

SPOTLIGHT ON SPORTSMANSHIP

SPORTS — B



Man 'drives thru' Papa Murphy's

INSIDE — A3



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SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON

Friends of the FEC receives \$30,800 grant

Oregon Cultural Trust awards Cultural Development Capacity Grant for lighting, sound

Oregon Cultural Trust announced this week that Friends of the Florence Events Center (FEC) received a Cultural Development Capacity Grant totaling \$30,800.

By CHANTELLE MEYER
Siuslaw News

"Generous spring donors lifted Oregon Cultural Trust fundraising to a new high, resulting in a record \$2.94 million in grants to 136 cultural nonprofits for fiscal year 2018," the grant package stated.

The grant will "support theater lighting and sound equipment upgrades to improve sustainability of the cultural events center operations."

The Friends of the FEC will provide matching funds for the project, with in-kind donations and donated staff hours bringing the total project to \$70,000.

FEC Marketing Specialist Jennifer Connor, who worked with the Friends to write the grant, said, "This is something we've been hoping to do. It has been on the wish list since we started raising money (in 2016) with Dancing with Sea Lions. We saw there might be potential to do something big."

Connor and members of the Friends attended several Oregon Cultural Trust "Conversations with Funders" to determine the type of grant they should seek.

"When we talked to some of these organizations back in January, they said there weren't a lot of people applying in this category. Everybody heard that, and about 70 grants were requested in the capacity category. There was really stiff competition this year," Connor said.

According to Oregon Cultural Trust, the Cultural Development Grants — which



CHANTELLE MEYER/SIUSLAW NEWS

Florence Events Center, 715 Quince St., will get new LED stage lighting and an upgraded sound system thanks to an Oregon Cultural Trust Cultural Development Capacity Grant obtained by the Friends of the FEC. Above, the Friends host a Florence Area Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours Aug. 3 under the stage lights of the FEC.

address access, capacity, creativity and preservation — included first-time awards to 37 organizations and an average grant award of \$17,050. More than half of the grants went to organizations outside the Portland Metro area.

FEC Director Kevin Rhodes said, "It's nice that we got an award this size while being on the coast. Now we have some resources to

work with."

The Friends wrote the grant with assistance from local grant writer Susy Lacer and included a video made by Margaret McDiarmid.

"Margaret's video showcased performances at the FEC," Connor said.

See **GRANT 6A**

Are the kids still alright? Part II

Local teens speak about the normalization of alcohol

By JARED ANDERSON AND HANNA ANDERSON — INTERN
Siuslaw News

(Editor's Note: This is the second in a three-part series examining teen alcohol use in Florence.)

Youth drinking can often be met with a collective shrug.

If a parent is caught giving a child a quick puff of the latest recreational marijuana hybrid, the police would be instantly called and the parent would be swiftly charged and socially ostracized.

If a parent gives a child a glass of wine, it raises fewer eyebrows. In fact, in Oregon, it's perfectly legal to do so.

Earlier this week, regarding the first part of this series, Jamie Boyd Wallace commented on the Siuslaw News Facebook, "Probably should focus on teen pot smoking more it's bad here in Florence and schools don't care! (sic)."

Schools have been addressing the issue of marijuana use by teens, most recently when the Siuslaw School District worked on finalizing language for drug testing in sports.

But, according to Florence Police Commander John Pitcher, alcohol is by far the number one drug issue facing Florence area teens.

Local resident Nicole, as she prefers to be called, saw this dichotomy first hand.

In her early 20s, she was married with a child and a full blown alcoholic. Her husband was a methamphetamine addict at the time who also had a penchant for marijuana.

One afternoon, a sheriff came to their door to confirm an alibi of one of their acquaintances. He smelled marijuana in the home, which the husband had smoked earlier, out of view of the child.

"The fact that my son was in the house, and they could smell it, they tried to take my son away from me," Nicole said. "The charge was neglect and endangering the welfare of a minor."

Her husband wasn't allowed in the home and required to take narcotic anonymous classes.

"I told them I didn't use drugs, but I had to leave work and take drug tests two to three times a week," Nicole recalled. "I had to see a caseworker. They would come into my home at any time and go through my kitchen to make sure I had food."

Nicole always came up negative on the tests, but the caseworkers never noticed, or inquired about, her heavy drinking.

"At that time, I was drinking a lot," she said. "I would come home from work and drink several glasses of wine. I didn't want to have to deal with the reality of being a single parent. I just thought that would never be me."

