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SPORTS — B



Midcoast Wave Visitor's Guide

SPECIAL PUBLICATION INSIDE



Siuslaw News

126TH YEAR | ISSUE NO. 40

SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON

READY TO REIGN

Queen Rhododendra Claire Waggoner fulfills her heritage; Benjamin Cahoon becomes third King of the Coast

King of the Coast Ben Cahoon and Queen Rhododendra Claire Waggoner proudly took the stage at the end of the Rhododendron Court Coronation Thursday night at the Florence Events Center. More than 300 people attended the event, which featured a return to traditions of the past.

Referencing 110 years of Florence's festival history, Rhody Court Committee chairwomen Pat Sapp and Wendy Krause planned a Coronation night of talent, pageantry and poise.

Krause emceed with plenty of poise herself, along with local humorist Ned Hickson, who showed off a few talents of his own.

The five princesses of the Junior Court — first-grader Clover Holbrook, second-grader Chloe Clark, third-grader Madeline Jerabek, fourth-grader Arianna Williams and fifth-grader Ava Center — earned applause and cheers throughout the evening as they waved to the audience, answered impromptu questions from Hickson and stood beside their fathers.

A panel of five judges evaluated the three Senior Court princes and five Senior Court Princesses on their talents, stage presence and

formal wear. The final judging category was the students' 2017 Rhododendron Festival pin sales.

Cahoon showed a fast motion video of himself painting a watercolor of the Siuslaw River Bridge while singing "Can't Help Falling in Love" and playing a ukulele. He later answered a question about what he would bring to a deserted island: three 'Bs' — the Bible, a blanket and "bow-'n'-arrows."

Cahoon is only the third King of the Coast in Rhody Fest history.

Prince Kyle Doran performed card tricks with the help of judge Vanessa Buss, 1989's Queen Rhododendra. During his interview, he said the best compliment he ever received was "a \$20 tip."

Prince Michael Larson claimed not to have



King of the Coast Ben Cahoon and Queen Rhododendra take the helms of rhododendron royalty Thursday night.

a demonstrable talent, but his comedic routine brought plenty of laughs. He also showed

See **RHODY 6A**

ELECTION 2017

Local incumbents fare well in Special Election

Jail levy receives overwhelming renewal support

With few exceptions, incumbents were reelected to serve on boards throughout the Florence area during the May 16 Special Election.

By JACK DAVIS
Siuslaw News

Two board position races were tight, but currently do not qualify for an automatic recount.

The closest race was between Bill Meyer and Bill Fleenor for Port of Siuslaw Position 5. Meyer beat out Fleenor by a scant 26 votes out of a total of 3,634 votes cast for the two candidates. A third candidate, David Swinney, received 887 votes.

The three candidates were running to replace retiring Port Commissioner Ron Caputo.

Mike Buckwald and Terry Duman successfully held off opponents to return to the port board for four more years.

In the Western Lane Ambulance District (WLAD) Director Position 4 race, challenger Larry Farnsworth narrowly defeated incumbent Laura Anne Stonelake by 65 votes out of a total of 4,467 cast for the two candidates. Stonelake, who has served on the WLAD board for more than 18 years, was one of the few incumbents to be defeated in the May 16 election.

In order to qualify for an automatic recount, the vote count difference must be less than .002 percent. Neither of the two close races qualifies.

Lane County Clerk Cheryl Betschart said, "Nothing is final until we certify the results on June 5. People can still resolve unsigned ballots. We are also receiving ballots that are coming from other counties."

According to Betschart, Oregon ballots may be dropped off at any ballot drop off location in the state and then forwarded on to the voter's county of residence.

Both Mike Webb and Rick Yecny ran unopposed and were reelected to the WLAD board.

All four incumbents running for the Siuslaw School District board of directors were reelected to serve four more years.

Incumbent Paul Burns ran against Elizabeth Miller and received almost 60 percent of votes cast. Suzanne Mann-Heintz received 59 percent of votes, compared to her opponent Jesse Chapman, who received approximately 41 percent.

