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**Siuslaw**  
**News**



**Fiber** from 1A

Once the fiber optics are laid, only the connectors at the ends of the lines will need to be modified for future upgrades, versus other communication utilities, which would need much more work to modify.

Currently, standard Internet packages in town provide anywhere from 3 Mbps to 80 Mbps of data. Movie streaming services, such as Netflix or Hulu, require at least 5 Mbps for a two-hour movie, so common packages start at 6 Mbps.

The standard for Hyak's fiber will be 1 Gbps, or 1,000 Mbps. It could go all the way up to 10 Gbps.

"Think of it as a water pipe," Wright said. "A hose letting in 60 liters of water just isn't going to compare to a hose bringing in 1,000 liters of water. One is just going to get you more power and speed."

To get the pilot project started, Wright worked with private investors, Oregon Pacific Bank, Florence City Recorder Kelli Weese, the Planning Department and Public Works, as well as the city's economic development catalyst, Jesse Dolin.

"You don't have to live in an urban center now to have access to high speed Internet, an important aspect to many thriving businesses," Dolin said. "Now, you can live in a beautiful city like this."

Dolin sees the speed fiber brings as essential to education at Siuslaw School District and Lane Community College Florence Center, especially as instructors stream educational content or students learn how to interact with and thrive in the modern world.

"Fiber goes beyond streaming high-definition movies," Dolin added. "It allows us to compete in the global economy — for both businesses, like Top Hydraulics at the business park, and for home-based businesses and startups."

Wright, who serves on the

Florence Economic Development Committee and as a board member of the Florence Area Chamber of Commerce, said the city has a strong desire for and sees the need for this service in town, "but it hasn't been a budget priority."

He said he hopes people will be able to see the feasibility and the demand for fiber as they expand the pilot project.

"We've been seeing some great response already," Wright said. "We know the technology and the community well, so we plan to demonstrate success to our partners."

"In a perfect world, I would love to see fiber access all over western Lane County."

Looking into options for the future, Dolin said the pilot project

could lead to increased occupation of the Pacific View Business Park, which currently has 24 remaining lots for sale or lease.

"It could incentivize businesses to move to Florence, as well as encourage people looking to relocate," he said. "Florence is beautiful. Who wouldn't want to live here? Now, people can have a thriving business, increase their educational and job skills and transition to new industries."

The pilot project will be accessible to up to 627 individual lots. Businesses and residents in the area will have to sign up for inclusion.

More information, including how to register, will be available at SiuslawBroadband.com.

**Cemetery** from 1A

Grants helped fund cemetery mapping, a new website and signage to direct travelers to the destination.

One of the major problems the

cemetery faced was the use of temporary markers.

Occasionally, families were unable to put up permanent headstones for various reasons, usually financial. Small blocks of diverse materials — primarily stone and metal — with simple phrases were

placed instead, with the intention of purchasing proper headstones down the road.

But for years, in some cases decades, only the markers remained.

Sometimes the money never came through for the families. Other times they moved — or passed — away. As the families disappeared, so did the information on the stones.

In one instance, "Grandfather" was simply etched in stone, with no other identification.

Time could be unkind to these markers. In some cases, general wear and the infamous Oregon rains eroded the simple phrases, leaving no identifying information at all.

What the cemetery board needed was a good genealogist to trace these burials, and it just so happened they found one in Pat Rongey, a member of the Siuslaw Genealogical Society.

"Pat is awesome," Gerber exclaimed. "She came on board three years ago with all these ideas. She's really enthusiastic with people finding their heritage and has been a terrific source of information."

Rongey and the board began making lists of the unknown headstones and unearthing names.

It was a painstaking process, tracking down relatives or searching obituaries. Most of the graves were identified. For those that weren't, respectful but anonymous headstones needed to be placed.

The grant will pay for these.



JARED ANDERSON/SIUSLAW NEWS

**Headstones at Deadwood Cemetery date as far back as the 1800s. The gravesite is still in use today.**

While the headstone replacements are a major breakthrough, the board isn't stopping there.

An annual Heritage Day is held, with Civil War reenactors invited to relive the first burial in front of a giant crowd who enjoy food, historical displays and educational games.

Of particular concern are the burials of veterans. There are currently 33 known sites held by them, dating back to the Civil War. A memorial is being designed to honor those, with plans to build on a newly sown area overlooking the river.

A gazebo is being planned to overlook the memorial. An ash scattering garden will also be placed, an important addition considering that the cremation rate is 48.6 percent of the population, according to the Cremation Association of North America.

All of this has reignited interest in the cemetery. The board now has six members. Donations and volunteer labor have been given from people across the Siuslaw region.

Deadwood resident Kathleen Brooks said, "Rural areas run a risk for losing their identities. A place like the Deadwood cemetery is a link to our past. It's a beautiful place where people can gather and have that link to the past."

For Gerber, the ultimate goal is to have the site become a welcoming place for everyone to visit.

"It's so the (community) can look after the people," she explained. "To honor our heritage and the family members, and to make a place that is respectful."

Anyone interested in volunteering, donating or researching are encouraged to email deadwoodcem@gmail.com or call 541-964-3345.

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