

LIGHTHOUSE WEEK

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Siuslaw News

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SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON

Fiber comes to Florence, finally *Siuslaw Broadband, Hyak bring fiber optics to businesses, neighborhoods*

BY CHANTELE MEYER
Siuslaw News

In a new pilot project announced this week, Siuslaw Broadband, doing business as Hyak, will install fiber optics to Florence's Pacific View Business Park and certain nearby residential and business areas.

"Siuslaw Broadband has been trying to get fiber off the ground for a while," owner Robbie Wright said. "We have been in Florence for six years, so we are in touch with the technology needs that people have."

The Internet service merged with Full Spectrum Computers in April, just one of several

tech-based announcements Siuslaw Broadband wanted to announce for 2017. The other is the formation of Hyak as a new brand, specifically for fiber optic services.

Hyak will partner with Florence Contractor Ray Wells, Inc., to install fiber in pilot areas including Pacific View Business Park, the Park Village

neighborhood and the Boys and Girls Club of Western Lane County.

"Long-term, we're interested in keeping construction in house, but we couldn't have a better partner as we get started. The city knows and trusts Norm (Wells), and we do, too," Wright said.

He said the pilot project will

begin a six- to eight-week construction in August, "after the eclipse."

"We chose the business park since it is centrally located. From there, we can grow this to someday take fiber all over the city," Wright said.

Hyak will install fiber underground. Since the area near Pacific View Drive has similar-

ly built homes, this allows for easier construction of the underground fiber line.

According to Wright, fiber is a superior technology in many ways, including its ability to be updated with future technological advances.

See **FIBER 7A**

Siuslaw Valley seats new board members and gets to work

New chaplain position, board leadership named

Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue welcomed two new board members on July. Directors Ron Green and Ned Hickson took the oath of office as the first action item undertaken at the district's scheduled monthly meeting.

BY MARK BRENNAN
Siuslaw News

Chief Director Jim Langborg administered the oath individually to Green and Hickson and the new board was convened.

The board's first order of business was the nomination of and voting on new officers for the board.

Green and sitting board member John Carnahan both received nominations for board president, with Green then voted in as president and Carnahan as vice president.

Current board member Woody Woodbury was nominated for and accepted the position of secretary treasurer.

The board's next order of business was the introduction and swearing in of Chaplain Lori Severance. Langborg presented Severance's resume and qualifications, and spoke highly of her experience.

"It's a privilege to welcome her to our ranks," Langborg said. "We feel fortunate to be able to add someone who brings 20 years of experience as a professional crisis intervention worker ... with a master's degree in social work and in psychology."

Langborg then asked the board to approve the job description that had been included in the meeting packet that had been prepared for the members.

Carnahan initiated a brief discussion, questioning the need for and the wisdom of creating a new paid position, as the district currently has four volunteer

See **BOARD 6A**

DEADWOOD CEMETERY COMES ALIVE

Trustees revitalize State Historic Cemetery through grants, research, volunteers

BY JARED ANDERSON
Siuslaw News

It's the breathtaking, giant sequoias that people notice first when they enter the main grounds of the Deadwood Cemetery.

Hidden on a hill overlooking a river and surrounded by the majestic trees, the cemetery exists in another world only found in fantasy novels.

Just beyond the sequoias are the graves.

In the morning, the rising sun passes through the trees, casting beams of light on headstones creating a haunting yet peaceful aura.

On June 22, Deadwood Pioneer Cemetery Board of Trustees was awarded \$5,860 grant from the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department's Historic Cemeteries. The grant will pay for new headstones to replace 35 decayed markers.

The project is only a component of a larger push to restore the cemetery.

The cemetery is a small gravesite, its origins dating back to the turn of the 19th century. A church and a school used rest next to the site but were lost to time.

The park is impeccably kept, important for a State Historic Cemetery designated area. A massive, 7-ton entry rock displays that moniker as you enter its windy entrance road.

A new water irrigation system has been put into place. The grass is trimmed perfectly. It's a beautiful monument to the rich history of the area.

It didn't used to be this way.

The cemetery, which has around 300 graves, fell into a state of disrepair over the years. This was of particular concern because it was still hosting new burials.

However, its decay was not for a lack of trying.

