

New soccer league thanks city for support



Members of the Siuslaw Youth Soccer Association presented the City of Florence with a photo collage representing their first season as a token of appreciation for the city's support in helping the group. Approximately 175 school age students signed up for the program.

JACK DAVIS/SIUSLAW NEWS

‘Whale Watching’ seeks volunteers

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) is seeking whale-lovers to participate in its annual Whale Watching Spoken Here program. The program places trained volunteers at 24 whale-watching sites along the Oregon coast during winter and spring watch weeks, when approximately 20,000 gray whales migrate on their way to and from feeding areas off the Alaska coast and birthing areas near Baja, Mexico. Volunteers who complete the one-day training may select a whale-watching site where they will be stationed to assist visitors in spotting gray whales

and maintain a count of whales spotted. The dates for upcoming whale watching weeks are Dec. 27 through 31, and March 25 through 31, 2017. New this year, volunteers can register for the training online at www.whalespoken.wordpress.com, as well as select a watch site. The training is required for new volunteers. Returning volunteers are encouraged to repeat the course every few years to learn the latest gray whale research results. The first of three sessions is set for Saturday, Dec. 3, at the Hatfield Marine Science Center in Newport.

The training will be delivered by Dr. Bruce Mate, an expert on whales and director of the Oregon State University Marine Mammal Institute. Additional volunteer training is scheduled for Jan. 14, 2017, at the Oregon Institute of Marine Biology in Charleston, and also Feb. 11, 2017, at the Warrenton Community Center in Warrenton. Whale Watching Spoken Here has been around since 1978 and is one of the most organized onshore whale-watching programs in the United States. For more information, call 541-765-3304.

Special camping reservations for total eclipse to open

Beginning Thursday, Nov. 17, state park campers can make reservations for campsites, yurts and cabins to enjoy the Aug. 21, 2017 total solar eclipse. The normal advance campsite reservation window opens nine months before the first night of a visitor's stay, but a temporary change to the reservation system will affect people who want to make a 14-night reservation, the maximum allowed in Oregon's State Park system. The state park system accepts reservations nine months in advance, but it would normally be possible to get a reservation for Aug. 21 by booking the maximum 14-night stay on Nov. 17, 2016. Given the expected high demand for sites around the eclipse, and to prevent overbooking that could interfere with other visitors' summer vacation plans, state parks along and near the eclipse path

will not accept reservations for Aug. 17-21, until Nov. 17. This is 10 days after OPRD's standard rolling nine-month reservation window would normally allow a camper to make a long reservation. On Nov. 17, the normal rolling nine-month window will resume for all sites that accept reservations at parks along and near the eclipse path. "We made this change to accommodate all visitors, both those planning for the eclipse and those who are planning an unrelated camping trip," said Chris Havel, OPRD spokesperson. "We encourage eclipse campers to extend their stay with us for a day or more before and after the eclipse to reduce the congestion on the roads." The Nov. 17 reservation opening date applies to the following campgrounds inside the path of totality: Devil's Lake, Beverly Beach, South Beach,

Silver Falls, Detroit Lake, The Cove Palisades and Farewell Bend. Campgrounds that are up to 30 miles outside the path of totality are also affected by the temporary change to reservation rules: Beachside, Cape Lookout, Washburne (yurts only), Honeyman, Nehalem Bay, Stub Stewart, Champoe, Milo McIver, Ainsworth, Memaloose, Viento, Deschutes River, Tumalo, LaPine, Prineville Reservoir, Lake Owyhee and Wallowa Lake. OPRD is making plans to temporarily convert first-come, first-served state park campgrounds to reservation-only for the eclipse, so additional campsites will be made available at a later date. The eclipse will begin at 9 a.m. and end at 11:30 a.m. on Aug. 21, 2017. For more information about the eclipse, visit www.OregonStateParks2017Eclipse.com.

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