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Siuslaw News

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FLORENCE, OREGON

Festival steps 'out of the woods'

Winter Music Festival leaves emphasis on folk behind

By CHANTELE MEYER
Siuslaw News

Friends of the Florence Events Center (FEC) committee is making changes to the two-day January concert formerly called Winter Folk Festival.

"It's always been Winter Folk Fest," said Rachel Pearson, chairwoman of the Friends committee that is planning the new Winter Music Festival.

Ten musicians, singers and ensembles will fill the FEC with music on Saturday, Jan. 16, and Sunday, Jan. 17.

The folk-focused festival began in the early 2000s, when a Mapleton-based band called The Singing Loggers put on a concert.

"It started with homegrown talent," Pearson said.

Since then, the festival has featured headliners popular in the folk music scene.

This year, however, the committee decided to change the name to Winter Music Festival.

"There has been a change in leadership," Pearson said. "The people who remained said, 'We need to reboot and refresh.' Our reboot is reflected in the artists. The only traditional folk artist we have is Bob Haworth. Everybody else is newer, younger, more rocky, with more variety."

Some performers will still be familiar, such as the duo Pretty Gritty, who played at this year's folk fest, and Cabin Fever NW, who played in Florence in 2011.

Also, up-and-comer singer and Siuslaw High School graduate Billy Jones will be opening the music festival on Jan. 16.

Singer-songwriter Molly Hardin is another local artist who will perform during the festival.

Most recently, she sang at Backstreet Gallery during September's Rods 'n' Rhodies in Old Town.

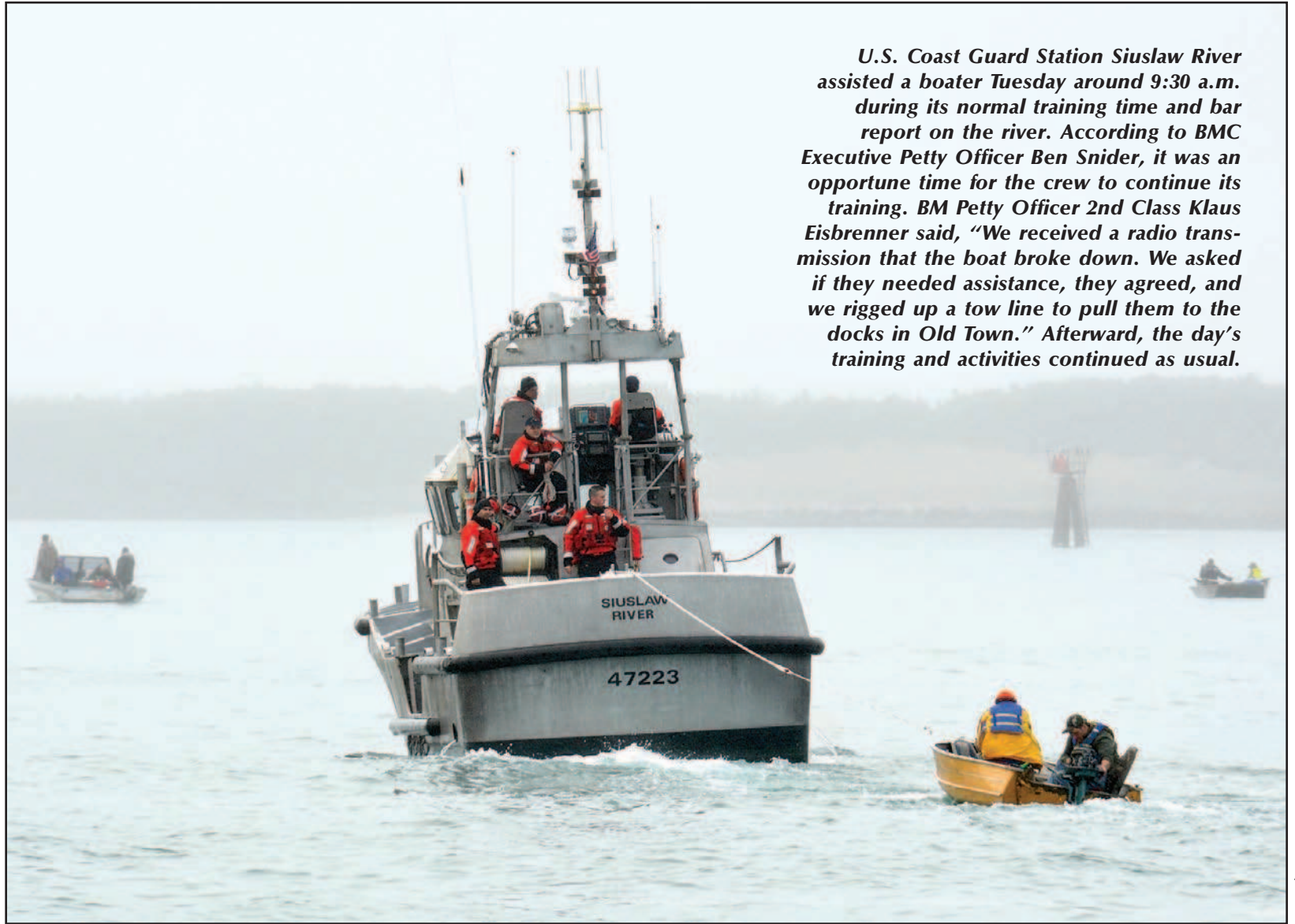
"We're changing the decade of music that we're going to listen to," Pearson said. "This needs to be a centerpiece of January."

