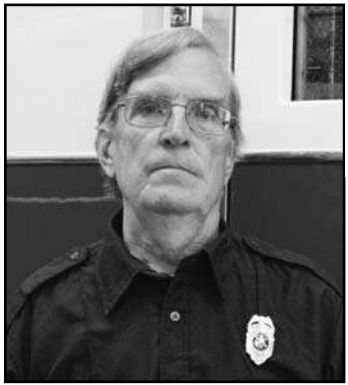


Siuslaw Valley honors firefighters at banquet



Firefighter of the Year
Craig Spomer

Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue named the Firefighter of the Year and other awards at its annual banquet on April 16. During the event, several firefighters and officers were recognized for their efforts and longevity with the department:

The Firefighter of the Year went to Craig Spomer from North Fork Station. Spomer was with the department for three years and recently passed away. He was able to be receive the award before his passing.

The Officer of the Year went to Captain Liz Iabichello from



Officer of the Year
Liz Iabichello

the Main Station. She has been with the department for 13 years.

Volunteer of the Year went to Tim Teel from the Old Town Station. He has been with the department for 6 years. The volunteer award is new this year to recognize the extra non-firefighting efforts a firefighter contributes.

Recruit of the Year went to Jerry Ward, stationed at Sutton Lake Station. This award goes to the recruit that shows the most interest and dedication to the initial training of being a firefigh-



Volunteer of the Year
Tim Teel

er. The most prestigious award is the Pat Clark Award. This year, it went to retired battalion chief and current Board Member John Carnahan.

The Pat Clark award is named after a very influential assistant chief the fire district had in the 1990s. This award is not only for firefighters or members of the fire district; it goes to anyone in the community that has shown great support to public safety and the fire district.

The banquet also celebrated the retirement of Carnahan and



Recruit of the Year
Jerry Ward

career Captain Brian Jagoe.

The following firefighters received Time in Service Awards:

- Division Chief Marvin Tipler — 35 years
- Carnahan — 30 years
- Captain Doug Barrett — 25 years
- Captain Pete "Boa" Warren — 10 years
- Chaplain Darryl Murphy — 10 years
- Firefighter Kyle Orozco — 5 years
- Firefighter Ned Hickson — 5 years.

COURTESY PHOTOS

Geocache Splash to offer coins to treasure hunters

Modern-day treasure seekers known as geocachers will descend on Florence and along the central Oregon coast for the Geocache Splash Off on Saturday, May 14. This event is part of the Florence Events Center's 20th anniversary Celebration, Dancing with Sea Lions.

"Porter the Sea Lion" is inviting geocachers to the Cache Splash Off on May 14, at 8 a.m., at the Florence Events Center (FEC), 715 Quince St.

The first 25 people to sign up at the FEC will receive a special Dancing with Sea Lions refrigerator magnet. There will be a chance to win some amazing prizes donated by generous merchants, along with theme-oriented geocaches.

For an extra chance to win these amazing prizes, bring an item that can be added to the raffle collection. A raffle will be held at 4 p.m. (Must be present to win.)

There is a "colony" of 20



COURTESY PHOTO

A limited number of geocoins will be available to find starting May 14 on the Dancing with Sea Lions trail.

artistically decorated fiberglass sea lions standing 7 1/2 feet tall to find, stretching from Reedsport to Newport.

Geocachers will be looking for Porter in all her beautiful forms, as well as new caches as a part of the fun. Teamwork

would be helpful, but isn't required — and don't forget your camera to take pictures with each Porter!

To claim geocoins, complete the Porterport, where details will be listed. Participants must complete the Porterport to receive a geocoin while supplies last. On May 14, bring your completed Porterport to the FEC before 5 p.m.

After the event, bring the Porterport to Sea Lions Cave, 91560 Highway 101, anytime between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. to receive a trackable geocoin while supplies last. However, only one geocoin is allowed per family.

Participants must present the original Porterport to receive a geocoin.

Geocachers can obtain a Porterport at the event. After the event, a printable Porterport will be available at www.dancingwithsealions.com. This event will officially end Sept. 30, or when Porter leaves to be auctioned.

Spoken Word Poetry open mic at Homegrown

Tonight, May 7, Homegrown Public House will be hosting an open mic for all poets at 9 p.m., after the Big Wave Spoken Word Poetry Contest taking place at the Florence Events Center from 6 to 9 p.m.

The poetry slam is drawing poets from around the state to give a three-minute poetry performance in hopes of winning one of the cash prizes.

At the after hours poetry open mic, anyone can sign up to present their poetry, and everyone is welcome to come and listen.

"We wanted to give our poets another venue to present their poetry, because

some of them are driving a long way to just perform for 3 minutes," said Big Wave Poetry Committee member Karen Brown. "Plus, this is a great way for those poets who are new to performing, or not quite ready to enter a contest, to get their feet wet."

Brown is a writing and English instructor at Lane Community College, and has been instrumental in organizing the Spoken Word Poetry Contests in Florence, beginning in 2014.

Those interested in the open mic can show up at Homegrown Pub, 294 Laurel St., tonight around 9 p.m.

Next PFLAG meeting to prepare for Rhody parade

Find out what you can do to be part of the PFLAG group in the upcoming Rhododendron Festival Grand Floral Parade, on Sunday, May 22, at PFLAG's next meeting, Tuesday, May 10, at Lane Community College, 3149 Oak St., in Florence.

The meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. in room 130. The public is invited and refreshments will be served. As is customary, there will be time for news and sharing.

Suggestions for decorating

the PFLAG truck are welcome.

The parade is May 22, with groups forming on 27th Street at 10 a.m. The parade will start at noon

All participants will receive instructions, and the meeting will be a good opportunity to get ride-sharing arranged in advance.

PFLAG is the country's largest organization for parents, families, friends and straight allies united with people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

Photography studio holds 'itty bitty' opening today

Itty Bitty Blessings Photography Studio and Baby Boutique in Old Town Florence has announced its grand opening this weekend for Mother's Day.

"I am a mother myself of five babies, ages 10 years to 8 weeks, and just opened my dream business," says owner and photographer Amber Kelly.

Itty Bitty Blessings, at 1297 Bay St., next to the Bridgewater Restaurant, is

open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and specializes in newborn, pregnancy, babies' first year and family photography sessions. All props, outfits, backdrops are included for a very stylized unique experience.

The baby boutique is stocked with mostly custom handmade baby items from stay-at-home moms.

For more information, call 760-964-1392 or go online to facebook.com/ittybittyblessingsphotography.

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