

**Website** from 1A

Siuslaw News is also working on a partnership with local videographer Jared Anderson to provide more video coverage of local events. "Having the opportunity to incorporate things like video interviews from city council meetings, sporting events, Town Hall meetings and others into our coverage on the website will offer more dimension to the stories we report on," Hickson said. Current subscribers who would like to have complimentary access to the website can email [klibby@thesiuslawnews.com](mailto:klibby@thesiuslawnews.com) or call 541-902-3526 during business hours. Those who are not currently subscribers will be able to access 10 stories at no charge per month. To subscribe, contact Siuslaw News at 148 Maple St. in Old Town Florence, visit [thesiuslawnews.com](http://thesiuslawnews.com) or call 541-997-3441.

**Storm** from 1A

Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue also responded to downed trees, limbs and power lines throughout its entire region, including one power-line related fire around 3 p.m. The fire department and Western Lane Ambulance District responded to an early morning car accident Friday, although it was unclear if the storm was a contributing factor. Western Lane Operations Manager Matt House said the two-car accident around 6 a.m. required ambulance transportation for three people. Two people went to PeaceHealth Peace Harbor in Florence, and an unidentified pregnant woman went to PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center at RiverBend. "It is unclear at this time how those situations turned out," House said. Western Lane responded to its usual number of calls throughout the day, though House did say it was a busy Friday. Just before 3 p.m. on Friday, a small landslide was reported on Mercer Lake

Road at milepost 2, just past Lakewood Avenue. The slide included multiple trees entangled with energized power lines, making it difficult to address the situation. At the time of the incident, Lane County workers couldn't confirm when the road would reopen. National Weather Service predicted that the highest winds would end by Friday evening. People can continue to report storm damages at [ci.florence.or.us/publicworks](http://ci.florence.or.us/publicworks) or by calling CLPUD at 1-866-484-3783. April 3 through 7 was Work Zone Safety Week, with several organiza-



COURTESY PHOTO

**Downed trees blocked a portion of Mercer Lake Road and brought down power lines throughout the central Oregon coast on Friday.**

tions wearing orange on April 5 to remind people to slow down and watch for workers. "Power on? Thank a line worker!" CLPUD's Twitter said.

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**Candidates** from 1A

Muenzer said, "I feel that everybody is entitled to a good education. Community colleges play a critical role that no other type of institution can play. I want to continue to dedicate myself to insuring that everybody has equal access to education." During the announcement segment of the meeting, two candidates for the Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue Board of Directors, Ron Green and Crystal Farnsworth, and one candidate for

Western Lane Ambulance District Board of Directors, Larry Farnsworth, requested permission to speak. Crystal Farnsworth is running against Ned Hickson for Siuslaw Valley Position 1. Green is running against Marvin Tipler for Siuslaw Valley Position 2. Larry Farnsworth is running against incumbent Laura Anne Stonelake for Western Lane Position 4. Green said, "I ask that you support Crystal and myself for position 1 and 2 for the fire district and Larry Farnsworth for ambulance district

(position) 4." The Siuslaw News will be publishing a voters guide on all candidates and the Lane County Jail Levy measure in its Wednesday, April 26, edition. Local candidates have also been invited to participate in a special election candidates' forum debate May 3 at the Florence Events Center. The debates are open to the public and will be moderated by KCST Coast Radio News Director Bob Sneddon during the "Our Town" segment from 4 to 7 p.m.

**Nurses** from 1A

ONA negotiator and Peace Harbor Registered Nurse Elaine Beers has been a nurse for 42 years, with 26 years at Peace Harbor. She said, "I have been on negotiation committees for 35 of those 42 years. In those 35 years, this particular session has been the most odd of any ever, because there is no communication." According to Beers, when ONA made proposals, there was no feedback from PeaceHealth negotiation representative Vice President Labor and Caregiver Relations Debra Miller. "When she was questioned as to when we could expect a response, Miller would say, 'We reject them. That is our response.' Any attempts to get some specifics are again met with, 'We reject them,'" Beers said. Miller would not comment, but a statement released by PeaceHealth said, "We are bargaining in good faith as we value our RNs and all of our caregivers. Overall, we are very disappointed that the ONA is taking a negative approach to negotia-

tions. This is not productive and does not help move our discussions forward in a collaborative manner." Beers compared the current nurse contract negotiations to the ongoing doctor shortage at Peace Harbor. "Think about not having any nurses as well," she said. Beers said that the community has supported the hospital and now it is time for the hospital to support the community. She said that there were many issues still on the table, but the four critical issues were wages, insurance, security and lengthy on call requirements. According to Aguiar, Peace Harbor nurses' wages are as much as 4.6 percent below those paid at the PeaceHealth Sacred Heart RiverBend Hospital in Springfield. PeaceHealth Strategic Communications and Engagement Director Marcy Marshall said, "When we reach agreement, we anticipate wages that will be market competitive. There may be some nuisances with the Sacred Heart RN contract and the timing of wage increases; however, we do not anticipate any significant differences." Beers said because of the last

change in PeaceHealth's health insurance policy in 2015, several nurses who had surgery needed to put their co-pay on a payment plan because it was so high. "What is wrong with this picture?" she asked. "A health care facility that doesn't offer decent health insurance to its workers." Security has also been a concern to the nurses. According to Aguiar, it is standard practice for PeaceHealth hospitals to have seven days a week, 24-hour trained security guards. He said Peace Harbor has 24-hour security on weekends and holidays, but only 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. security during the week. "This has only been since September. ONA helped to push this into existence. It is not in the contract and therefore is subject to cancellation," Beers added. The final area of major contention between the nurses and PeaceHealth, according to Beers, is the current on-call requirements. "The operating room nurses and the home health/hospice nurses work all day, then are on call for 12-14 hours and are required to report to work the next morning," Beers said. The PeaceHealth statement further said, "Our hope is that we come to an agreement so that we can fully focus on delivering care to our patients while assuring all of our nurses are receiving fair and equitable compensation and benefits consistent with their market. I would say, we are hopeful that the mediator will help resolve these outstanding issues." Approximately 20 of Peace Harbor's 75 nurses attended the Tuesday meeting. Aguiar had them stand and then asked a series of questions. He first asked all nurses who were planning to retire within the next five years to sit down. Next, he asked the nurses who planned to leave the area if a fair contract could not be signed to sit. Two nurses remained standing. Both Aguiar and Beers said local Peace Harbor administration had been very supportive of the nurses and that the negotiating problems were with PeaceHealth corporate representatives from Vancouver, Wash. Federal mediation will begin Monday in Florence as a mediator attempts to find common ground for Peace Harbor and the local nurses. Aguiar said, "We remain hopeful that Monday we will reach a suitable agreement with our employer on a contract that we can recommend to our membership for ratification. If not, our bargaining team, in concert with nurse leaders, will assess where our bargaining unit is. We will gauge whether nurses on the floors are willing to escalate further. We will not make any decisions until after Monday's medi-

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