

10A 10/6/13 THE SENTINEL • SUN

Salem opens first CILA facility

New home hopes to provide community with vital service

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SALEM — With controversy swirling in Centralia over the quality and conditions of Community Integrated Living Arrangements (CILAs) in the area, Salem has taken steps to open its first facility and provide quality service.

“From a mayor’s perspective, I’m glad to see you in town. Because I think there are unmet needs in Salem with people with mental disabilities who need live close to home. I think that you are doing a great thing,” expressed Mayor John Raymer.

“It seems like you were able to come in here, open a CILA and explain that you’re not here to rip all the people out of Murray Center, we’re here to meet the needs of other people who come up. I hope that the focus can stay there.”

With the first resident moving in Friday, Nikki Kuhlrig and David Armbrust, two individuals overseeing the new CILA’s operation, provided a tour of the home and highlighted their goals for the facility.

“Our policy has always been to work with families. If you do that and work with the actual individuals, I don’t think there will be any problems involved. If you’re working for the people you serve, that’s what we’re shooting for. We want to provide really good services,” Armbrust said.

“We are shooting for a place where a resident, as long as they need services from us and want services from us, can stay as long as they want and make this their home.”

Kuhlrig, who is in charge of training for the CILA, said that no individual will be considered if the staff can not adequately meet the resident’s needs.

“If there is a better provider that would serve a client’s needs, we aren’t going to try and take that individual when another provider could do a better job. Client safety is extremely



Sentinel photo/REECE RUTLAND

ANSWERING QUESTIONS — David Armbrust, LEFT, takes time to answer Salem Mayor John Raymer’s, RIGHT, questions about the town’s new CILA home. Local media members were also provided a tour of the facility.



Sentinel photo/REECE RUTLAND

HOMECOMING — Salem’s new CILA facility got its first resident Friday. The home will eventually house four residents and was selected for various handicapped accessible features as well as its quiet neighborhood.

important. If we couldn’t adequately care for a patient, we wouldn’t take them,” Kuhlrig said.

As for the openness of the home, both Armbrust and Kuhlrig agreed that family members were more than welcome, stating that some parents have even opted to spend the night during the transition period to help.

Salem’s CILA is located in a quiet subdivision on the northeast side of town. Armbrust said the house was a perfect fit because the house had already had pre-built

handicapped features, including a wheelchair ramp into the back yard, showers, sinks and cooktops that accommodate anyone in a wheelchair.

Residents can be referred to the Salem CILA through an agency in Centralia, however, families may contact Armbrust if they are interested in possibility utilizing the CILA’s services. Anyone with questions was told to contact 322-7455 for additional information.

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