Other updates will include changing the "look" of the marketing of festival.

"We didn't want to change every last thing and not have people recognize it, though," Pearson said. "We're keeping our iconic 'woodblock' style logo. We just want to come out of the woods a little bit."

See **MUSIC 7A**

TO THE RESCUE



U.S. Coast Guard Station Siuslaw River assisted a boater Tuesday around 9:30 a.m. during its normal training time and bar report on the river. According to BMC Executive Petty Officer Ben Snider, it was an opportune time for the crew to continue its training. BM Petty Officer 2nd Class Klaus Eisbrenner said, "We received a radio transmission that the boat broke down. We asked if they needed assistance, they agreed, and we rigged up a tow line to pull them to the docks in Old Town." Afterward, the day's training and activities continued as usual.

DEBORAH HELDT CORDONE

BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB GROWS STRONGER

Interim director shares progress, needs and vision for expanded club programs

By JACK DAVIS
Siuslaw News

This past January, many in Florence expected the local Boys and Girls Club chapter to be nothing but a sad memory by now.

Financial woes forced the club's Teen Center to close in December 2014. The director was let go in February and the club had an unimaginable \$120,000 in short-term debt.

But the board was not willing to go quietly into that good night. Their tenacious spirit, sweat equity and financial commitments began to slowly turn the tide of despair. Their attitude and hard work was an inspiration to local community members, businesses and organizations who banded together to com-



JACK DAVIS/SIUSLAW NEWS

Newly remodeled Boys and Girls Club of Western Lane County Teen Center at 1601 15th St. buzzes with after-school activities. The center offers homework help and constructive programs to bolster student academic interests.

pletely remodel the Teen Center.

Today, the Boys and Girls Club of Western Lane County continues to wrestle with financial problems, but the numbers appear more reasonable.

According to interim administrative director Chuck Trent, the club has paid down more than \$65,000 of debt, has reopened the Teen Center and is currently working with an estimated 250 Florence-area students, ages 6 to 18.

The club's six fall sports programs have 185 students enrolled. The elementary after-school program has 40 students and the Teen Center program sees an average of 25 middle and high school students each day.

See **CLUB 7A**

When it rained, they poured

Brew Fest attracts hundreds to Old Town

By CHANTELE MEYER
Siuslaw News

Light drizzles and cool temperatures didn't stop the approximately 450 people who attended the first ever Beachcomber Brew Fest last Saturday.

Beachcomber Pub in Old Town brought in 40 beers and ales on tap for attendees to try. Guests could spend time in the beer garden on Maple Street or sit inside

the pub to watch sports and listen to the jukebox. Beachcomber also gave away mini tasting glasses with the \$5 admission.

In all, the event raised about \$2,000 for the Beachcomber Community Scholarship Fund.

"The response was incredible," said event organizer and Beachcomber owner Scott Waiss. "People really enjoyed themselves. We expect next year to be even better."



PHOTOS BY CHANTELE MEYER/SIUSLAW NEWS



More than 40 beers and ales were on tap during Saturday's Brew Fest.

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