



Clothes and other items available at Project Homeless Connect at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center.

R.J. Marx

Officials look to address chronic flooding

Despite fixes, rain still impacts section of Highway 101

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

During this month's heavy rains police issued alerts for some vehicles to avoid U.S. Highway 101 between the Cannon Beach junction and Avenue U in Seaside due to flooding — a yearly issue.

"Guys, you know we had a little bit of water," Seaside Public Works Director Dale McDowell said at the Jan 12 City Council meeting. "Everybody did a great job and all our residents were patient. We helped everybody that we possibly could and I think we did quite well."

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Project Homeless Connect returns after virus hiatus

Outreach links homeless with social services

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

Several dozen people moved through the Seaside Civic and Convention Center on Tuesday morning for Project Homeless Connect.

The event, which aims to link homeless people with services and other assistance, took a year off because of the coronavirus pandemic but returned as homelessness continues to be a challenge across Clatsop County.

Given the surge in new virus cases linked to the omicron variant, the number of agencies that participated was limited and focused only on those that deal with the homeless directly. Only homeless people were admitted, and, unlike previous years, there were no volunteers.

After intake, visitors received a meal, personal care items and connections to services they might need.

"Right now, we are giving away, for the harm reduction programs, naloxone, Narcan, as well as some of our resource pages," said Jenna King, the county's public health harm reduction coordinator. "We're also offering immunizations. We have a flu vaccine, as well as the COVID-19 for a second



Amy and Sammy Evans of Helping Hands Reentry Outreach Centers at Project Homeless Connect.

and booster shots."

Clatsop Community Action, which organizes the event, is working in partnership with Helping Hands Reentry Outreach Centers, and the Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District to provide a warming center in Seaside.

Amy Evans, of Helping Hands, said there is no stereotype of a home-

less person.

"There's no cookie-cutter," she said. "We're getting less and less people into our facilities that have drug addiction or alcoholism as one of their barriers. It's just society right now. And it's really hard to pick yourself up and get a home when most homes are almost impossible without multiple incomes."

Gearhart readies to launch May firehouse bond vote

Growth boundary is key to new site

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

At next week's meeting the Gearhart City Council will be asked to decide whether to file for the mayor to go forward with a fire station.

The project, designed to bring the station out of the tsunami inundation zone, will require bringing the land into the city boundary.

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Seaside schools adjust to new virus guidelines

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

The Oregon Health Authority issued new guidance for the state's schools, Susan Penrod, Seaside School District superintendent, said at last week's board of directors meeting. These impact testing, quarantine and procedures for vaccinated and unvaccinated students and staff.

"The quarantine time has been reduced from 10 to five days, so our staff and our students who test positive can return after

five days if they're symptom-free for 24 hours," she said.

The Oregon Health Authority and the Oregon Department of Education want to do everything possible to keep school in person, she said. "They know that both our local health authorities and school districts have been overwhelmed with contact tracing."

New virus cases, linked to the omicron variant, have surged across Oregon. Virus case numbers have jumped in schools in Clatsop County since students returned to classes after the holidays.

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COVID essentials for local businesses

Health official offers omicron update to Seaside Chamber of Commerce

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

A shortage of test kits and a surge in omicron cases has driven skyrocketing numbers of COVID-19 cases in Clatsop County. These and their impacts on local businesses were at top of mind for members of the Seaside Chamber of Commerce last Wednesday, as they hosted Margo Lalich, Clatsop County's interim



Margo Lalich, Clatsop County's interim public health director, speaks to members of the Seaside Chamber of Commerce.

public health director, at the Bob Chisholm Community Center.

"I receive calls frequently from business owners, as well as the cham-

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ber directors, just wanting to get some guidance around how to proceed with events," Lalich said. "Let's keep it simple and focus on what's essential. That's my approach to this pandemic. We want to keep it as simple as possible so that we can manage it and carry on with our day-to-day lives, to support and create community, which is very important for all of us, and so important for the health and well-being of the community."

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