For a time, the Deadwood Pioneer Cemetery Board of Trustees consisted of only three people: Don Wilbur, his daughter Sally and Gary



PHOTOS BY JARED ANDERSON/SIUSLAW NEWS

A tranquil sight meets visitors at the historic Deadwood Cemetery, where standing headstones and faded grave markers show more than two centuries of history. The cemetery's board of trustees plans to replace 35 decayed or lost markers with grant money.

Burnett.

Wilbur's family had taken care of the cemetery for decades.

The three-person board, made up of volunteers, worked diligently to care for the grounds.

It was hard labor, though, and expensive. They had to dig the graves, manure the grounds, care for the road leading to the site and various other clerical and physical responsibilities.

When Sally passed away four years ago, the task became overwhelming. The trustees needed help to revitalize the historic site.

Around six months after Sally passed,



Megan Gerber was hired to work for Wilbur's company, Don Wilbur Ltd.

Gerber was asked to be the secretary for the board meetings, which began to catalog the issues with the site.

In time, the trustees introduced new rules and guidelines.

See **CEMETERY 7A**

Past SHS principal killed in motorcycle accident

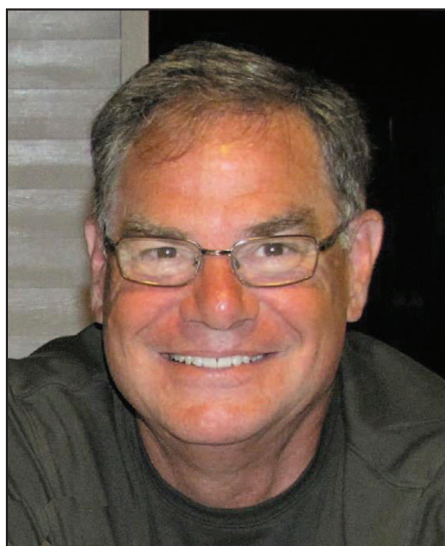
BY NED HICKSON
Siuslaw News

Past Siuslaw High School teacher, vice-principal and principal John Weeks, 65, was killed in a highway accident early Wednesday morning, July 19, at approximately 10:30 a.m.

Weeks was traveling eastbound on his black 2015 BMW motorcycle on Highway 20, about seven miles east of Sweet Home, Ore., when he struck the side of a green 2016 Kenworth log truck heading westbound.

Weeks was pronounced dead at the scene and Highway 20 was closed for about three hours while Oregon State Police interviewed witnesses and conducted their investigation.

According to LaGrand Patrol Sergeant and Public Information Officer Kyle Hove, it was determined that Weeks unintentionally veered into



John Weeks

oncoming traffic, clipping the front corner of the log truck driven by Kenneth Keil Reynolds.

Reynolds was not injured, according to Oregon State Police.

A witness told officials that they believed Weeks may have been looking over his shoulder while negotiating a curve when he veered into traffic.

Sweet Home Fire and Ambulance District, along with Oregon Department of Transportation, assisted Oregon State Police at the scene.

Weeks attended Southern Oregon University, where he earned his bachelor's degree, then received his masters at Western Oregon University.

While at Siuslaw High School, he taught English and Media before becoming the school's vice-principal in 1987, working with long-time principal Richard Whitmore.

Weeks continued his education, attending the University of Oregon and earning his degree in school administration before eventually taking over as principal when Whitmore retired in 1993.

See **WEEKS 6A**

7-year-old boy dies after ATV accident

Upriver agencies respond to death

BY JARED ANDERSON
Siuslaw News

The Upriver community is reeling from the sudden death of 7-year-old Joe Motichka, of Mapleton, on Tuesday, July 18.

Members of the Western Lane Ambulance District and Deadwood Creek Fire District responded to the incident where Motichka succumbed to injuries related to an ATV accident near Highway 36.

Motichka was riding the ATV when it tipped over, killing him instantly. He was wearing protective gear at the time.

In lieu of flowers, a memorial fund has been set up through Banner Bank to help with the funeral costs, with a stated goal of \$5,000. Family friend Mary Stands help set up the fund.

Donations can be made to any Banner Bank. People are asked to make checks payable to "The Joe Motichka Memorial Fund."

A go-fund-me is also set up on Facebook by Stands, where she wrote, "The family wants to say thank you for all the outpouring prayers, love and support in this tragic time."

A private celebration of Motichka's life will be held today.

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