

Grapplers ready for final push

SPORTS — B



COAST CENTRAL

A&E — INSIDE



Siuslaw News

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SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON

THE FINEST HOURS

City Lights hosts movie premiere with Coast Guard



BY DEBORAH HELDT CORDONE
Special to Siuslaw News

The U.S. Coast Guard and Florence community came together last Thursday evening to celebrate the opening of the new Disney thriller, "The Finest Hours."

To acknowledge the professional and often heroic work of the local Coast Guard, City Lights Cinemas offered Station Siuslaw River and Station Umpqua River members and their families a private screening of the film, after which the public was invited to a preview showing.

Active-duty guards men and women were on hand before the movie — with a 25-foot response boat and safety display — to answer questions about local operations, offering an insightful understanding of their duties. The Siuslaw High School culinary team provided a Cape Cod themed menu for guests as well.

See **MOVIE 11A**



PHOTOS BY DEBORAH HELDT CORDONE

U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) members brought a 25-foot Defender-class response boat from Station Siuslaw River to the premiere of "The Finest Hours" Thursday, Jan. 28, at City Lights Cinemas. Top, City Lights owner Michael Falter (center) and USCG members greet theatergoers before the showing.

POLICE

Missing senior found safe

Florence first responders, citizens locate Don Schug, 85, after 10-hour search

BY CHANTELLE MEYER
Siuslaw News

A missing elderly resident of Regency Florence Rehabilitation Center was found safe Monday morning following a 10-hour search that involved more than nine response agencies.

Don Schug, 85, of Florence, went missing around 1:25 a.m. on Feb. 1. He was located and returned safely home around 11 a.m. that same day.

Florence Police Department (FPD) was called early Monday morning to investigate a missing person from the 1900 block of 21st Street. Regency reported that Schug, one of its patients with mild dementia, had broken a window screen and left the facility.

Schug was last seen wearing blue short-sleeved flannel pajamas and brown shoes.

When Regency personnel could not locate him, they called the police.

"Over 30 first responders participated in the search, including two search dogs," reported Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue (SVFR).

FPD, SVFR, Western Lane Ambulance District, Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians Police Department, Lane County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue, Florence CERT, Siuslaw School District, the U.S. Coast Guard and news and social media outlets helped in the search.

See **POLICE 11A**

LCC drops Perkins student loan program

Congress stalls renewal for three months, adds restrictions that create problems

BY JACK DAVIS
Siuslaw News

The Perkins low-income student loan program, which has been available to college students since 1958, might be dropped from Lane Community College's (LCC) student loan options.

LCC was not able to offer the Perkins student loan program for the 2015-16 fall term because congress failed to renew the program. The program was not signed into law until Dec. 16, at the start of winter break.

LCC Florence Center Interim Director Russ Pierson said, "The program was not reauthorized for three months. It was a dead program."

According to LCC Director of Financial Aid Helen Faith, approximately 70 percent of current LCC students receive financial aid. Of that 70 percent, only 4 percent had Perkins loans last year. The total number of Florence Center students with Perkins loans was about 16.

See **LOAN 11A**

Western Lane Ambulance begins strategic plan

District consults community members on 5-year work plan

BY CHANTELLE MEYER
Siuslaw News

Western Lane Ambulance District (WLAD) invited more than 20 community members to take part in its five-year strategic plan on Jan. 19.

Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) led the two-hour meeting. ESCI previously worked with Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue on its strategic plan in March of last year.

"We are here to assist WLAD in developing a strategic plan," said Don Bivins, senior associate at ESCI. "This is a customer-centered strategic plan, which means you folks as the customer are the focus. We want to get your feedback, which will guide the process that we use with the internal staff."

WLAD Interim Executive Director Brian Burrighit welcomed the group and presented background information on the district. The community group, which included taxpayers, medical and law enforcement personnel and other citizens, filled out surveys and discussed the district's performance.

Out of seven priorities for the

district moving forward, the community group listed technical competence of responders, reliable and functional facilities and equipment and compassionate and empathic customer service as goals.

The community members ranked the district as "appropriate" for staffing, response and cost of service.

"Your results are encouraging. I think the group gets it. I think people are on the same page," Bivins said. "You don't see a major problem, and you aren't necessarily seeing more investment for more services."

The group also discussed some of the issues that the internal staff

of the district will have to determine: future tax rates and the expansion of facilities.

"We worked with the district to make sure we had representation. We didn't want a room full of cheerleaders," Bivins said. "We didn't want a room full of naysayers. This group is pretty well balanced, and we got some pretty balanced perspective on your community and your ambulance service."

The internal staff met for two days to go over the community group's feedback and create a work plan for the next five years.

The final strategic plan will be available to the public once it is completed.

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