

Janus opens new drug-treatment clinic

Drug Abuse Center

By **STEPHEN BAXTER**

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WATSONVILLE — Leaders of Janus of Santa Cruz celebrated the opening of a new drug-rehabilitation clinic in Watsonville on Wednesday that is expected to help more patients in south Santa Cruz County.

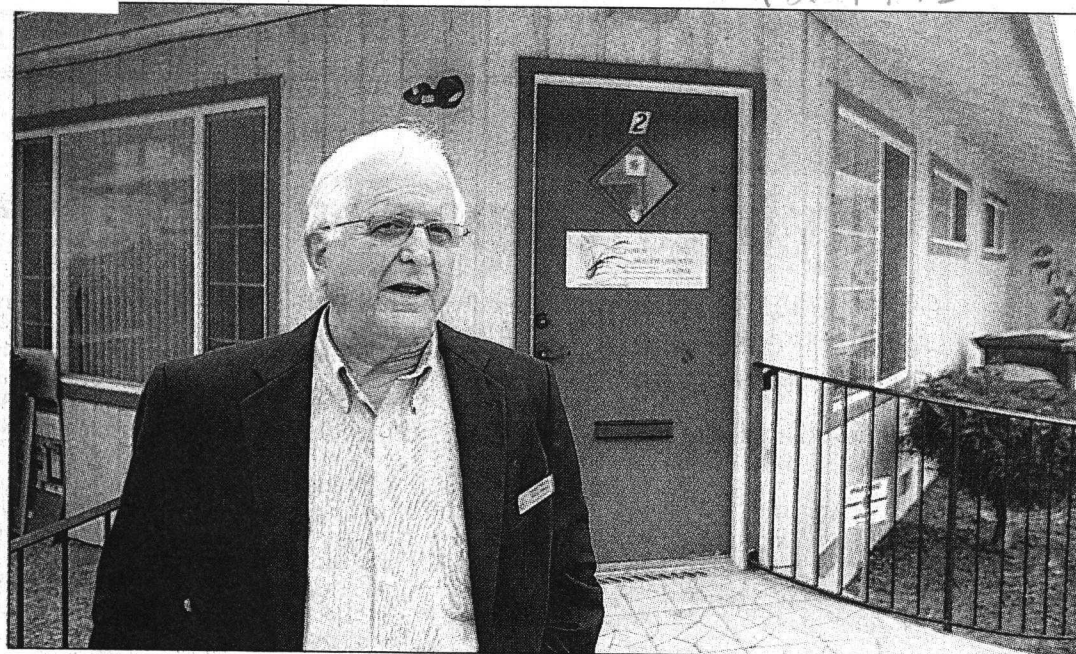
The only other methadone clinic in Santa Cruz County is at the County Health Services Agency's complex on Emeline Avenue in Santa Cruz, and more than half of its roughly 60 clients live in South County communities such as Watsonville, Janus leaders said. The new office will shorten their commute — which can take up to 1 1/2 hours on a public bus.

Many Janus clients already have switched to the Watsonville clinic since it opened Dec. 5 at 284 Pennsylvania Ave.

"It's a matter of bringing services to the people," said Janus Executive Director Rod Libbey.

The new clinic is in the same complex as a small medical office and a massage studio. It includes three rooms for counseling, offices and a room for physical exams.

Janus leaders have been trying to open a clinic in Watsonville for



Janus Executive Director Rod Libbey stands in front of the new clinic in Watsonville.

DAN COYRO/SENTINEL

about eight years because of the demand.

The space needed to be remodeled, and Janus is leasing the building, Janus leaders said. The total price tag for the project was about \$90,000, which the organization had set aside in fundrais-

ing, Libbey said.

"I think the community really needs it," said Cecilia Krebs, director of medication assisted treatment at Janus. "I've been working toward this goal for a long time. To finally see it happening, I can hardly believe it."

Janus, a Santa Cruz-based non-profit, treats about 2,500 clients annually with addictions to alcohol, marijuana, meth, cocaine, heroin and other drugs.

Clients in the program typically

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first receive a physical exam from a nurse practitioner and a consultation. Clients then get their first medication along with treatment and counseling, Krebs said.

A two-year minimum of treatment generally is recommended because shorter treatment periods almost always lead to relapse, Krebs said.

About eight people work at the new clinic. Its hours are 5 a.m. to 1 p.m. weekdays so that patients can get medications before work — especially for those working in agriculture, Janus leaders said.

The clinic also is open 6-8 a.m. Saturdays and Sundays. Because the clinic is surrounded by apartment complexes, Krebs said that Janus clients have been asked to be quiet and respectful — especially in the early morning.

Janus clients often are trying to find jobs and housing and repairing relationships in their lives, Janus leaders said. Clinics such as this one are important, county health leaders said, because they also can reduce drug-related crime such as burglary, shoplifting and theft.

Bill Manov, director of Santa Cruz County alcohol and drug services, attended Wednesday's open house along with more than a dozen others. He praised Janus for its work.

"I think it's fantastic and it's greatly needed," Manov said of the new clinic.

"It's helping a lot of people lead normal lives."

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WHAT: Janus of Santa Cruz opened a new clinic for methadone treatment and drug rehabilitation at 284 Pennsylvania Ave. in Watsonville this month.

CONTACT: For information on Janus services, call 831-319-4200 or visit www.janussc.org.



Guillermo Rodriguez is the clinical supervisor of the new Janus South County Clinic in Watsonville.

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