For Nicole, drinking was more dangerous to her precarious home-life than anything else, but there were never any tangible, legal consequences for it. It was a crutch for her to lean on, so she kept drinking.

Those lack of legal consequences, Nicole believed, is what kept her drinking for so long. All of her family members had, at one time or another, been arrested for violations ranging from drug use to disorderly conduct, but never her.

The legal issues her family had run into involved, for the most part, illicit drugs. Alcohol was the acceptable family way to deal with turbulent times.

And it's a lesson Nicole learned from an early age.

See **DRINKING 7A**

Local firefighters aid in the Chetco Bar conflagration

Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue sends 3 members to assist in suppression efforts

On Aug. 20, Oregon Gov. Kate Brown declared the Chetco Bar Fire a conflagration.

By MARK BRENNAN
Siuslaw News

This declaration empowered the Oregon State Fire Marshal to mobilize local municipalities to assist in fighting the fire.

In response, Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue Chief Director Jim Langborg has dispatched three full-time firefighters to join in the effort to contain the Chetco fire.

The Chetco Bar blaze, located approximately five miles northeast of Brookings, was first reported on July 12, and apparently started by a lightning strike.

Originally, the fire was only a half-acre in size and grew slowly at first, due to high humidity and cool temperatures. Now, the fire has grown to approximately 100,000 acres with more than 1,000 personnel assigned to the suppression efforts.

According to Langborg, the Siuslaw Valley firefighters are making meaningful contributions to the Chetco effort.

"The Taskforce our crew is assigned to is responsible for structural protection, which includes triaging, prepping and, when needed, protecting hose lines," he said. "We continue to think our firefighters will remain at the fire for the rest of the week, because the fire has not been contained at this time, and it may be as long as two weeks."

Siuslaw Valley has a mutual assistance agreement with other fire districts in Lane County and sends firefighters when the situation requires a larger response team than a small municipality can provide.

See **FIREFIGHTERS 8A**

DUNES CITY APPOINTS NEW MAYOR

Councilor Bob Forsythe is appointed mayor on Aug. 25; citizens discuss cannabis grow facilities

By JARED ANDERSON
Siuslaw News

With a candle burning in memory of the late Mayor Rebecca Ruede, the Dunes City Council held a meeting that led to the swearing in of a new mayor and a heated discussion on growing marijuana in Dunes City.

The Aug. 25 special session, which played to an overflow audience at Dunes City Hall, started out peacefully as the council paid tribute to Ruede.

A call for nominations to replace Ruede as mayor was then made. Councilor Robert Forsythe was the only member to nominate himself for the position.

He also asked current Council President Sheldon Meyer if he would be interested in taking the position.

Meyer replied, "I've done this for a long time, and I think I'd be better as council president and fill in when I need to."

Forsythe's nomination was approved unanimously, and he took the oath of office to applause from the audience.

Forsythe, a Vietnam veteran, spent 43 years in manufacturing with a focus on Procurement and Equipment Management.

He moved to Florence in 2009 after retiring and served on several committees and organizations, including being the chair of the Environmental Management Advisory Committee and the Florence Budget Committee.

He also served as Port of Siuslaw port manager from 2012 to 2015.



JARED ANDERSON/SIUSLAW NEWS

Valerie Cain-Mathis defends her medical marijuana facility to the Dunes City Council and local residents in a meeting Aug. 25.

Forsythe moved to Dunes City in June 2015, where he and his wife Cindy have been building a new home near Darling's Resort.

In 2016, he ran for the Dunes City council as a write-in candidate.

"A while back, Rebecca asked me to sit on Dunes City Council and I was honored to do so," Forsythe said. "I tend to get involved everywhere I live, whether it be a homeowner association or city, mainly because I found that if other people decide what is good for me, I want to at least have a voice in it."

He will fill out the remainder of Ruede's term, ending on Jan. 8, 2019.

Forsythe is taking the mayorship at a particularly contentious period in Dunes City, as evidenced in the remainder of the meeting.

At issue was a marijuana grow facility that is finishing up construction within city limits.

Oregon State Measure 91 allows possession, manufacture and sale of marijuana in Oregon, with licenses being issued by the state.

According to Dunes City Administrator Jamie Mills, "Neither the city council nor the voters of Dunes City placed a local ban on the November 2016 ballot. As a result, these marijuana licenses are legal within the city."

The site's owner, Valerie Cain-Mathis, came before the council in a public meeting on April 13 attempting to assuage residents' fears about her facility.

See **DUNES CITY 6A**