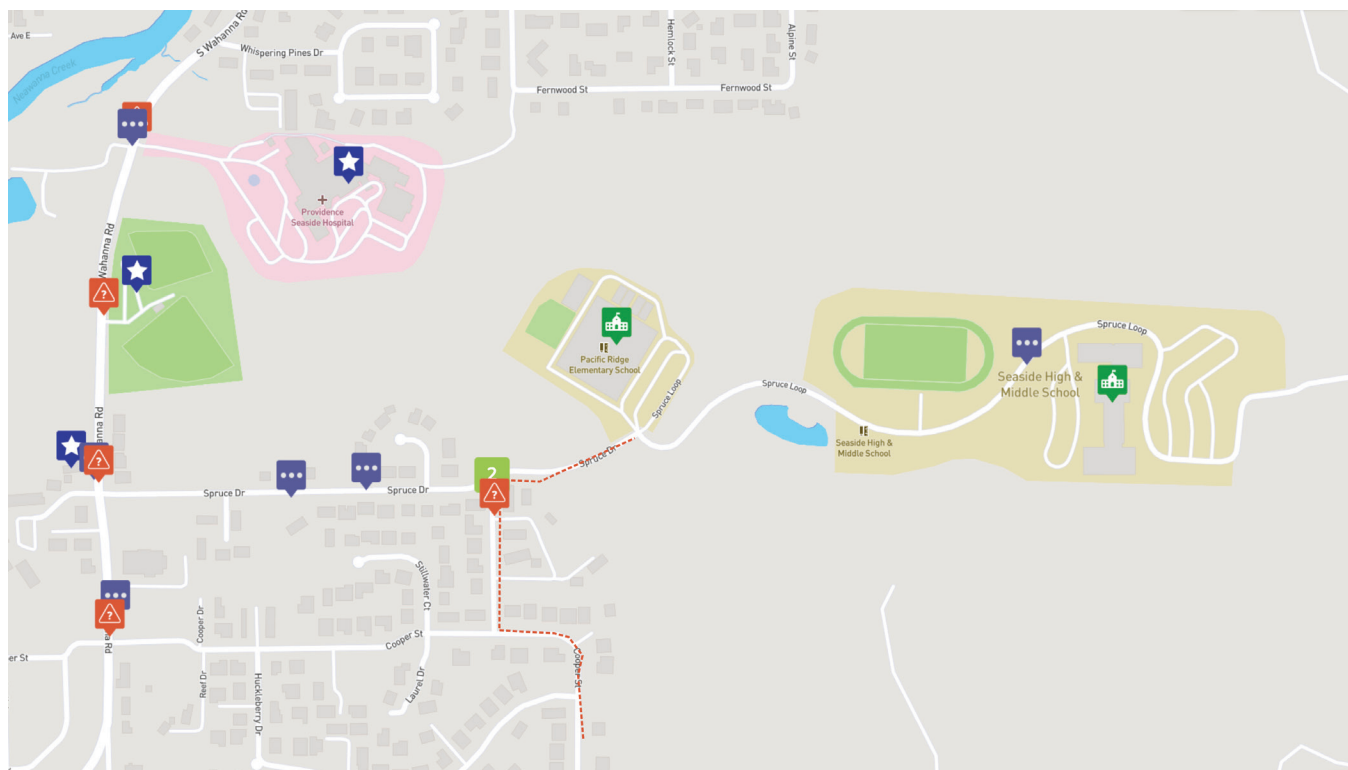
Continuance is granted as development clock resets

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

Representatives of Vista Ridge II delivered stormwater plans, water flows and home designs to the Planning Commission last week as they review plans for the 17-lot, 6.5-acre residential subdivision in the city's eastern hills.

In a September meeting, neighbors expressed concerns about flooding and landslide risk, already a problem for nearby properties at the original Vista Ridge subdivision. Residents said they had pumped water off their properties during storms for decades, and fear the new subdivision will only make things worse.

See Vista Ridge II, Page A3



Seaside School District

Map indicates areas of concern for speeding, crossing and other hazards. The map identifies schools, points of interest, Safe Routes to School locations and enrollment boundaries.

Ensuring a safe trip to school for every student

Assessing options, identifying issues

By KATHERINE LACAZE
For Seaside Signal

As Seaside, the Seaside School District and other partners explore solutions for providing students with safer access to their schools, sports and other activities, they are looking for feedback from the community.

