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FLORENCE, OREGON

Humane society inspection shows no abuse or neglect

U.S. Department of Justice prompts site visit to Oregon Coast Humane Society, inquires into board selection process

By MARK BRENNAN
Siuslaw News

The ongoing controversy surrounding the Oregon Coast Humane Society (OCHS) has advanced significantly, with two important new developments happening this month.

An on-site inspection conducted by Florence Code Enforcement Officer Dan Frazier on Oct. 6 found no signs of animal abuse or neglect at the Oregon Coast Humane Society.

The inspection was prompted by a U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) inquiry generat-

ed at the Portland office of the DOJ.

Department officials were unable to comment on the record for this report, as the inquiry is still in progress, but officials were able to confirm a few basic facts about the situation on conditions of anonymity.

The department has received numerous complaints from residents of Florence regarding the operation of the Florence-area shelter and the legitimacy of recent board of director appointments. The DOJ also was forwarded articles published in the Siuslaw News that revealed volunteer and member

concerns about the operational practices of the OCHS.

These complaints, and hundreds of additional emails referencing the issues at OCHS that inundated the Portland and Salem DOJ offices, were the genesis of the investigation.

The DOJ assessed the complaints and referred the con-

cerns of area residents regarding animal welfare to the Florence Police Department.

Florence police then notified Dan Frazier, who has oversight responsibilities for animal welfare in the municipality, and he began an investigation.

See OCHS 10A

WOMAN DIES WHILE IN POLICE CUSTODY

Melissa Gallauer died Friday at Peace Harbor — sheriff's office says there is no indication of wrongdoing

Melissa Gallauer, 47, was pronounced dead at the PeaceHealth Peace Harbor Medical Center on Friday, Oct. 13, after being detained by Florence police at the

By JARED ANDERSON
Siuslaw News

medical center when she refused to leave the premises.

“Investigators

with the Lane County Sheriff’s Office and the Oregon State Medical Examiner’s Office have interviewed all of the known witnesses to this event, and have reviewed other evidence while conducting this investigation,” said Lane County Detective Sergeant Carl Wilkerson in a statement released late Tuesday. “There is no evidence the involved officers used deadly or excessive force, and all evidence indicates the involved officers were extremely patient and only used enough force to detain Gallauer, who was being uncooperative and was refusing to leave the location.”

Sgt. Carrie Carver of the Lane County Sheriff’s Office said there is no indication of wrongdoing at this time on part of the hospital staff.

At approximately 7:15 p.m., the Florence Police Department was contacted by Peace Harbor, which stated the Gallauer, after being asked to leave by hospital staff and security, became disruptive and refused to vacate the premises.

A previous news release stated Gallauer had been discharged “earlier in the day,” though it is unclear if she left the hospital and came back, or refused to leave directly after being discharged.

Police arrived and attempted to convince her to leave, but she still refused to go. The officers detained her at that point, but before they were able to take her off-site, they became concerned about Gallauer’s health. They asked medical personnel for additional evaluation.

Gallauer’s health began to deteriorate at that point, and though medical staff attempted lifesaving efforts, she was pronounced deceased at 8:43 p.m.

An autopsy has been conducted by the Oregon State Medical Examiner’s Office. While her cause of death remains unknown, there is no indication that the death of Gallauer was a result of her contact with police department employees.

See DEATH 10A



COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

PHOTOS BY FLOYD LARSON AND JARED ANDERSON & CHANTELE MEYER/SIUSLAW NEWS

More than 550 people attended Oktoberfest last Saturday at the Florence Events Center. Traditional music and dancers welcomed community guests to lift their heels as they sampled beer, cider, wine and food provided by local vendors and nonprofit organizations. This included bratwurst with sauerkraut, potato soup in a bread bowl, pretzels, popcorn and apple strudel. The community celebration event was presented by the Friends of the Florence Events Center and sponsored by Oregon Sen. Arnie Roblan, Darlings RV Resort & Marina, KCST Coast Radio and Siuslaw News. Outside, the Wiener Dog Races brought additional spectators to watch Dachshunds in their annual race (see page A11).



‘A Part to Play’ 90by30 works toward reducing child abuse and neglect by 90 percent by 2030

By JARED ANDERSON
Siuslaw News

After more than three years of data collection and research, the 90by30 program is about to begin implementing strategies to reduce child abuse and neglect in Lane County by 90 percent by the year 2030.

West Lane Region 90by30 Co-Chair Suzanne Mann-Heintz, who attended the group’s yearly conference this past weekend, spoke about some of the progress the

group made with the program since its inception.

Mann-Heintz said there are numerous factors that can lead to

child abuse, including lack of education on how to raise a child, financial difficulties, a lack of empathy and isolation from com-

munity support — but there are ways to help alleviate those factors.

“Research has demonstrated that

“People have resources. They just need to know where to go to get help. Nobody wants to hurt their kids.”

— Suzanne Mann-Heintz
West Lane Region 90by30 Co-Chair

there are certain protective factors against child abuse, and if these factors are part of a community, it will decrease the

likelihood for people to abuse or neglect children,” she said. “These protective factors were what we looked at in terms of availability and resources.”

To help discover what resources already existed in the Siuslaw region, and what people’s attitudes were toward the issue, 90by30 performed more than 200 adult surveys and an 18-month survey on what community assets already existed over the past three years.

See 90BY30 10A

INSIDE Classifieds B6
Community A3
Kid Scoop B5
Library Tidings A8
Opinion A4
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