

**VIKS' FINAL WEEK  
AROUND DIAMONDS**

SPORTS — B



**DAR celebrates  
9th birthday**

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# Siuslaw News

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SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON

## LCC invites public to 'Faces of Florence'

*Event designed to allow residents to meet students from other countries*

BY MARK BRENNAN  
Siuslaw News

Lane Community College at Florence is hosting a public event entitled "Faces of Florence" on Tuesday, May 9, at 7 p.m. in Room 103 on the campus, at 3149 Oak St. in Florence.

"As our local college, we are pleased to offer this educational gathering to our community, and to learn about the many faces of Florence," said Russ Pierson, Dean of the LCC Florence Center. "Whatever our political inclinations may be on issues around immigration, we can all agree that Florence and its environs is a region that welcomes and supports people of many nationalities and ethnicities who all contribute to building a strong and vibrant community."

The event is a response, in part, to the recent activities in town that targeted and arrested a number of undocumented immigrants.

Those arrests were conducted by members of Homeland Security's Immigration Control and Enforcement (ICE) task force and their actions have been the source of heated discussions at city council and school board meetings since they occurred last month.

Pierson referenced the arrests as part of the reason for the timing of the "Faces of Florence" event.

"Two of the people taken by ICE in Florence a month or so back have been a part

See **FACES 8A**

## City honors four officers at annual ceremony

BY JACK DAVIS  
Siuslaw News

*VFW Post 3232 sponsors Officer of the Year awards*

During the May 3 city council meeting, Florence Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 3232 again sponsored the Officer of the Year awards given to four local police, fire and ambulance personnel.

Recipients were: City of Florence Police Commander John Pitcher, Oregon State Police Trooper Darrell Sheets, Western Lane Ambulance District CPR and first aid coordinator George Lydick and Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue volunteer firefighter Jerry Ward.

VFW Post 3232 Commander Paul Gargis and member Gerald Hernandez introduced the recipients and presenters.

Police Chief Tom Turner said, "We selected John Pitcher for this award because he epitomizes what the community, city and police department want in a top police administrator. He provides the best possible police service to this community with a personal touch."

While presenting the award to trooper Sheets, OSP Sergeant Michael Berland said, "He is our lighthouse in the Florence area. For a trooper stationed on the outposts of the

See **OFFICERS 11A**

## Special Election candidates address 'Our Town' at forum



MARK BRENNAN/SIUSLAW NEWS

Former KCST News Director Bob Sneddon poses questions during Wednesday's live broadcast of 'Our Town,' which focused on candidates running for positions on the May 16 Special Election ballot. The broadcast was Sneddon's last after 18 years.

*The special live broadcast covered a myriad of discussion topics led by Bob Sneddon*

BY CHANTELE MEYER  
Siuslaw News

Former Coast Radio News Director Bob Sneddon ended his 18-year career hosting the monthly Our Town broadcast Wednesday with a forum for many of the Florence-area candidates in the May 16 Special Election. The forum included candidates for the boards of directors for Lane Community College, Siuslaw Public Library, Siuslaw School District, Western Lane Ambulance District and Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue and the Port of Siuslaw Board of Commissioners.

Sneddon held the 3-hour forum at Florence Events Center and broadcast live on Coast Radio. The show also aired the next morning.

About 70 people made up the live audience.

"If you want to boo me, then boo me," Sneddon told the audience before broadcasting began. "But try not to direct anything at the candidates. They're sticking their necks out and they're the ones on the ballot running for something. If they're elected, they're going to be serving us. They'll get plenty of 'boos' over the next two to four years, trust me."

**LANE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
Sneddon began with the candidates for Lane Community College Director Zone 1. Although three names appear on the ballots that most residents have received in the mail by now, Florence resident Sally Wantz has withdrawn her candidacy.

The first candidate, Jeffrey Gratreak, is the co-owner and gen-

eral manager of PizzAmoré in Albany, though he does fit the residency requirements for running for a position in Lane County.

"I always wanted to run for public office," Gratreak said.

As a recent graduate who attended two Oregon community colleges and two Oregon universities, he expressed his familiarity with the ways educational institutions are run.

"Running a successful business (had me) thinking of what I want to do to give back to the community," he said. "I want to help right things."

The second candidate, Melanie Muenzer, worked for 7 years with the U.S. Department of Education and served on President Obama's transition team in 2008. She currently is the associate vice president for academic administration and chief of staff to the provost at

University of Oregon. On April 12, Lane Community College's board appointed Muenzer to fill the vacant Director Zone 1 position.

"Besides my family, there's actually nothing I care about more than ensuring that everybody, regardless of their background, has the same opportunity for quality, affordable education," Muenzer said.

During their discussion, Sneddon guided the candidates onto the topics of the community college's \$10 million budget shortfall, student enrollment and the role of the board, especially with regard to the college's new president, Dr. Margaret A. Hamilton, who begins in July.

Gratreak said, "It really should be about the students. The problems that face the college can be

See **FORUM 6A**

## TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK SALUTES EDUCATORS

*Letters, photos and tributes to teachers past and present to be highlighted*

BY MARK BRENNAN  
Siuslaw News

The National Education Association and National Parent Teacher Association (PTA) have declared Tuesday, May 9, National Teachers Day and the week from May 7 through May 13, Teacher Appreciation Week.

Since 1984, there has been an official recognition of the work teachers do and this year's theme



CHANTELLE MEYER/SIUSLAW NEWS

Florence Mayor Joe Henry honors the Florence Community PTA on May 1.

is "Teachers Deliver."

In a joint open letter to their organizations, National PTA President Laura Bay and NEA President Lily Eskelsen-Garcia encouraged interested citizens to contact educators in their community and share their appreciation for the work teachers do

on a daily basis.

Florence Community PTA President Tiffany Holdahl echoes these sentiments, "Teachers are the foundation that our schools are built on, and in celebration of Teacher Appreciation Week we'd like to shower them with tangible thank you notes."

One of the main points that the national organizations and the

See **TEACHERS 9A**

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