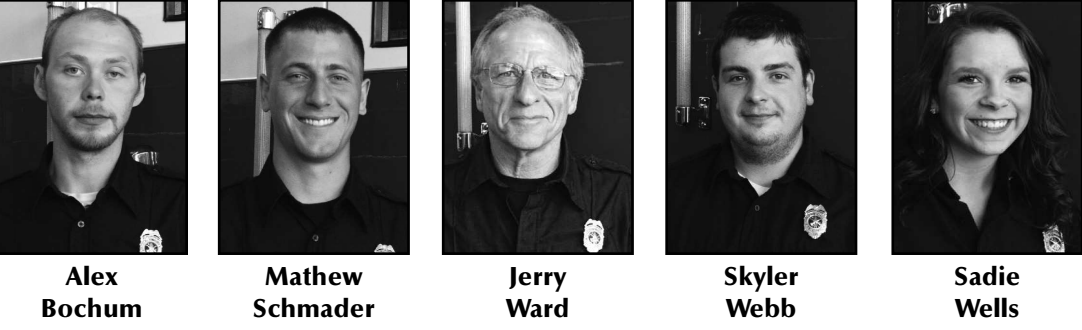


New recruits pass summer fire academy



PHOTOS OF ROBERT PIDCOE AND SOPHAROTH ROS WERE UNAVAILABLE AT PRESS TIME.

By Chantelle Meyer  
Siuslaw News

Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue (SVFR) graduated seven volunteers from its June Fire Academy.

According to Fire Marshal Sean Barrett, “They are a very good group — very intelligent.” The new volunteers who will respond from SVFR’s main station, at 2625 Highway 101, are Alex Bochum, who works at McDonalds; Mathew Schmader, a member of the U.S. Coast Guard; Sopharoth Ros, who works at Three Rivers Casino Resort; and Sadie Wells, who works at AT&T.

Two of the new recruits — Jerry Ward, who owns Coast Heating, and Skyler Webb, who works at NAPA — will respond from the Sutton Lake Station, at 88973 Sutton Lake Road.

The last new volunteer,

Robert Pidcoe, who works at Taco Bell, will respond from the Old Town Station, 243 Laurel St.

“These are your recruits. You see that anybody can do it,” Barrett said.

SVFR’s biannual volunteer training academies take place in December and June. This class was a nine-day commitment, where 12 students started the process. After the application process, background check, drug test and physical, only seven students graduated.

“We make sure they’re healthy, for their sakes and ours. It’s an in-depth process,” Barrett said. “In the end, we do the same job as the paid department, and their process is a lot more stringent than this.”

The entry-level Fire Academy gives the basics on safety, fire management and how to use the equipment.

“It was nine days in a row and 32 hours of instruction on fire behavior, safety, self contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), fire hoses and fire streams,” Barrett said.

The training took place in the classroom, at a controlled “Burn to Learn” setting and on-site at a real “four-alarm fire” at Pacific Pines RV Park and Storage on June 16.

“A couple of them were on the storage fire with us before their first ‘Burn to Learn.’ They did an awesome job,” Barrett said. “We’ve got a good group of recruits this time.”

The graduated volunteers will continue with their training to be certified as a Firefighter I, where they get more advanced training on firefighting equipment and operations.

“That should take about one year and 80 more hours,” Barrett added.

Rhody from 1A

“The driving factor for any paving project is oil prices. With oil prices being very stable and being low, we’re getting a very good deal right now,” Miller said.

Wildish Construction will begin the project in August and conclude at the end of September.

“I think that’s an excellent outcome,” said Henry.

Sierra Santa Fe Corporation won the bid for the second Rhododendron Drive project, a chip and fog seal from 35th

Street to Lighthouse Way.

“The road is very fractured, but we don’t have the amount of money to go in and actually do the repairs,” Miller said. “This section requires total rehabilitation, which would probably cost in the range of \$500,000 to \$750,000. This will buy us time.”

The seal should last three to five years, when Miller hopes that a full rehabilitation can be done.

The main goal is to seal and protect Rhododendron Drive’s sub-grade from water intrusion. The single shot chip seal consists of an application of

emulsified asphalt and a layer of fine aggregate. It will be performed by Sierra Santa Fe, a private company that specializes in chip and fog seals.

The chip and fog seal is scheduled for July and August.

Both projects are included in the 2016 fiscal budget and are fully funded.

The Rhododendron Drive Shoulder Extension Project, which will add six-foot shoulders with permeable pavement for the use of pedestrians and bicyclists, will go to bid in the spring of next year, with construction slated to be completed by March 2017.

FEC from 1A

Local businesses will be able to sponsor a sea lion.

“Sea Lion Caves is very excited about this project, as you can imagine, and would like to have one in front of the business, too,” she said. “It has been great throughout this process.”

Cowpainters, a business in Chicago, Ill., will cast the sea lions and show how to mount the statues after final approval from the FEC.

They will resemble native Stellar sea lions “with the little ears and the whiskers,” said Connor.

The committee is still working on a final design and could make the decision by Friday, July 17. According to Connor, the current plan is to have a “dancing” female sea lion in a sweeping arc, with the tail in the air.

“We are putting it ‘up on its nose,’ so to speak,” Connor said, and added that the pose will show more motion than previous designs.

