

ERV GARRISON: TRUE SIUSLAW TRADITION

SPORTS — B



Shorewood wins at Death by Dessert

INSIDE — A3



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SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON



PEACE HARBOR COULD FACE CHOPPY SEAS

NED HICKSON/SIUSLAW NEWS

PeaceHealth Peace Harbor Medical Center, 400 Ninth St., is Florence's largest health care provider. Area registered nurses have been working without a contract since Feb. 1

Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) member nurses at PeaceHealth Peace Harbor Medical Center have been negotiating for better terms in a new contract since Nov. 30.

The previous contract expired Dec. 31 and a 30-day extension lapsed Jan. 31. The 75 Peace Harbor ONA members have been working without a contract since that date.

According to Peace Harbor Hospital registered nurse and ONA negotiating team member Sandy Fleetwood, the major negotiating points between the nurses and PeaceHealth are healthcare benefits, wage and hour issues, recruitment and retention and security.

The first two two-day bargaining sessions have resulted in little or no progress on these key issues, according to Fleetwood.

"It's not Peace Harbor, it is PeaceHealth's corporate office we are getting pushback from. Our administrative staff here at Peace Harbor is very supportive of the nurses. It is the corporate people we are negotiating with," she said.

Kevin Snyder, PeaceHealth Assistant Vice-President of Strategic Communications said, "PeaceHealth has, and continues to negotiate,

BY JACK DAVIS AND NED HICKSON
Siuslaw News

in good faith. We have responded to most, if not all, proposals from the union."

ONA Peace Harbor negotiator Gary Aguia said, "PeaceHealth negotiators are not budging. They are not moving. They are being tough negotiators. Other than a couple of insignificant things about job title changes, they haven't really moved on anything.

Approximately six years ago, PeaceHealth cancelled the healthcare plan for Peace Harbor and replaced it with one being used at other PeaceHealth facilities.

Fleetwood said, "We want to go back to an older set of health insurance benefits we used to have. A few contracts ago, we had really good health insurance benefits. Then we went to the 'global PeaceHealth' insurance plan."

Aguia said, "We would like to see healthcare insurance that is more comparable to other (hospital) facilities in our region."

According to Fleetwood, the nurses at Peace Harbor receive up to 5 percent less in salary than nurses at other Oregon hospitals.

"(PeaceHealth) has offered a one percent increase in pay. Peace Harbor is about five percent below other hospitals in the state.

A one-percent increase wouldn't even get

us to that five percent," she said.

Like most nurses, the nurses at Peace Harbor work as hourly employees, not salaried.

Fleetwood said the previous contract had no limit to the amount of overtime a nurse could be required to work, and no limit to the amount of "on-call" or "off-call" time. On-call is when a nurse must be available to come in at a moment's notice; off-call is the length of time the hospital can tell nurses they aren't needed

"We work really hard for weeks or months and are exhausted, and then we get called off for a couple of weeks and there is no money coming in," said Fleetwood. "They expect us to use our vacation time to fill in those days that they call us off."

Nurse recruitment and retention is a growing problem across the country and especially in rural community medical facilities.

Fleetwood said that in the new contract, nurses at Peace Harbor would like to see something to address recruitment and retention of nurses.

"If we can't recruit and retain a quality staff, then it is hard for us to maintain those high standards," said Fleetwood.

See **NURSES 7A**

'Points of Grace' clinic offers drug-free treatment



MARK BRENNAN/SIUSLAW NEWS

Patricia Immel, of Wellspring Clinic in Florence, is providing acupuncture treatments to the public to help people reduce the use of opioids in the treatment of pain.

Wellspring Clinic, PeaceHealth team up to provide relief alternatives to opioids

Many Oregonians have a problem with pain. More precisely, they have a problem with the prescriptions that they receive for their pain.

BY MARK BRENNAN
Siuslaw News

According to the Oregon Health Authority (OHA), three Oregonians a week die from prescription opioid abuse. That is one of the major reasons the Oregon American Medical Association conference last year had a single agenda item, "Oregon's Opioid Epidemic."

Fortunately, there is a fledgling program in Florence available as an alternative approach to pain management.

Points of Grace is a joint effort of PeaceHealth Peace Harbor Hospital and The Wellspring Clinic.

The program offers pain treatment that does not use pharmaceuticals, but uses one of the world's oldest medical traditions, acupuncture, to manage pain. The program uses the age old Chinese technique of "Ear Acupuncture" to achieve its results.

The Points of Grace program was developed and is managed by the founder of Wellspring, Patricia Immel, a licensed acupuncturist and certified herbalist.

See **TREATMENT 7A**

CRIME

Lane County Circuit Court charges Randy Clay to 44 years

On Tuesday, Florence resident Randy Clay was sentenced by a Lane County Circuit Court to 44 years for sexually abusing two teenage girls. Clay was arrested Sept. 6 by Florence

STAFF REPORT
Siuslaw News

police, who searched his home and interviewed him after conducting earlier interviews with two under-age victims.

Details surrounding the arrest of the 61-year-old man were made public after a search warrant was unsealed in October in Lane County Circuit Court.

At that time, Florence Police Commander John Pitcher said, "A victim disclosed what happened to a relative and that relative contacted us."

Police charged Clay with multiple counts of sexual abuse, coercion and using a child in a display of sexually explicit conduct.

Clay has since been held in the Lane County Jail.

See **SENTENCE 7A**

Around the world in just 1 day PTA hosts multi-cultural event at middle school

Florence Community Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is extending an invitation for Siuslaw students, parents and community members to join them and go "Around the World in a Day" during the PTA's first multi-cultural event.

The free event will take place next Saturday, Feb. 25, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Siuslaw Middle School and is

open to the public. "Our goal is to bring students, parents and community members together to provide education on cultures from around the world while building social connections with the schools and our community," said event chairwoman Diane McCalmont. "Through food, music, arts and dance we hope to introduce our community to the world and cultures that lie

beyond our coast — and have fun while doing it!"

The event will feature finger foods from Mexican, Asian, German, Italian and Americana-style cuisines as well as a variety of entertainment, including belly dancers, Native Education drums and dancers and Tribal flutist Nathalie Picard.

Artistic demonstrations and displays will cover basket

weaving, beading, origami, Scandinavian and belly dance instruction and much more.

All attendees will be entered in a door prize drawing, as well as have the opportunity to hear, taste, feel and see cultures from around the world at no cost.

For more information, like the Florence Community PTA on Facebook, or call Diane McCalmont at 541 999-9692.

INSIDE Classifieds B5
Community A3
Religion A5
Opinion A4

Records A2
Side Show B4
Sports B
Weather Data A3

THIS WEEK'S WEATHER
Full Forecast, A3

TODAY
50 42

SUNDAY
51 45

MONDAY
50 43

TUESDAY
50 36

SIUSLAW NEWS
2 SECTIONS | 20 PAGES
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