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CREEKSIDE CHAT

Arts, reading, civil rights top topics



JUSTIN MUCH

Rob Sisk stopped by Silver Creek Coffee House for a Creekside Chat on Jan. 4 to share information about Silver-ton's MLK Day celebra-tion, to which he ascribes a weighty significance in light of recent reports of slurs directed at Latino popu-lations in the aftermath of the November election.

The 14th Annual Silverton Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Observance will be at 6 p.m. Monday, Jan. 16, at Silverton Grange, 201 Division, which is two blocks off S. Water St.

In addition to Rob, we heard from North Willamette Valley Habitat for Humanity Development Director **Mi-chele Finicle**, who apprised us of a build-ing project planned in Silverton.

That day's chat came amid the coldest stretch yet of this winter season, so it was nice to hear about some springtime planning from local artists **Lori Lee McLaughlin** and **Bob Foster**.

Additionally, Start Making a Reader Today (SMART) Program Manager **Michael Finlay** brought us up to date on a new chapter in Silverton. While Silver Creek co-owner **Josh Nightingale** was eager to invite everyone to inspect the new coffee house changes.

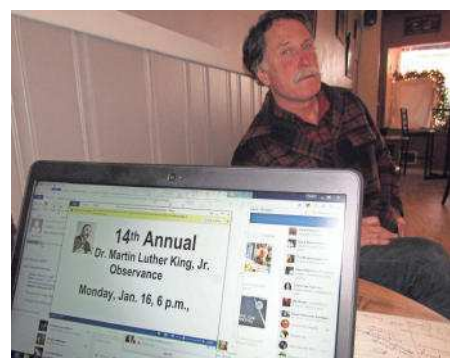
MLK Day event

Rob said organizers stress MLK looked beyond racial or color divides, di-recting his energy toward helping peo-ple who needed it, especially those im-periled as targets of discriminatory ve-hemence or persecuted due to ethnic or cultural persuasion.

That is one reason why many cele-brate the iconic 20th-century civil rights leader's birthday today. In various com-munities nationwide, MLK's image is paradigmatic to civil rights beyond a racial intonation.

Silverton is among those.

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JUSTIN MUCH/APPEAL TRIBUNE

Rob Sisk discussed the Silverton Martin Luther King Jr. Day Observance and potluck, set for Jan. 16 at the Silverton Grange.

Salem parents welcome first babies born in 2017



Jean Swanson of Salem with son Micah Thomas Swanson, born at 12:58 a.m., the first at Silverton's Family Birth Center.

New mom: 'I have a lot of hope and promise for the year now that he's here, healthy and happy'

LAUREN E HERNANDEZ
STATESMAN JOURNAL

As the clock struck midnight marking the start of 2017, Jean Swanson was preoccupied with labor pains as she awaited the birth of her baby - the Mid-Willamette Valley's first baby born in the new year.

Swanson was in a Silverton Hospi-tal Family Birth Center delivery room with her parents, husband Mark, and midwives when she gave birth to her baby boy Micah Thomas Swanson at 12:58 a.m.

"I guess it sort of starts the new year off on a really positive note,"

Online

Go to StatesmanJournal.com for more photos and videos of the New Year's babies.

Swanson said. "I have a lot of hope and promise for the year now that he's here, healthy and happy."

Swanson's father, Thomas, the namesake of Micah's middle name, had joked with his daughter that his grandson should be born before the end of 2016 in order to bank on a tax deduction.

"I said 'Maybe he just wants the

notoriety of being the first' and that's what it was," Swanson said with a laugh, looking at her baby. "We'll use you as a tax deduction next year."

Swanson and her husband arrived at the Silverton Hospital prepared with hours of entertainment with a set of movies to watch as the mother and baby rest from the birth.

Among the selection, the Salem residents rented Pete's Dragon and Suicide Squad but have already put a dent in the collection. They've already watched Inside Out, Babe, The Proposal and The Blindside.

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Rural roots run deep for new SHS principal

CHRISTENA BROOKS
SPECIAL TO THE APPEAL TRIBUNE

Any farm kid knows raising a hog can be lucrative.

So, as a 13-year-old, Justin Lieuallen decided to raise not one - but 200 of them. At auction time, his gamble paid off. Now a grown man of 46, he's too modest to talk dollars and cents, but he'll admit he earned enough money to buy his own brand-new snowmobile.

Lieuallen's backstory is brimming with the sort of success only achieved by working hard and reaching high. A successful educator and former All-American wrestler, Silverton High School's new principal is already apply-ing his competitive nature to the task of bettering the high school for its stu-dents and staff.

First, he's looking hard at the Silver-ton High's data, especially how it com-pares to similar schools throughout Oregon. He's considering the state's best schools too, shooting high and hop-ing to learn from them.

"Justin is completely committed to student achievement," said Erik Jes-persen, principal of McNary High School in Keizer and Lieuallen's most recent boss. "He's very driven, he's very focused. He wants what's best for the students; his ambition is properly placed ... he's going to do everything he can to ensure Silverton is a great high school."

One statistic on Silverton High's most recent Oregon Department of Education report card that he's scruti-nizing is the fact that only 57 percent of Silverton graduates go on to two-year or four-year colleges, while 70 percent of students at similar Oregon high schools do.

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CHRISTENA BROOKS/SPECIAL TO THE APPEAL TRIBUNE
Silverton High School Principal Justin Lieuallen visits with students as he heads out of English teacher Ben Hynes-Stone's classroom.

Literacy for little ones is the SMART thing to do

ANNETTE UTZ
FOR THE APPEAL TRIBUNE

While speaking of the impor-tance of reading and literacy, Start Making A Reader Today® (SMART) Executive Director Chris Otis quoted Carl Sagan: "One of the greatest gifts adults can give -- to their offspring and to their so-ciety -- is to read to children."

It is with this philosophy that SMART has announced the opening of a new program to be held at the Silverton Oregon Child Development Coalition, adding to the re-cently opened program at Jefferson Elementary School and the exist-ing program at Aumsville Ele-mentary. The schedule is expected

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SMART readers foster a lifelong interest in reading and fortify literacy in youngsters.

Online at SilvertonAppeal.com

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