

**Splash** from 1A

"It's so exciting to be moving into motion with this project," Connor said. "It has certainly been a dance getting my sea lions in a row."

All the artists completed their work and sent the sea lions to West Coast Auto Body for final sealing.

"West Coast Auto Body went over and above with their sponsorship. They took in each of the sea lions and clear coated them for us," Connor said.

After Saturday, the sea lions will be dropped off at locations in Florence, along Highway 101 and in Reedsport and Newport.

City of Florence Public Works Department created 440-pound cement bases for the sea lions. Each sea lion will be mounted with a plaque detailing the artist and the project.

The second phase is the part where the sea lions take on "a life of their own" by interactions with the public, said Connor.

Project planners hope visitors follow maps to see each sea lion and take pictures with them, potentially posting to the project's social media sites.

"Dancing with Sea Lions is really supposed to get people talking about art. Art affects everyone in a ripple or wave, and this is one aspect of that," Connor said.

The arts in Florence are a big deal lately, especially since Florence City Council approved guidelines from the Florence Public Art Committee on March 7.

Committee member Jo Beaudreau worked closely with the sea lion artists through BeauxArts Fine Art Materials.

"Jo has been a great support and a real lifeline for artists in the community," Connor said. "She walked the artists through each stage of the project, from preparing the fiberglass surface to the final varnishing. We're so lucky to have her here in the area."

Connor also thanked the other members of the committee, events center and city staff and community members.

"Dancing with Sea Lions is going to put art right in front of people who don't always seek it out. It makes art accessible," Connor said.

See the sea lions in person on Saturday or follow the map to their summer locations at [www.dancingwithsealions.com](http://www.dancingwithsealions.com).

**Club** from 1A

Siuslaw School District has been providing meals to the Boys and Girls Club after-school elementary program held at the elementary school, but the location of the Teen Center has made district-provided meals impractical.

"The school partnering with us has been a great benefit to everyone involved. But it did not make sense to try and transport meals back and forth from the elementary school to the Teen Center," Trent said.

Previously, the Teen Center provided daily snacks for its members that were paid for out of the club's budget.

According to Teen Center Director Tracy Aaron, because the club is serving hot meals that meet strict federal guidelines, the State Department of Education reimburses the club monthly for food expenditures.

"We have to serve a protein, we have to serve a grain, we have to serve milk with every meal and fruit and vegetables," Aaron said. "And, they have it down to portion sizes, such as three quarters cup of vegetables, three quarters cup of fruit. You have to have all the elements in each meal in order to claim it for reimbursement."

The club creates menus a month in advance. Copies of the



JACK DAVIS/SIUSLAW NEWS

**Teen Center members help prepare, serve and clean up as part of the club's new after-school hot meal program.**

menus are made available for parents and their children.

Teen Center members are encouraged to be involved in the menu creation process. Aaron sees this as another way to teach youth better eating habits.

"They started off with things like chicken nuggets," Aaron said. "We said, that's all well and good, but what else can you have besides chicken nuggets, something that is a little healthier than deep fried breaded chicken? We got to teriyaki chicken, chicken stir-fry, rotisserie chicken and chicken sandwiches."

She added, "We took the junk

food items they would like to have and came up with options that were similar and still meet all the USDA requirements. The kids have been very responsive to the program."

The members also help with meal preparations, table and chair setup and cleanup.

"A lot of these kids don't get to sit down at a family table at dinnertime," Aaron said. "This gives them a chance to sit at a table as a group with silverware and dishes and have a family-style meal."

In addition to providing nutritious hot meals, Trent envisions

extending the meal program to include participation from PeaceHealth Peace Harbor Medical Center nutritionists to promote healthy eating cooking classes.

"PeaceHealth representatives with nutrition backgrounds will teach club members what good nutrition looks like and how to have healthy meals," Trent said.

According to Peace Harbor Medical Center spokesperson Michele Diffenderfer, the hospital is planning on working with area service groups to promote better health in the community.

"The Boys and Girls Club was one of the first organizations that came to mind," Diffenderfer said. "Our goal is to come up with a class or demonstration for the kids to show that eating healthy can be tasty and it can be fun."

She said starting healthy habits at a young age can lead to better health as an adult.

"The partnership with Boys and Girls Club will enable Peace Harbor to reach the children of our community in a positive and beneficial way, and there is nothing but goodness in that," she added.

Aaron said the number of teens showing up for the hot meal program has increased from about 17 to more than 25.

"Teenagers love food," Aaron said. "If you feed them, they will come."



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**Travel** from 1A

"Florence is just a gem on the coast, and you have more activities and more things for visitors to do than really any community combined," Trendler added.

One aspect of Trendler's job is marketing Lane County in the international market. A big part of this campaign is the slogan "Spend another day in Florence."

According to Westlund, 15 percent of the overnight visitors to Lane County spend the night in Florence. Twenty-five percent of the tourism spending happens here as well.

"Your collections are also

doing well," Westlund said. "I just saw February numbers, and you're up around 6 or 7 percent on the TRT, so continuing to grow. We've been in a growth pattern for a few years now."

Travel Lane County hopes to continue to see those numbers rise by focusing on what makes Florence truly unique, both along the Oregon coast and in Lane County.

"When we look at Florence and the coast, you have many fabulous attributes. You have an incredible lighthouse, but there are many along the coast. You have what we believe is the best historic merchant area, but there are more than one of those as well. When we look at how we're going to bring people out of the

Portland metro area, the first time they can get into a dune buggy or access the dunes is here," Westlund said.

She said that the dunes resonate across all Travel Lane County's markets, whether that is its social media platforms, print advertising or its new ads on transportation vehicles in the Eugene and Portland areas.

Councilor Joshua Greene said, "You're doing a great job as always. It's great to hear the update and the success of it all, and the fact that you really embraced social media over the last years. It's really taken shape."

Travel Lane County concluded its presentation with new commercials that will start to air as part of a spring campaign. Video

footage of the dunes was taken in large part by drones.

Greene suggested getting video of another view of the dunes, one that shows the enormity of the area.

"That's the moment when people get the space and the expanse of it that's so mind-blowing. Maybe if you can get that view of the vista, you'll show more of the mountainous expanse of the sand," Greene said.

Westlund agreed to look into it. "It's an incredible environment, whether you're a gearhead and you're on a rail or you're on foot, it is really a special place," she said.

For more information, go to [www.EugeneCascadesCoast.org](http://www.EugeneCascadesCoast.org).

**Port** from 1A

"A marine engineer will be at that meeting to give his estimates and an overview of what needs to be done. We should have a cost estimate at that time

because we have to get the figures to FEMA," Leskin added.

A secondary problem created by the eroding banks is where the material ends up. Leskin said the sediment that has sheered off of the banks flows down river and ends up

in the port boat basin.

"That will be a part of our dredging project later in the year," Leskin said.

Port commission meetings are at 7 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month at the port office, 80 Harbor St.



**THIS WEEK'S LUCKY WINNERS:**

Tuesday 3/29	Pattie Panther Teresa Bartlett	Florence Florence	Safeway Oceanside Veterinary Hospital
Wednesday 3/30	Dixie Buss Donna Tervo	Florence Florence	Grocery Outlet Brian's Automotive
Thursday 3/31	Bear McDaniel Elwin Price	Westlake Florence	Safeway Safeway
Friday 4/1	Doris Creager Donna Price	Florence Florence	Cheveux Spa Safeway
Saturday 4/2	Joe Arsenault Carole Jensen	Florence Florence	A&W Family Restaurant Safeway
Sunday 4/3	Betty Blake Sharon Price	Florence Florence	Books 'N' Bears Safeway
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