

Shasta View Nursing Center eyes new ideas

New administrator planning in-house CNA training

By Sibyl Walski

Not only was Sunbridge Nursing Center recently sold to a small corporation owned by a young man, James Preimesberger of Meridian Health Care, but the administrator changed, too.

David Pettijohn, his wife and five young children relocated to Siskiyou County only about three weeks ago. He takes command as Betty Groton, administrator for the last 13 years, moves into semi-retirement.

With the new blood – and the new eyes – come new ideas. Preimesberger and Pettijohn seem to be on the same page with the upgrades, and with investment of time, energy and dollars in the local community.

Preimesberger has immediate plans to replace the ventilation system, paint the facility, install a gazebo and other improvements to the physical plant.

Pettijohn's job is quality of care for the residents. Typically, he said, long term nursing facilities are shortstaffed, because the work is difficult and the pay is low.

And California has minimum caregiver to patient ratio requirements which must be met. The facility is short ten CNA's to meet the state requirement.

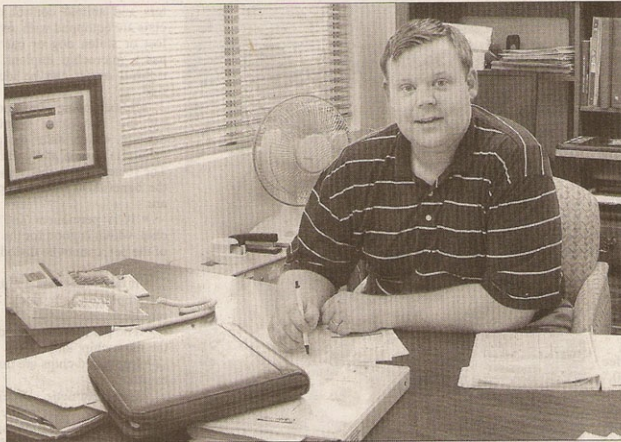


Photo by Sibyl Walski

David Pettijohn is the new administrator of Shasta View Nursing Center, replacing Betty Groton, who ran the facility for 13 years.

Therefore, he said, only 45 residents are currently under care, although the maximum occupancy is 59.

The first item on his agenda is to remedy the deficit with an in-house CNA training program to begin June 11.

The facility's director of nurses is Candace Smith, RN, who trained dozens of aides at the now defunct Beverly Manor in Yreka. She will teach the class at Shasta View.

Pettijohn promises higher

wages, free training and a \$500 sign-on bonus for successful candidates.

The goal, he explained, is that the facility will be operating at capacity in six to twelve months, more jobs will be created and the facility can afford to expand, not only with more "skilled" beds for the severely debilitated, but with assisted living units for the more independent resident.

Pettijohn is also putting out the call for more volunteers to

play cards and bingo with the residents, read to them, lead exercises, or simply chat.

Shasta View is the fifth facility Pettijohn has administered. He transferred to the area from Independence, Mo. to be closer to his parents, who live in Grants Pass and own the Fourth Street Bakery & Deli.

Before Independence, he ran long term care centers in Lincoln, Neb., Dillon, Mont., and Baker City, Ore.