With assistance from Safe Routes to School, the project leaders — including representatives from the city, school district, Oregon Department of Transportation and Alta Planning + Design — are holding a walk audit from 7:30 to 10:30 a.m. next Wednesday. The community and other stakeholders are invited to attend to learn more about the program and offer input. The group will be meeting at 7:15 a.m. at the bike rack at Pacific Ridge Elementary School. In addition to attending the walk audit, community members also can share feedback at <http://odots-rtspjctid.com/>.

The walk audit will be conducted in the morning to observe student arrival, according to Seaside schools Superintendent Susan Penrod. It will begin with observing elementary student arrival and then move to the middle and high school campus.



Katherine Lacaze

Staff member James Downes helps students get safely inside Pacific Ridge Elementary School during the first day of the 2021-22 school year.

Dale McDowell, the city's Public Works director, who is spearheading the program for Seaside, said they want to get an idea of how the traffic flows, how many students are currently walking or biking to school, how the school buses are getting on and off campus, and other factors.

"With the Safe Routes to School coming on board, it's another set of fresh eyes looking at things for us," he said.

Safe Routes to School

Safe Routes to School was started in the 1990s but didn't take off until 2005, when Congress approved funding for implementation of programs across the country. In June 2012, Congress passed a new transportation bill — Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century — that made significant changes for funding the program.

Under the new law, Safe Routes to School is combined with the former Transportation Enhancement program. All Safe Routes to School that were eligible under the federal Safe Routes to School program continue to be eligible to compete for funding under Transportation Alternatives. However, these projects are no longer fully covered by federal funds. Local communities must now come up with 20% of the project's cost as a match.

The objective of Safe Routes to School is to create safe, healthy, convenient and fun opportunities for kids to use active transportation for the school commute or to get to their after-school activities. This primarily involves walking, biking or skating.

McDowell has been interested in having Seaside participate in Safe Routes to School for several years. He initially reached out to former school Superintendent Doug Dougherty. However, the project was put on hiatus with talk of building the new school campus on the hills by what is now Pacific Ridge Elementary School.

See Safe rides, Page A6

A surprise celebration for Mayor Barber's 80th birthday

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

Mayor Jay Barber celebrated his 80th birthday with a little help from his friends, almost 100 of them, at the Sons of Norway lodge in Gearhart.

People turned out at 4 p.m. sharp to surprise the mayor 15 minutes later. The Barbars entered the room from a drenching downpour outside to find themselves surrounded by friends, family and state and local notables.

State Sen. Betsy Johnson, who is running for governor as an independent, said she first met Barber 35 years ago when he served as the director of the Oregon Health & Science University Foundation, overseeing fundraising



LEFT: Crowd celebrates Mayor Jay Barber's 80th birthday. RIGHT: Barber and his wife, Jan, share a moment at his 80th birthday party.

programs.

"The one consistent throughout all of Jay's life is service to others," she said. "When we met, he was helping sick kids at OHSU. He helped students who went to Warner Pacific. Jay is the chair of the board of Helping Hands Reentry (Outreach

Centers) and helping with that. City councilor, mayor — Jay's life is a total life of service."

Former Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District director Mary Blake described Barber as a man of warmth and compassion. "He wraps everybody



Photos by R.J. Marx

up with love and is one of the best spirited kind of guys, with a killer sense of humor," she said.

Seaside Fire Chief Joey Daniels said Barber supports firefighters and always plays a role at their fundraisers.

See Barber, Page A5

Gearhart ZIP code discussion points to city east-west divide

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

Is a package destined for Seaside or Gearhart? Postal workers and delivery drivers can't always be sure. Both cities share the 97138 ZIP code, and each has addresses of numbered and lettered streets.

Gearhart Mayor Paulina Cockrum and city councilors want the U.S. Postal Service to assign Gearhart a unique ZIP code, and came prepared to issue a resolution to that effect at last week's City Council meeting.

But doing so, City Councilor Dan Jesse pointed out, may lead to unintended consequences.

Jesse said while a new

ZIP code might benefit residents in the city's core, many residents, especially those living east of the Neacoxie River and east of U.S. Highway 101, have grown to depend on the Seaside Post Office.

"I don't get anything from the Gearhart Post Office," Jesse said. "I have no reason to ever go there because it doesn't serve me at all."

City Councilor Reita Fackerell said she understands the need for a new ZIP code and supports the resolution. "But if we did get a new ZIP code in Gearhart," she said, "we're not sure who will deliver to the people who do have actual mailboxes."

See ZIP code, Page A6

