

SCHOOL ZONE

A Monthly Newsletter for the Siuslaw and Mapleton Schools and Florence Community PTA

RESTORING THE DUNES FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Local students design new signs for Oregon dunes

Hannah Smoldt, a fourth-grader at Mapleton Elementary School (MES), knows first-hand that signs can be overlooked when visitors

are recreating within the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area.

“Sometimes I need to remind my family of the signs we see while riding on the dunes, so we make sure we’re following the rules,” said Smoldt.

She was one of three Oregon coast award-winners in a contest for kids to create signs encouraging visitors to protect natural resources on the dunes through responsible recreation.

Smoldt’s sign depicts rolling dunes along with sensitive plant and bird species, all under the heading “Restoring the Dunes for Future Generations.”

She said, “When peo-



COURTESY PHOTOS

Mapleton Elementary School fourth-grader Hannah Smoldt is awarded a gift certificate from Discover Your Northwest bookstore manager Paula Cline-Jones (right), while Siuslaw National Forest Interpretive Specialist David Thompson displays Smoldt’s award-winning sign.

ple see my sign, I hope they’ll stay out of areas where they’re not supposed to go because I like the animals and want them to be alive.”

Smoldt took a break from MES’s jog-a-thon on Oct. 15 to receive her prizes — a Forest Service lapel pin and a gift certificate to be used at either the Cape Perpetua or Oregon Dunes Visitor Center — accompanied by the applause of her teachers and classmates.

Other award-winners included Kristen Lynn Wall from Siuslaw Elementary School in Florence and Peyton Mesa of Highland Elementary School in Reedsport.

About 50 students from elementary schools near the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area participated in a contest to create signs encouraging visitors to recreate responsibly while on the dunes.

The three winners’ signs will be reproduced and stationed throughout the dunes in conjunction with snowy plover nesting areas and new riding route designations.

“The students all did a terrific job of

capturing the message of protecting resources on the dunes for future generations,” said Dave Thompson, interpretive specialist and contest organizer for the Siuslaw National Forest. “We hope visitors will take the time to enjoy the students’ creativity and share in their sentiments.”

For Smoldt, however, she’s keeping her focus close to home.

“I think my dad will probably read my sign because it was drawn by me,” she said.

Visitors should see the students’ artwork by summer 2016.

The Siuslaw National Forest manages more than 630,000 acres of temperate rainforests along the Oregon Coast Range, from Tillamook to the end of the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area in Coos Bay.

For more information, go to www.fs.usda.gov/siuslaw, www.twitter.com/SiuslawNF and www.facebook.com/DiscoverSiuslawNF.

—Submitted by Lisa Romano and Paul Mezmarich

‘Stewards of the Sand’ attend summit

Siuslaw students meet Dr. Jane Goodall

On Thursday, Oct. 15, 10 students from Siuslaw elementary and middle school attended the

Oregon Youth Summit in Portland.

The Siuslaw team chose the name “Stewards of the Sand.”

These students are veterans of the Oregon Dunes Stewardship Project that has been carried on by all fourth grade classes since 2011.

The summit featured a mix of 30 elementary, middle, and high schools from around the state. Each school displayed its environmental research and/or stewardship project on a 3-foot-by-6-foot table.

The school teams briefly presented their projects to keynote speaker Dr. Jane Goodall.

Siuslaw’s spokesperson was Brady Bauer.

The team previewed the project for the Siuslaw School Board earlier in the month.

Other features of the Thursday event were mini-workshops and a scavenger hunt involving all of the displays.

The goal was to have an opportunity for students to share what they’ve done, and to inspire each other to even greater work in the future.

Siuslaw’s team met 3 evenings and did much of the work at home.

The team’s display board was constructed from Scotch Broom sticks. They also made a broom. The project won two awards, from Oregon Invasive Species Council and U.S. Forest Service.

The team also provided printed take-away brochures.

Teacher Dennis King and volunteer Jim Grano guided the students.

“After a full day of work, Dennis and I should be exhausted after this extra planning and time. Instead, we were energized and inspired by the enthusiasm and creativity of these students and their parents,” Grano said.

The team boarded a bus at 6 a.m. that morning.

The summit was sponsored by the Diack Foundation, which also provided \$250 in assistance to each school for transportation and substitute teachers, and the Jane Goodall Environmental Middle School (JGEMS).

—Submitted by Jim Grano



Dr. Jane Goodall

Restoring the Dunes for Future Generations



Hannah Smoldt, Mapleton School District

Restoring the Dunes for Future Generations

Please stay away from the wild life and the wide variety of plant life! Thank you so much!

Kristen Lynn Wall, Siuslaw School District

Restoring the Dunes for Future Generations



Peyton Mesa, Reedsport School District

HEAD START

Firefighters warm hearts



PHOTO BY BONNIE COLE

Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue brought a firetruck and firefighters to Head Start in celebration of Fire Prevention Week. “I had to share this beautiful photo with you,” said Nikki Sneddon. “It was such a wonderful moment between firefighter Robert Pidcoe and young Gage Wilby.” —Submitted by Nikki Sneddon



COURTESY PHOTOS

Siuslaw School District’s “Stewards of the Sand” stand with Dr. Jane Goodall at the Oregon Youth Summit in Portland.