John Barnett and Bill McDougale, who ran unopposed, were also reelected to the school board.

See **ELECTION 7A**

Florence — city in perpetual motion

Florence continues to pursue economic development with initiatives, teamwork

By CHANTELLE MEYER
Siuslaw News

Since the current Florence City Council started together in 2015, the council and city staff have made economic development a main focus for the city. With the addition in November 2016 of Economic Development Catalyst Jesse Dolin, Florence, "The City in Motion," has started to see fruit from a long period of sowing into new and expanding businesses.

From a second location for local coffee shop Ocean Grinds Coffee Co. to new businesses in Historic Old Town, Dolin and Florence city staff have worked together to make a culture where businesses

can grow and thrive.

For Top Hydraulics owner Klaus Witte, Florence's momentum was a huge draw for moving his business into city proper.

"We get a good balance of quality of life in Florence, with much thanks to the city for being so involved in advancing itself," he said.

His wife, Maria, said city staff, including City Manager Erin Reynolds, City Recorder Kelli Weese and Dolin, showed "a tremendous willingness to take part" in Top Hydraulic's expansion.

Top Hydraulic, 3235 Pacific View Drive, rebuilds hydraulic parts for more than 30 brands of

modern convertible vehicles. It is a niche market located in Florence that ships all over the world.

"We're a web-based business and most of our customers are everywhere else except here, where they can drive convertibles," Maria said.

According to Witte, he looked into purchasing property in September to expand his business. By October, he worked with the city to purchase an almost 2-acre plot at the Pacific View Business Park and moved into the nearly-completed facility at the end of March.

Now, the business has room to expand and employ up to three times the size of the current staff,

and all at a living wage.

"Community, as corny as it sounds, is the main motivator that we did this," Klaus said. "We could have done just fine by continuing to work in our home, ... but we like it here and it's good for the community to have good jobs."

Maria agreed.

"This business is going to provide jobs for the community and provide more of a taxbase to improve the city," she said. "We are moving forward in a way that is responsible to the community, the city and the land, and also to encourage growth here."

See **BUSINESS 7A**

Mapleton School District to receive \$2.9 million to improve structural integrity

By MARK BRENNAN
Siuslaw News

Mapleton School District announced that it has received two significant grants from the Oregon Seismic Rehabilitation Program.

The grants, totaling \$2.9 million, will be used for major structural upgrades to the Mapleton elementary and high schools.

The realization that Oregon is at risk of a major Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake drove the state's effort to invest now to protect critical community structures from catastrophic damage.

When announcing the recipients of this year's seismic grants on April 17,

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown emphasized the need to proactively retrofit rural community centers like the Mapleton schools.

"Ensuring every community in the state, particularly in rural regions, has safe community gathering places and emergency response infrastructure will be key to Oregon's recovery from a significant seismic event," Brown said. "While this may seem to be a daunting task, we're making steady progress, through a concerted and coordinated effort by communities, individuals, businesses and, as a state, toward building a more



The Mapleton School District track is one of the first and easiest of the upgrades that will be undertaken in the ongoing effort to upgrade facilities and seismically retrofit buildings on campus.

resilient Oregon."

The grant awards come at an interesting time for the district as it arrives on the heels of recently approved bond measures designated for upgrading many aspects of the Mapleton campus.

Mapleton Superintendent Jodi O'Mara is pleased that the district will now be able to initiate much needed infrastructure refurbishment to insure that students are attending classes in safe structures.

"The seismic grants that we were just awarded were for \$1.4 million for the elementary school and \$1.5 million for the high school, and that money is to be used

specifically for seismic upgrades," she said. "For instance, that is replacing siding with sheer walls and for structural reinforcements where we need to use bolts to anchor the walls to the foundation, as well as ensuring the roofing is seismically secure."

The combination of the new awards and the funds provided by the bond measure will allow for a number of significant upgrades to the campus that were hoped for but not guaranteed.

O'Mara is looking forward to the improvements that were already scheduled — such as the striping of the track — and

See **UPGRADES 7A**