

# RAISING THE BAR

SPORTS — B



# Royals prep for Rhody Days

SCHOOL NEWS — INSIDE



# Siuslaw News

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SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON

## TRANSPORTATION

### Yachats-Florence bus service to start in July

*Transit service will connect the last un-served portion of Highway 101*

**F**lorence and Yachats will begin a one-year trial transit service starting July 1, because of a \$290,110 pilot project grant received by Lane Transit District (LTD) from Oregon Department of Transportation.

According to LTD Accessible Service Specialist John Ahlen, the grant will fund connecting the last stretch of Highway 101 not currently served by transit service.

Ahlen met with about 12 local and regional transit personnel and area citizens during a stakeholder meeting at Florence City Hall Thursday to receive input on a proposed rider survey scheduled to be posted on the LTD website in next week.

The survey is designed to receive potential rider input in several categories, such as preferred days of the week and hours the service would run; the primary reason for using the service, such as shopping, medical recreational or employment; and rider location and demographics.

See **TRANSIT 6A**

### Lane County Parks holds public forum

*Master Plan will include significant public input*

**L**ane County Parks Department held a public meeting April 26 at the Mapleton High School Library to solicit citizen input on the county's Parks and Open Space Master Plan, which is currently being developed.

The presentation was made by Parks and Animal Services Manager Mike Russell, and was less a presentation than an inquiry into what community members want to do and see in their parks.

County representatives began the evening with an overview of the current planning process.

See **PARKS 7A**

## Students aid in effort to restore dunes

*Siuslaw Middle School students remove invasive Scotch broom during field trip*

By MARK BRENNAN  
Siuslaw News

**S**prays of bright yellow are mixed in with the varied shades of brown that make up the mountains of sand around the area called dunes. While these plants are visually appealing, they are not as harmless as they look.

Scotch Broom is an aggressive, invasive species that has taken hold in many areas around Florence. The yellow plant is choking out other life on the sands and poses an ongoing threat to wildlife and native plants.

That is why Siuslaw Middle School students went on a field trip Friday to help remove the offending plants from the dunes off Heceta Beach Road.

Middle School Principal Andy Marohl coordinates the school's "Stream Team" and believes the threat of invasive species is one that needs to be discussed with students and addressed.

"Invasive species are an important topic for students to learn about. They are the number one cause of biodiversity loss — next to habitat destruction — and we live in a very special ecosystem that has been greatly impacted by invasive species," said Marohl.

The tenacity of Scotch broom makes it a particularly difficult



MARK BRENNAN/SIUSLAW NEWS

**Above, Kyle Terry (right), Program Manager for the Siuslaw Watershed Council, assists students in the removal of a large clump of invasive Scotch broom. Students spent Friday morning clearing the plant from the dunes near Heceta Beach Road.**

plant to remove. The middle school's field trip focused on the plant, for good reason.

See **DUNES 7A**



## Western Lane board upholds termination decision

*Board of Directors swears Yecny in as interim commissioner to replace retiring Sneddon*

By JACK DAVIS  
Siuslaw News

**D**uring the April 27 Western Lane Ambulance District (WLAD) Board of Directors meeting, more than 30 people crowded into the small conference room and hallways to hear arguments and rebuttals regarding the decision to terminate WLAD employee Cindy Haberman.

Haberman was placed on paid administrative leave on March 13 while an investigation into charges of "insubordination and unwillingness to follow the directions of your supervisor," were conducted, according to a termination letter dated April 4 and sent to Haberman from Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue (SVFR) Chief and WLAD Director Jim Langborg.

WLAD Board President Mike



**Terminated Western Lane Ambulance District employee Cindy Haberman (inset left) reads a prepared statement to the WLAD board, (above) during a 90-minute appeal of her firing during the April 27 board meeting.**

PHOTOS BY JACK DAVIS/SIUSLAW NEWS

Webb moderated the tense, but mostly civil, discourse, allowing Langborg and Haberman to present their respective positions.

Webb had to repeatedly inform audience members that they would have a chance to speak, but must wait for the proper time.

Langborg said, "After continued efforts, over a period of time it was found that the situation with this employee (Haberman) was not going to work out."

According to Langborg, the decision to terminate Haberman was made after revelations from a March 8 LifeMed meeting came to light.

LifeMed is a subscription membership available to local residents to help them offset the expense of an ambulance bill.

See **DISTRICT 6A**



MARK BRENNAN/SIUSLAW NEWS

## 'Spy Plane' pilot gives a history lesson

*Col. Jay Murphy speaks about Cold War during military museum Heritage Days*

By MARK BRENNAN  
Siuslaw News

**T**ension between North Korea and the U.S. has been in the news recently, and Florence residents had an opportunity to hear from an individual with unique insight into that dynamic last Saturday at

**Col. Jay Murphy, U.S. Air Force retired, speaks of his Cold War exploits to a rapt crowd April 22 at the Florence Municipal Airport.**

Florence Municipal Airport.

On April 22, Oregon Coast Military Museum (OCMM) sponsored a Heritage Day presentation by Col. Jay Murphy, a retired U.S. Air Force pilot who flew the SR-71 Fighter Jet on classified spy missions in the 1970s and 1980s.

OCMM Director Cal Applebee believes that the plane was one of the most important technological developments of that era.

"When one thinks of Cold War elements like cloak and dagger or 'Spy vs. Spy,' we often think in terms of people.

However, there have been numerous technological developments over the years that figure prominently in the Cold War, and one of those is the SR-71," Applebee said.

A crowd of approximately 75 heard about Murphy's exploits in the famous stealth fighter. They seemed enthralled by the colonel's tales of danger and heroism.

In the 1960s, Lockheed developed the SR-71 under CIA auspices. It was the first aircraft designed to incorporate stealth

See **HISTORY 6A**