

**TACKLING PROBLEMS HEAD-ON**

SPORTS — B



# Siuslaw News

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SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON

## Port of Siuslaw fires Steven Leskin

*Port manager fired 'with cause' — sexual harassment claim unsubstantiated*

BY JARED ANDERSON  
Siuslaw News

**(Editor's note: Information used in this story was collected from public records, meeting tapes, local and state agency documents and confirmed sources. By law, we are not allowed to include any information obtained during executive session.)**

After an executive session held Monday, Aug. 8, the Port of Siuslaw commission unanimously voted to terminate the employment of Port Manager Steven Leskin with cause. The decision comes after allegations of insubordination and inappropriate behavior, followed by a three-month paid administrative leave due to an investigation over a sexual harassment claim.

The five-member commission included Terry Duman, Nancy Rickard, Mike Buckwald, David Huntington and Bill Meyer.

Meyer, who is new to the commission, had not worked with Leskin; Meyer replaced past commissioner Ron Caputo, who was the commission's president during Leskin's tenure.

In a statement regarding the dismissal, Port Attorney Jim Brewer stated, "The port has a policy not to discuss personnel matters, but it is fair to say that the port was unable to substantiate the sexual harassment complaint."

The termination comes at the end of a year's worth of bitter arguments and public outbursts that resulted in accusations of fraud, collusion, illegal voting, insubordination, misleading the Oregon Government Ethics Commission, misuse of taxpayer funds and, most recently, sexual harassment.

While disagreements between the port commissioners and Leskin were minor after Leskin's initial hiring on Feb. 1, 2016, tensions rose incrementally until March 17, culminating in the commission's unanimous decision to terminate Leskin on Monday.

At a Feb. 15 public meeting, Leskin proposed a port resolution that would clarify what constitutes a commercial vessel versus a recreational designation. Leskin said he was concerned that people were "gaming" the port by erroneously claiming they were commercial fishing vessels but not actually fishing.

The annual moorage rate for a 38-foot commercial vessel (fees vary based on ship size) was \$997. The recreational rate would \$1,680 — which is a large source of income for the port.

"Those fishing licenses cost 25 bucks," Leskin said. "Then they're not fishing. We hear people bragging about it."

Leskin stated he knew of at least four boats that were never leaving their slips, which Duman agreed with. "We know the boats," he said.

But the resolution proposed by Leskin was vague, with no set criteria on how to judge what a commercial vessel was.

"It needs to be black and white," Duman insisted.

See **PORT 6A**



PHOTOS BY MARK BRENNAN/SIUSLAW NEWS

**M**usic for Malakai, a fundraiser for Florence sixth-grader Malakai Kirk (with his family, left, in a hat), took place on Saturday at Three Rivers Casino Resort's Event Center. Music was provided by Florence band Los Bastardos (above) and Eugene reggae band Sol Seed. Malakai's mother, Laurie Stone, said, "This is another example of the wonderful community we live in. We are extremely lucky to have friends and neighbors who really care about each other. We want to thank everyone who made this event possible. Los Bastardos and Sol Seed provided great music for us to enjoy." The turnout for the event was strong and all the money raised will go towards Malakai's medical expenses.



## REAL SCIENCE

*Physicist Dr. James Brau lectures on upcoming Aug. 21 Solar Eclipse*

BY MARK BRENNAN  
Siuslaw News

The idea of the summer of the Solar Eclipse came into clearer focus on Saturday with the appearance of world-renowned physicist Dr. James Brau at the Siuslaw Public Library.

Brau, a longtime academic star at the University of Oregon, made this stop in Florence en route to a high-profile conference in China, where he will continue to share his insights into the upcoming Solar Eclipse on Monday, Aug. 21.

The physicist's 90-minute, multimedia lecture was scheduled as a way to provide information about the upcoming celestial event.

"This is a very rare event," Brau said. "It is the first total solar eclipse to come all the way across the United States in 99 years. The shadow of the moon will come on shore in Oregon and pass all the way across the country in about an hour and a half."

"Here, it will be 99 percent totality, which is still pretty amazing, but if you are really interested in experiencing the full extent of the event, you really should try to get into an area in the path of totality."

This 65- to 70-mile wide corridor stretches from Waldport to Pacific City, centered around Depoe Bay, and will pass east through Salem Madras and Baker City. Other states included in the path of totality are Idaho, Wyoming, Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia and South Carolina.

"During totality, what you will see is a dark sky, possibly with planets visible, and the stars will probably come out. Venus should be very visible and you will be able to see the corona around the sun," Brau said. "It should be a very exciting experience."

Brau emphasized that people should wear protective eye coverings during the eclipse.

"People should be using the official eclipse glasses, not sunglasses, to watch the eclipse. The special glasses dramatically reduce the effects, more than sunglasses would," he said.

Brau's classes on the University of Oregon campus are often filled semesters ahead, and subjects regularly

See **ECLIPSE 8A**

## COOL PLACES TO VISIT THIS SUMMER

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**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.

## SHIPWRECKS OF THE OREGON COAST

**AT A GLANCE:** While some of the Oregon coast's shipwrecks are visible throughout the year, some prove elusive except when conditions are perfect. Here are six, from the north coast to North Bend:

1. Peter Iredale — Fort Stevens State Park. Remnants of the 275-foot sailing ship's rusted bow and masts are still visible jutting out of the sand where it ran aground in 1906.
2. Emily G. Reed — Rockaway Beach. Lost en route to Portland with a cargo of coal from New South Wales, the 215-foot sailboat crashed into rocks near the mouth of the Nehalem River in 1908. Storms and erosion periodically reveal the wreck.
3. J. Marhoffer — Boiler Bay, Depoe Bay. The steamboat's remains helped Boiler Bay get its name after a gas fire wrecked the J. Marhoffer in



PETER IREDALE BY MATT CONWELL

1910. The best time to view the 12-foot diameter boiler is at low tide.

4. The Bella — Siuslaw River South Jetty. The Bella was built in Acme (now Cushman) on the Siuslaw River. Winter storms sometimes uncover the bow of the 121-foot schooner, which was blown ashore in 1906 while waiting to cross the bar.

5. Sujameco — Horsfall Beach, North Bend. Like an eerie skeleton, onlookers can sometimes see the remains of the Sujameco, a 324-foot steam schooner that ran aground in 1929.
6. George L. Olson — Horsfall Beach. Only seen briefly in 2008, George L. Olson has since been reburied by sand and the tide. However, this steam schooner, built in 1917, that wrecked in 1944 will likely appear again.

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