

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS PARTICIPATION NATIONWIDE TOPS 7.8M

The number of participants in high school sports increased for the 26th consecutive year in 2014-15, topping the 7.8 million mark for the first time, according to the annual High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS).

Based on figures from the 51 NFHS member state high school associations, which includes the District of Columbia, the number of participants in high school sports reached an all-time high of 7,807,047, an increase of 11,389 from the previous year.

While boys participation dipped 8,682 from the previous year, girls participation

increased for the 26th consecutive year with an additional 20,071 participants and set an all-time high of 3,287,735. The boys participation total of 4,519,312 is No. 2 all-time behind the 2013-14 total of 4,527,994.

Six of the top 10 girls sports registered increases in participation this past year, led by competitive spirit squads (5,170 additional participants) and cross country (3,495). While track and field remained the No. 1 sport for girls with 478,726 participants, volleyball (432,176) moved ahead of basketball (429,504) to secure the No. 2 spot. Ten years ago, basketball was No. 1 for girls, followed by track and field, and volleyball.

Among the top 10 boys sports, soccer registered the largest gain with an additional 15,150 participants, while wrestling (11,306) and 11-player football (9,617) had the largest declines in participation. Besides soccer, other top 10 boys sports that had increases in the number of participants were baseball (3,938) and basketball (425).

“Overall, we are pleased with this year’s participation report indicating an increase for the 26th consecutive year,” said Bob Gardner, NFHS executive director. “And while football participation dropped this past year, the decrease is not that significant when you consider more than 1.1 million boys and girls are involved in the sport at the high school level.

“Despite other out-of-school opportunities that exist in some

sports, this year’s survey is yet another confirmation that our model of education-based sports within the high school setting is the No. 1 choice for boys and girls nationwide. We applaud the more than 19,000 high schools across the country for continuing to provide these important programs despite the funding challenges that exist in some areas.”

Eleven-player football remains the runaway leader in boys participants with 1,083,617, followed by outdoor track and field (578,632), basketball (541,479), baseball (486,567) and soccer (432,569). The remainder of the top 10 is wrestling (258,208), cross country (250,981), tennis (157,240), golf (148,823) and swimming/diving (137,087).

After outdoor track and field,

volleyball and basketball, the remainder of the top 10 girls sports are soccer (375,681), fast-pitch softball (364,103), cross country (221,616), tennis (182,876), swimming/diving (166,838), competitive spirit squads (125,763) and lacrosse (84,785).

Among some of the non-traditional high school sports on this year’s survey, archery and riflery registered significant increases in participation. An additional 2,877 participants (boys and girls) in archery brings the overall total to 7,744 with schools in eight states sponsoring the sport. Riflery was up 1,010 participants for a total of 4,238 with competition in 10 states.

Also, while boys wrestling was down by more than 11,000 this past year, the number of girls participating in the sport

increased by 1,592 for a total of 11,496.

The top 10 states by participants remained in the same order as last year, with Texas and California topping the list with 804,598 and 797,101, respectively. The remainder of the top 10 was New York (389,475), Illinois (340,972), Ohio (319,929), Pennsylvania (319,562), Michigan (295,660), New Jersey (279,377), Florida (267,954) and Minnesota (235,243).

The participation survey has been compiled since 1971 by the NFHS through numbers it receives from its member associations.

The complete 2014-15 High School Athletics Participation Survey is attached in PDF format and will be posted soon on the NFHS website at www.nfhs.org.

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County seeks public input on parks plan

Lane County invites public comment on its draft of the 20-year Parks Master Plan, which will guide the management of county parks from 2016 to 2036. This is the first comprehensive update to the original 1980 master plan.

The draft plan identifies strategic investments in parks

and open space throughout Lane County that is consistent with identified recreation needs and public input.

“We are excited to get citizen feedback on how the county should be investing in parks and open space during the next 20 years,” said Mike Russell, Lane County parks manager. “Our parks are a valuable community resource and provide wide-ranging opportunities to enjoy the outdoors.”

The drafted master plan is available online at www.bit.ly/1h3GVtW. There are opportunities to submit comments on that webpage.

