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THE WAY

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Siuslaw News

126TH YEAR | ISSUE NO. 59

SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON

Fire districts
agree to
automatic aid
on Hwy 126

*Siuslaw Valley formalizes
aid agreement with
Mapleton Rural Fire*

By Chantelle Meyer
Siuslaw News

Siuslaw Valley Fire Chief Jim Langborg and Mapleton Fire Chief Charlie Moore have been working with their boards of directors to update the fire districts’ mutual aid agreement to automatic aid for certain calls.

“We had some discussions earlier in the year with the Mapleton Fire Chief Charlie Moore about the possibility of creating an automatic aid agreement,” Langborg said.

Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue and Mapleton Rural Fire District currently have a mutual aid agreement, which means each district can call on the other if additional support is needed.

Siuslaw Valley also goes to calls concerning car accidents through an agreement with Western Lane Ambulance District.

“With automatic aid, we are automatically dispatched to their alarms,” Langborg said. “Certain types of calls are specified within that agreement — vegetation fires, structure fires and auto accidents. With those particular types of calls, when Mapleton is dispatched, we will be included right off the bat as it’s being processed through the 911 dispatch center.”

The automatic aid agreement will also mean that Mapleton Fire responds to calls on Highway 126 up to mile-post 3, near Cushman.

Siuslaw Valley Board President John Scott said, “At Cushman, you can meet in the middle and have a better response.”

Langborg agreed.

“The benefit is that resources are notified sooner and that they arrive sooner,” he said.

Siuslaw Valley began pursuing the agreement as a way to positively affect the district’s services and Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating — a number that reflects the overall effectiveness of the department.

“We continue to do work to improve our ISO rating and strive to find ways to improve service — not only to our community, but to our neighbors as well,” Langborg said.

Siuslaw Valley’s board of directors asked for clarification on such points as increased turnout response times and rules for which calls take precedence.

Langborg said either district can cancel the call for the other if additional support is not needed.

See **DISTRICTS** 6A

RHODODENDRON DRIVE SHOULDER EXPANSION

Where the
rhodies meet
the road

Crew members from Ray Wells, Inc., work to clear vegetation for two six-foot shoulders on Rhododendron Drive. The Rhododendron Drive Shoulder Expansion Project, set to be completed this fall, will increase safety for pedestrians and bicyclists on Rhododendron Drive between Ninth Street and Wildwinds. The City of Florence and the construction crews are minimizing the removal and damage to native rhododendrons by using chainsaws and hand-trimming tools. “Ray Wells is going the extra mile to preserve what they can,” said Florence Project Manager Megan Messmer. For more information on the project, go to ci.florence.or.us.

COURTESY PHOTOS

Sharon Stiles selected to head LCC board

Expects search for new president and funding as major 2016-17 challenges

By Jack Davis
Siuslaw News

Florence resident Sharon Stiles was elected chairwoman of the 2016-17 Lane Community College’s (LCC) Board of Education, at the board’s July 13 meeting.

Stiles, 75, was first elected to the LCC board in 2009 and chaired the board in 2012-13. She holds the Zone 1 seat on the board, which includes Florence and the Western part of the college district.

“I’m looking forward to a promising year of positive movement,” Stiles said. “We have big challenges in our budget balancing but I have confidence in this board’s ability to work together to come to the best fiduciary decisions.”

Stiles sees two priority issues that need to be addressed during her term.

“I wanted to run for chair because of these two things,” she said. “One is that LCC President Mary Spilde is leaving. She gave us 16 months in order to replace her.

“The other reason is budget concerns. We have reached a pinnacle point where we have to make some tough decisions.”



Sharon Stiles

Spilde will retire as president of LCC in June 2017.

Finding a replacement is Stiles’ first priority. She has been one of three board members to be in charge of the recruitment process and has been working to find a replacement for almost six months.

According to Stiles, there are several hundred vacancies for college presidents and vice presidents in

the nation.

“We have been working with a consultant, Dr. Preston Pulliams, president of Gold Hill Associates for about three months. He has a really good reputation,” Stiles said.

“Our profile will be coming out in August. By January or February of 2017 we expect to have someone selected,” she added.

Stiles said the LCC budget concerns are a result of declining enrollment numbers.

“We have fewer students now than during the recession,” she said. “During that time we went up 45 percent, but now we are down double-digits. It has come back up a little, but it hasn’t recovered as much as we would like.”

See **COLLEGE** 6A

Port financial position improving

*Added revenue from rate increases bolsters
Port of Siuslaw’s financial statements*

By Jack Davis
Siuslaw News

During the July 20 Port of Siuslaw board meeting, administrative assistant Dina McClure reported on the port’s end of year financial condition. The port’s fiscal

year ends June 30.

“At the end of fiscal year, regarding expenses, all of the appropriate categories are within budget,” McClure said.

McClure said the port’s June 30 balance sheet showed a checking and savings balance of \$512,646.

“This is an increase of \$121,000 over last year,” she said. “We ended up with a lot more cash in the bank this year over last year.”

McClure reported that campground occupancy percentages were down slightly from the 2014-15 record of 47

percent occupancy to 44 percent in 2015-16, but revenue has increased by almost \$16,000, due to a rate increase enacted in December.

Moorage also showed a significant increase from \$69,337 in 2014-15 to \$102,520 in 2015-16.

This was also due to the rate increase according to McClure.

The hiker/biker campground also saw a slight reduction in nightly stays, but still showed a small increase in revenue over last year.

McClure has previously

attributed the decrease in campground and hiker/biker overnight stays to the wetter spring weather in 2016, compared to 2015.

The RV/campground rate increases implemented at the end of 2015 were the first in five years.

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