

SPRING SPORTS WIND UP

SPORTS — B



Set clocks forward
at 2 a.m. Sunday

Siuslaw News

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SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON

Truck driver takes a wrong turn into river

There were no injuries in the accident; driver was not impaired

BY MARK BRENNAN
Siuslaw News

Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue responded to an unusual situation Thursday night at the boat ramp on Harbor Street. A driver for the Eugene company Automatic Heat took a wrong turn at the corner of First and Harbor streets and drove straight into the

Siuslaw River at the Port of Siuslaw boat ramp.

A witness at the scene, Tom Payne, called 911 to report the accident around 7:30 p.m.

“I live on Bay Street and I was out taking a walk with a friend and looked out on the Port ramp and saw lights in the water,” Payne said. “I couldn’t quite figure out what I was looking at, so I walked down the ramp and saw that I

were looking at a full-sized box truck that was submerged and sinking.”

According to Payne, the driver was not in sight and did not appear to be in the vehicle.

“I was able to see the phone number on the truck and so I called them to see if I could reach someone,” Payne said. “Then I called 911, and about a minute and a half later there

were two officers here and then every one else showed up.”

First responders were initially unable to attach a cable to the submerged vehicle.

See **TRUCK 11A**

First responders pull a submerged truck from the Siuslaw River Thursday night after the driver took a wrong turn and drove into the water. There were no injuries at the scene.



PHOTOS BY MARK BRENNAN/SIUSLAW NEWS

FLORENCE COMMUNITY PTA TALENT SHOW

Siuslaw Superstars present two nights of talent



PHOTOS BY CHANTELE MEYER/SIUSLAW NEWS

Siuslaw Elementary and Middle school students took the stage at the Florence Events Center Wednesday and Thursday nights during the Florence Community PTA “Siuslaw Superstars” Talent Show. Students from kindergarten through eighth-grade performed gymnastics routines, dance numbers, songs and more for cheering audiences made up of parents, families, friends and community members. Elementary Principal Mike Harklerode emceed the event. “So much of what we do would not be possible without the support of our PTA,” he said. PTA members and event center volunteers ran the two-night event. The next PTA meeting is Tuesday, March 21, at 4 p.m. at the Siuslaw Elementary School Library.



Dunes City addresses land use, copyright issues

Council considers copyright infringement and the status of the Siltcoos dock

Dunes City Council met for its monthly meeting on Thursday, March 9, to discuss several topics with the potential to be troublesome, but were resolved during the meeting.

BY MARK BRENNAN
Siuslaw News

The first action item considered by the council was a

response to a letter from the Department of State Lands, which warned the city that it would be fined if it did not renew a public use permit for the Siltcoos Dock.

The council had previously talked about issues of the safety and maintenance requirements of the dock, which is in need of repair.

After some discussion, council members approved the \$350 expenditure to bring the city into compliance with the state for the next five years.

The council asked city staff for further information on the safety of the dock at the April city

See **DUNES CITY 11A**

School board discusses rec. immunity, cameras on buses

The Siuslaw School District Board of Directors met on Wednesday with a full agenda to consider, including recreational immunity, video surveillance and grade analysis.

The meeting began with four student athletes — Ricky Huff, Celie Mans, Kaeli Ramos and

BY MARK BRENNAN
Siuslaw News

Destinie Tatum — leading the pledge of allegiance. All four students were part of

teams who won state championships.

Business Manager Kari Blake presented a resolution to deal with the issue of recreational immunity.

In 1995, the Oregon Legislature declared it was the policy of the State of Oregon to encourage landowners to make their land available to the public for recreational use by limiting the liability that landowners could incur.

See **SIUSLAW 7A**

ReVision Florence to require additional funding

FURA, Florence City Council discuss, move forward with \$7.36 million project

BY JACK DAVIS
Siuslaw News

During the March 6 Florence City Council meeting, Mayor Joe Henry expressed concern and frustration over increases in the cost estimates of the now more than \$7 million Florence Urban Renewal Agency (FURA) two-year ReVision Florence project.

FURA Chairman and City Councilor Joshua Greene said most of the cost increases might be recouped from Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Lane County increases in project contributions.

The current estimated FURA

and city obligation, without additional outside funding, is approximately \$3.5 million. The total estimated cost of the ReVision Florence project, including contingencies, is \$7.36 million.

Greene said more than \$2 million of that was unexpected because of changes ODOT made and miscalculations that Portland engineering firm Murray, Smith and Associates (MSA) made.

“ODOT miscalculated what their cost going into this was. Then they realized that they didn’t have the team, the money or the ability to see this through,” he said.

According to Greene, if ODOT did the project without city input

and planning, the project would have consisted of a few Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) ramps, disconnected sections of sidewalk, paving and stripping.

“ODOT would have left total pieces of Highway 101 incomplete. They would leave it as it stands. Think about what that would do to Highway 101,” Greene said.

Both Greene and city staff said they are confident that ODOT would repay the city for engineering and other expenses associated with the project that ODOT should have paid for.

Greene said he had been in contact with state Sen. Arnie Roblan

and state Rep. Caddie McKeown and felt they would be able to help with the ODOT money.

City Project Manager Megan Messmer said she had been in discussions with ODOT and that they were willing to increase the initial commitment of \$1.05 million.

Henry asked if the city had that in writing, but the staff said “not yet.”

Discussion at the meeting then turned to how to cut back on expenses.

According to City Manager Erin Reynolds, the two gateway entrances to Old Town could be

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