Copies of the draft master plan are also available at the Siuslaw Public Library, 1460 Ninth Street in Florence.

There are five open house meetings scheduled this fall to allow community members to provide feedback and ask questions of parks staff.

All five meetings are open to the public and scheduled from 6 to 8 p.m.

The first will be held Thursday, Sept. 10, in the Council Chambers at Florence City Hall, 250 Highway 101.

Community members are also welcome to share their favorite photos of Lane County parks that may be used in the final master plan document.

Photos can be submitted to laneparks@co.lane.or.us.



DID YOU KNOW?

- 250+ Colleges offer scholarships for bowling
- The bowling industry provides more than \$6 million in scholarships each year.
- 48 states in the U.S. have established high school bowling programs.

•54,000 kids bowl in high school varsity competition

Sign up for the the Siuslaw High School bowling team at Holiday Bowl or at Siuslaw High School during registration.

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FLORENCE SOFTBALL LEAGUE TO END SEASON WITH TOURNEY AUG. 22-23

Tonight is the last day of regular season play for the Florence Softball League.

With the close of the season is the much anticipated Florence Softball League Tournament at Miller Park.

This year’s tournament will be played on Saturday, Aug. 22, and Sunday, Aug. 23.

Saturday will be a two-pool round-robin play with seeding for the tournament being based off a team’s average run differential.

The first round of the tournament will be played

Saturday evening just after round-robin play finishes.

Sunday will be the second, third and final round of the tournament.

On Sunday, the Box Lunch food truck will be at Miller Park serving the league and the spectators. This year the Box Lunch truck has a special Called the Grand Slam Burger with a side that will be \$10 with \$2 of every sale of a Grand Slam Burger going back to the Florence Softball League.

“This is very exciting,” said

Sean Campbell, who is with the league. “We would like as much support as we can. Tell your friends and family to come on down and get a burger and help support the league. Hope to see everyone out there!”

The co-ed league scheduled a total of 90 games in June, July and August, playing two games each Wednesday and Thursday at Miller Park.

Spectators are welcome at all games, which are family-friendly and alcohol free.

Special Olympics forming local bowling team

In every corner of the state, Special Olympics Oregon is

changing the lives of people with intellectual disabilities and this includes Florence.

Special Olympics Florence invites all interested athletes to participate in the upcoming bowling season. Practices will be held Tuesdays, from 4 to 5:30 p.m., at Holiday Bowl, beginning Aug. 25.

There will be 10 weekly practices and a regional competition in Bend in November.

There is no cost to join Special Olympics, nor is there a cost to train or compete. Special Olympics raises funds through sponsorships, private donations and special events.

Anyone who has been identified as having an intellectual (or cognitive) disability by a medical professional is eligible to be involved in Special

Olympics. Athletes must be at least eight years old to compete in regional or state games.

(Athletes may participate in practices at age 6.) There is no upper age limit.

Special Olympics Oregon serves more than 8,000 participants with intellectual disabilities through participation in 14 Olympic-type sports over three sports seasons.

Through its signature sports programs, athletes gain self-confidence, social competency, and other enhanced skills, in addition to building important ties with other families and Special Olympics athletes within the community.

For more information, contact head coach Linda Stent at 541-991-3161 or email her at lstent@charter.net.

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Garage Sale GUIDE

Fri./Sat., 8/21-8/22,
9am-3pm,
659 Skookum,
Huge Sale, crafts, holiday items, Priced below \$10.
Sun. 8/23 all items FREE
10am-Noon.

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9am-4pm
1915 E. 36th Street
Furniture, household, decor, lots of misc.

Thurs.-Sun.
8/20-8/23,
10am-4pm,
702 Skookum Dr.,
Estate/Yard Sale, porcelain, pottery, crystal, corning, pyrex, household misc., clothing, new/gently worn, books, collectibles, some furniture, JAZZY motor chair excellent condition, w/new batteries.

Fri. Only 8/21,
9am-3pm,
Summer Sale,
18th & Tamarack,
Household items, tool, garden equipmet, yard art.

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