

SETTING
THE PACE

SPORTS — B



Youth program
receives donation

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Siuslaw News

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SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON

DEATH INVESTIGATION

Lake Oswego man drowns in Siltcoos Lake

Emergency responders recover 78-year-old man's body early Friday morning

BY CHANTELLE MEYER
Siuslaw News

Emergency response teams from the U.S. Coast Guard, Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue, Lane County Sheriff's Office and Western Lane Ambulance assisted in the search for a missing man who disappeared under water Thursday after jumping off a boat into Siltcoos Lake.

Dispatch received a call for assistance at 6:18 p.m. Aug. 25 after Robert Cook, a 78-year-old Lake Oswego resident, did not resurface upon entering the lake.

Cook was visiting with friends on a private boat anchored on the lake when he dove into the water. According to witnesses, Cook surfaced briefly but was unable to make it back to the boat before going under the water. The boat's other occupants then entered the water in an attempt to find him, but murky water conditions hampered their efforts.

"We responded to a search for the missing swimmer until dark," said Fire Marshal Sean Barrett. The search focused on the water. Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue brought its search and rescue boat, Lane County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue Dive Team responded and U.S. Coast Guard Station Siuslaw River brought its 25-foot small response boat.

See **DEATH** 7A

POLICE

Business Center arson linked to 'smoking box'

Evidence reveals Tuesday's incidents are related, officials say

BY CHANTELLE MEYER
Siuslaw News

New evidence has linked two fire-related incidents on 12th Street that occurred within hours from each other on Tuesday, Florence Police said.

The first involved an arson at the Florence Business Center, 1525 12th St., which was extinguished by the building's sprinkler system. The second involved a suspicious container found outside the Florence Elks Lodge, just down the street from the center, and required assistance from Eugene Police Department's Bomb Squad.

Emergency responders from Florence Police Department and Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue were sent to 12th Street around 1:50 p.m. after receiving a call about a "smoking box" that was found outside the Elks Lodge, 1686 12th St., near a backdoor.

Police described the suspicious object as a metal box with a concrete walking stone placed on top. There was a large amount of smoke coming from the box when first reported and smoke continued issuing from the box for several hours after.

Officials requested that people inside the Elks Lodge vacate the building during the investigation.

The Bomb Squad responded later that afternoon.

"They used their X-ray machine and robot to make the object safe," Florence Police Commander John Pitcher said.

It was determined that there was no explosive device contained within the metal box.

See **ARSON** 7A

THE SIUSLAW SEVEN



JACK DAVIS/SIUSLAW NEWS

Seven new instructors have joined the Siuslaw School District staff for the 2016-17 school year: (from left) Carrie McNeill, first grade; Anna Moser, high school physical education and health; Charnae Decker, sixth-grade math; Max Perry, high school freshman future success and English; McKenzie Perry, returning to sixth-grade science; Allyson Bitner, elementary school counselor; and Stephanie Rogers, alternative education coordinator and alternative education biology and science. Students return to school after Labor Day weekend, beginning Sept. 6.

SCHOOL DISTRICT FOOD PROGRAM A HIT

First year of Siuslaw's self-operated food service successful on all levels

BY JACK DAVIS
Siuslaw News

Siuslaw School District Food Service Manager Dave Bitner recently reported on the successful results of the district's first year of self-operated food service.

"This last year was very challenging, educating and sometimes frustrating, but overall, very rewarding for me personally," said Bitner, who was hired last year to head up the district's new program.

According to Bitner, during the 2015-16 school year, the district served 35,898 breakfasts, 113,854 lunches and 21,301 suppers.

"One of our biggest fears as we became self-operating was can we do it and make it financially viable?" Bitner said during the Aug. 17 school board meeting.

He added, "Many school districts have not been successful when they became self-operational. We found that was because they didn't change their purchasing ways. They continued to buy heat-and-serve products, just as their contract management firm did, but they lacked the economy of scale to get the same prices. We realized that and we didn't make that same mistake."

Instead of heat-and-serve, Bitner's focus was on fresh, healthy, tasty and local food. The program also does as much "from scratch" cooking as possible.

Bitner said the goal of the program was to break even by the end of the school year. The district finished the school year with a \$3,924 surplus.

"We are not a for-profit food service operation," Bitner said. "Any money we do make allows us to increase the quality of ingredients we are using."

Last year the district served 9,000 pounds of fresh produce.

"Over half of the funds we get from the federal government are now going to the fresh produce program."

—DAVE BITNER, FOOD SERVICE MANAGER

In addition to fresh produce, Bitner told the board he purchased local beef and chicken that are free of hormones and antibiotics.

See **FOOD** 7A

Yachats faces water shortage

City asks residents to conserve usage

BY CHANTELLE MEYER
Siuslaw News

YACHATS — The City of Yachats reported that it is facing a raw water supply shortage and, effective immediately, must enter Phase I water conservation and curtailment until further notice.

"Thank you for your assistance in helping conserve our water during this long, dry summer," Yachats City Administrator Joan Davies said.

To best conserve water, the city requests that residents comply to a conservation plan.

Under the Phase I curtailment, the watering of lawns, gardens and landscaping is restricted to alternative days. Specifically, houses with an

See **WATER** 7A

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