“It goes well with Florence’s ‘City in Motion’ theme this year,” she added.

The statue will be 7-1/2 feet long from the nose to the tail, or well within the average size for a female Stellar sea lion.

A big discussion point for the committee is making sure the statues are stable and resistant to damage and vandalism.

“We are confident with Cowpainters’ expertise,” Connor said. “They will lead us in the right direction.”

In two months, the FEC will receive its first sea lion statue. Once the statue arrives, artists will be able to view it to get an idea of size, shape and surface.

Then, the FEC will put out a call to artists to submit their designs and interpretations for the full 20 sea lions.

“We’d like to do a call to artists locally, especially ones who have been involved with FEC. ... We have enough artists and enough talent here

to generate the ideas. That’s where we’re going to start,” Connor said.

She added, “The ones in Newport might make a call to artists in their area. I think that makes sense on a lot of levels.”

Once artists complete the work in April, the FEC will hold a “Splash Off” event to unveil the entire group before placing each sculpture in the community.

The sea lions will be on display from April to October, when all 20 sculptures will return to the FEC.

“They will find permanent homes at the ‘Migration Gala’ and auction,” Connor said.

The project will cost approximately \$50,000, but will generate anywhere from \$25,000 to \$100,000.

She noted, “We’re looking way ahead, but this takes a lot of planning. This project is going to involve a lot of hours, help and assistance from everybody.”

The whole process will take 12 months to plan, implement and complete.

“It’s a project in motion, just like this is a ‘City in Motion,’” Connor said to the councilors.

“I can just visualize all the things you can do,” said Mayor Joe Henry.

Florence recently commissioned a public arts committee, which had its first meeting this month.

Connor said, “We like to think of it as the ripple effect of the arts across the Oregon coast. This gives an opportunity to put out in the community that the FEC is here with the performing arts and with community events.”

She added, “This is an opportunity to really give local artists the notoriety and respect they deserve. The FEC has been a visual arts gallery all 20 years. We’ve had visual artists there, and they’ve worked very hard. We’re happy to embrace the art community.”

Besides business sponsors, the nonprofit group Friends of

the Florence Events Center will write grants.

Connor said the Sea Lion Foundation in Newport and Oregon Pacific Bank have already shown interest in the project.

“It’s an extra enhancement for our community,” she said.

Even Rogue Ales, based in Ashland, might get involved with a special edition label or porter.

“There’s a great opportunity for education about sea lions and the love-hate relationship we have with sea lions,” Connor said.

“Almost everybody likes sea lions. I love sea lions,” Henry said. “Though I suppose commercial fishermen don’t like them.”

A design is in the works for a geocaching coin to help bring people along the full trail of sea lions.

Other opportunities could include trivia or games linked to each of the sculptures and even a Twitter, Facebook or Instagram campaign, all designed to get people to visit.

The FEC has a timeline and a plan to keep moving forward with the project.

“City Manager Erin Reynolds said to talk to somebody else (who’s done the project) and find out how they did it, as that would save us time,” Connor said. “That was great advice, for the more research we did, we found out people were willing to share their secrets about how it was done.”

“All of the research has shown that it has been done before in many communities and it is successful.”

She listed that local commerce, artists, businesses, government and communities will benefit, along with state and local tourism.

“The excitement is really building. I’ve talked to so many people who are on board, excited and saying yes, include them. Especially the arts community and the City of Florence. I’ve had some really great response,” Connor said.

# Florence Got Talent!

Auditions opened to **ALL** ages and Talents  
Registration/Auditions dates  
**Friday, July 24 6pm & Sunday, July 26 2pm**  
At Three Rivers Casino Resort  
Enter through South Entrance of Three Rivers Event Center

**Final Competition at  
Relay for Life on August 8, 2015  
Great prizes to be awarded!!!!**

Acts will be allotted no more than Four (4) MINUTES to perform.  
Participants may only perform ONE time during the show.  
NO profanity or vulgar lyrics in any vocal performance or dance music. This is a family show!!!  
Keep attire at a respectable and tasteful level.  
NO alcohol, tobacco, or drug advertisements are to be shown on any clothing.  
NO pyrotechnics, open flames or any other dangerous additions.  
Sound system and microphones) will be provided.  
You must provide your own CD music, instruments and props  
All contestants under 18 years of age must complete the minors authorization form.  
Minors must have an adult supervise them and must be identified to Florence Got Talent  
Questions? Please email  
**ereinke@threeriverscasino.com**

# WORD ON THE STREET

What is your favorite summer activity?

“Salmon fishing on the Siuslaw River.”  
—ARMANDO CARIAS, 27 FLORENCE

“I love to go to the beach and walk. I love to see the cool wildlife out there and see what’s new every day.”  
—ROBYN SMITH, 43 FLORENCE

“I like to work in my vegetable garden.”  
—RONNIE BLEVINS, 70 MADERA, CALIF.

“Walking on the beach. I just love the ocean and the fresh air and finding treasures.”  
—DEBORAH MANTHE, 57 FLORENCE

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## Port from 1A

“Every one of the candidates fully impressed me,” Commissioner Terry Duman said.

Commission president Ron Caputo said that Buckwald understood financials and that the board needed someone with those qualifications.

“It was a tough decision,” he said.

Buckwald will be sworn in as commissioner during the July 15 board meeting.