

# Senior park pass rate increases

SPORTS — B



Reviews

BY BURNEY GARELICK

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# Siuslaw News

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SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON

## Relay for Life paints the town purple

2017 reinvigorates annual fundraiser

BY MARK BRENNAN  
Siuslaw News

The 2017 American Cancer Society Relay for Life fundraiser was held July 22 at the Florence Events Center (FEC). The location was new, but the goal of the effort remains the same as it has for years: to raise awareness and money for the ongoing battle against cancer.

The move from outdoors to indoors was the main change for Relay, but other modifications included a noon to midnight timeline and a shorter, easier walking track.

Another notable change was the addition of a gathering area for participants and community members to sit, share stories of recovery or loss, listen to music or grab a bite to eat and relax between laps.

Amy Bickleman, community manager of the Great Western Division of the American Cancer



MARK BRENNAN/SIUSLAW NEWS

Participants in this year's Relay For Life Survivor Walk receive flowers, ribbons and medals in recognition of their struggle and successful fight against cancer.

Association, introduced the Relay Team Captains and officially began the 2017 Florence Relay for Life.

Relay organizers hoped one of the benefits of holding the event at the FEC was the option to move indoors during inclement weather.

Although the weather cooper-

ated on Saturday, the ability to come inside and take a break was appreciated by the crowd.

"I found it refreshing and inspiring to see how attendees used the venue for the event," Bickleman said. "People were always walking, and folks were also enjoying the comfortable seats at the table rounds, air con-

ditioning, indoor shopping and fundraising and live entertainment. I noticed many people would walk a few laps and then enjoy the indoor activities, then walk a few more laps. It was a really fun way to enjoy the event and the venue."

See RELAY 6A

## WILDLIFE SIGHTINGS

# Cougar, bear sightings increase around Florence

Agencies advise extra safety precautions for residents, pets

The woman woke up, got out of bed, looked outside her window and was greeted with pure horror: her cat hung from the teeth of a cougar.

BY JARED ANDERSON  
Siuslaw News

As she ran outside with her dog to scare it off, another cougar jumped off the roof.

And then it grabbed the dog.

This is one of many stories Karen Crowder has heard about cougars and bears in the Sutton Lake area. She works at the Twin Lakes Store, a small market near Sutton Lake, a few miles north of Florence.

Residents from the wooded suburbs come down to the store to buy a snack, catch up on local news and recount the stories of a seemingly endless stream of bear and cougar sightings.

"We're overpopulated with them," Crowder said. "We're seeing way too many. They're in broad daylight, walking down the streets, looking in houses. That's crazy!"

Their fears can be visceral.

While the bear sightings can be comical at times, some can be dangerous — a bear and her cub sitting on the front porch when a homeowner tried to get the kids off to school, for example.

And then there are the cougars.

In Crowder's story — which neither she nor the newspaper could verify — the dog reportedly survived after extensive medical bills. The woman who told Crowder the account chased the cougars off with a broom.

For Twin Lakes, these stories used to be rare. Now, they get around two a week.

Hung up on a bookshelf near the front counter, pictures of these animals taken by local residents can be seen, the locations of their sightings clearly marked. Also posted, a hunter for hire.

The same pictures fill Facebook and social media posts, peppered with comments of people aghast or delighted, depending on the animal and situation.

Florence Police Commander John Pitcher said he has noticed an uptick in bear sightings in the area.

"We were sitting in my office the other day and we saw a bear and its cub across the street," he said.

Wildlife biologist Jason Kirchner from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) has also noticed the increase.

"Florence typically has a lot of bears as it is, but overall we're seeing more bear activity and complaints," he said.

Kirchner believes the increase may be due to the failure of the berry crop this season.

"The salmonberries were really late this year," he said. "The thimbleberries haven't been seen, nor the elderberries, and the blackberries are still pretty green."

The cause, he hypothesized, was the longer winter and heavy rains, which suppressed the berry yield.

See WILDLIFE 6A



PHOTO BY MELISSA KEEL

A large tree crushes the bed of John and Erica Sanchez after it falls onto their home Sunday night.

## Tree crushes cabin, traps man

Siuslaw Valley, Western Lane respond to call

On Sunday night, Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue (SVFR) and Western Lane Ambulance District (WLAD) responded to a 911 call in the 88000 block of Highway 101.

BY MARK BRENNAN  
Siuslaw News

The call brought them to a small cabin, tucked back in the woods, that was occupied by John and Erica Sanchez and their dog Trudy.

According to Erica, they had just settled in to watch some television when they were interrupted by a very loud crash.

"We were watching 'Game of Thrones,' and then there was this sound, it was like a bomb. It was so loud you wouldn't believe it. Then the lights went out immediately and my husband John couldn't get up," she said. "He was stuck on the bed by a beam that crashed through the roof and it was holding

him down."

Erica described the night as being pitch black, with glass everywhere as she went down the hallway to call 911.

"The (responders) came so fast, it was amazing. They came right in, in the dark, and they got him out," she said.

Fire Marshal Sean Barrett said 911 dispatch alerted both SVFR and WLAD to the reported tree on a house with one victim trapped inside.

"Upon arrival, a non-injured man was trapped inside his bedroom by the fallen tree. Firefighters extricated him and medics evaluated him," Barrett said. "He was found to be in good health."

Medics looked over both Erica and John, and Trudy the dog was extricated from the home without complication.

See TREE 6A

## EMAC seeks input on use of foam take-out containers

BY MARK BRENNAN  
Siuslaw News

The City of Florence Environmental Management Advisory Committee (EMAC) is conducting an online survey on the issue of take-out containers.

EMAC also held a public forum July 17.

Florence City Planner Wendy FarleyCampbell is overseeing this effort to attempt a reduction in carcinogens in the local environment.

"EMAC is looking for a diverse and thorough community dialogue on the benefits and impacts to regulating food-grade foam," she said.

A panel at the July 17 forum shared information on the problems presented by the use of Expanded Poly-Styrene foam (EPS), commonly referred to as Styrofoam, in to-go containers.

David Lloyd, acting chair of the committee, said, "We're looking into ways to reduce or eliminate some of the negative impacts

of polystyrene foam. These impacts include litter; harm to wildlife and the environment; and increased cost of processing recycling due to foam contamination, since foam is not recyclable."

FarleyCampbell presented a slide show that highlighted the

See SURVEY 6A

## COOL PLACES TO VISIT THIS SUMMER

SPECIAL FEATURE: This summer we are highlighting unique spots that make the central Oregon coast one of the coolest places to live and play. New locations will be featured each month.

## C & M Stables

90241 Highway 101, Florence | 541-997-7450

AT A GLANCE: Horseback riding on the coast is at its best with C&M Stables. This family-friendly activity is open to beginning, intermediate and advanced riders, including youth.

C&M Stables offers a variety of timed rides. Saddle up before hitting the trail to the beach and dune trails, or stay in for a corral ride at the stables.

Reservations are recommended, but drop-ins are welcome.

Approximately 60 horses are available daily. Horses range in ages, from young and spunky to older and reliable, so people in a riding party can each be matched to their ideal horse.

Wranglers at C&M Stables want every visitor to have the ride of a lifetime. From taking people to cool forest paths or riding on



COURTESY PHOTO

the beach at sunset, C&M Stables provides the venue, equipment and expertise to fit all coastal horseback riding needs.

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