

Care Center

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Pennsylvania. They are considering a few other possibilities for financing, besides selling the Clinton property, and she hopes to have it open for next spring.

Sheahan said that everything was going well when the funding dropped out. The company ran into the same financing issues that the rest of the country is facing. "We got stuck right in the middle of the spiral spin down," said Sheahan. Those money issues prompted Sheahan to put the property at 8 Clinton Ave. up for sale in order to move to the new location. The sign at the North Main property merely redirects inquires to the other property on Clinton Avenue, she said.

The original plans for 49 North Main Rd. remain almost the same. Consistent Care will relocate the

existing offices and services as well as construct a new adult social and medical day-care center.

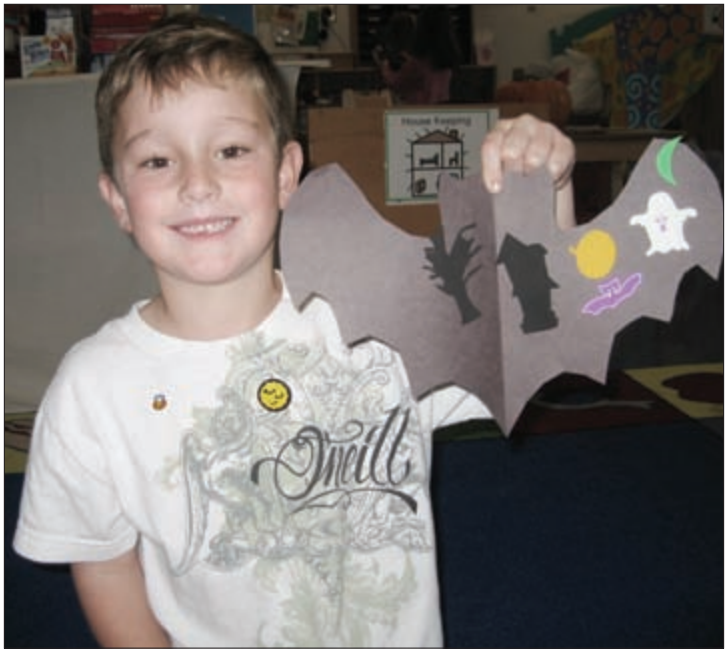
Sheahan is still committed to the company and to Jamestown.

Consistent Care started in 1991 as a home-based business and today has more than 40 employees making over 11,000 calls to homes in and near Jamestown. The home health-care company for acute and long-term care provides service from pediatrics to elder care. The new adult day-care facility will provide for elderly patients, especially those who may have Alzheimer's disease. Currently, Sheahan said that business is booming with almost more demand than they have the staff to accommodate.

Gail and her brother Charles Sheahan made the application to construct the new adult day-care center in January of last year. They searched for several years to find a suitable location, finally purchasing

the property and house at 49 North Main Road in October 2006. In January 2007, the planning commission approved the development plan, and the zoning board followed suit with a unanimous vote. The plan underwent minor revisions when wetlands were discovered near the back of the property in April of last year. This caused a slight alteration to the parking plan, but the wetlands will now be incorporated into the planned rock garden and should not affect the rest of the construction. The property is currently zoned for commercial development and the planned construction would not be affected by any zoning changes because of previous approval.

Two new buildings will replace the original house on the lot at 49 North Main Rd. The new modular buildings were constructed in Pennsylvania where they are currently awaiting transport to Rhode Island.



Going batty

Jack Barry dressed up his black bat with some spooky shapes during the harvest party in Colleen McIntyre's kindergarten class.

Photo by Andrea von Hohenleiten

Council

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education services, and tutoring, Lukon said.

Both the town administrator and School Committee Chairwoman Cathy Kaiser said there was a good possibility that aid to cities and towns will be reduced in the current budget and that state aid to schools will decrease in 2010. Kaiser acknowledged that the alleged decreases were rumors. However, other programs that are experiencing substantial cuts are good indicators for future expectations, she added.

Despite the negative impacts

on the budget, some good news emerged. The town administrator said that both the town and the school department will benefit from a three-year electricity rate of 9.4 cents per kilowatt-hour negotiated by the League of Cities and Towns.

Also, after the meeting, Facilities Director Lewis Kitts demonstrated lighting systems controlled by motion sensors in the school gym that automatically turn off when movement was not detected after 15-minutes. Kitts said that the systems would substantially reduce energy costs.

Lukon addressed enrollment and class size, but said that due to unknown military enrollment figures, an exact prediction was not possible

until later in the year.

When discussing the budget parameters, the 4.75-percent legislated tax cap was mentioned, but the consensus was that until the effect of the recession on grants, entitlements and state aid was established, a realistic evaluation could not be ascertained.

Possible revenue sources, including tuition students from other cities, did not look encouraging. Dr. Lukon said that Philip Thornton, interim superintendent of the North Kingstown School District, said that some NK parents voiced objections to a plan to send students to Jamestown schools.

Lukon said that the NK School Committee decided to monitor enrollments for the following year with

the hope that tuitioning students to another district will not be necessary. Lukon also reported that Pathways will probably not rent space at Lawn school next year. Because of their age, local students enrolled in the special education program will be moving to other programs.

Town Administrator Bruce Keiser said that he had conversations with the Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council (RIPEC) concerning a current study on Aquidneck Island on organizational and management consolidation. Keiser suggested the possibility of a Jamestown town and school administrative structures and management systems study to determine whether economies could be realized through restructuring.

The matter was informally discussed at an August meeting when the two groups determined that the consolidation of business operations between the two schools was impractical. However, they agreed to defer any decision until the cost figures from RIPEC were available.

Councilman William Kelly again raised the possibility of closing the Lawn Avenue School and made an appointment with Dr. Lukon to discuss the matter, as well as the budget. Kelly later clarified his intent and said, "A 20-percent increase in costs is substantial. Not that I doubt its legitimacy, but these are tough financial times. I think it is our responsibility to review all possibilities and go over the budget again to see if there might be something we missed."

After listening to the possibility of substantial budget cuts, school committee member B. J. White-

house said, "If taxes have to go up, that means mine are going up and I don't have children."

He also said, "I don't want to be fiscally irresponsible, but I'm thinking more about that eight-year old kid that just wants to be educated than I am thinking about the taxpayers and how much it's going to cost them."

"I'm going to take out my sharp pencil and my calculator and check with the administration to make sure that everything is okay. But my philosophy through this is going to be to educate children," Whitehouse said.

Town Administrator Keiser responded to Whitehouse and said that Jamestown is, fortunately, not in as bad a shape as other communities because, "We get a very small percentage of our school budget from state funding. We are 95-percent self-sufficient. We just have to look at ways of being more efficient and prioritize our services."

Councilman Robert Sutton also commented on Whitehouse's statement and said, "We can't think that way. We can't just expect the taxpayers to automatically absorb cuts in funding." He suggested proceeding with caution and to consider what can be done without grant money, and think about other ways to accomplish educational goals without automatically raising taxes.

After the meeting, Chairwoman Kaiser said, "The commitment of the school committee is to meet the needs of all students while being responsive to the needs of the community." The two groups agreed to meet again in January.

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