

Officer from 1A

of School Resource Officers Basic SRO program. The course requires 40 hours of training.

“This provides us with some redundancy to handle staffing challenges that may come up from time to time,” Ott said. “It is good training, even for someone who has already been an officer for a period of time, since there are a lot of differences between being a police officer on the street and being a police officer in a school.”

Bailey has also gone through the program, and will likely take over as Siuslaw’s SRO in January.

“As a school officer, you perform some educational tasks, some informal counseling tasks, and down at the bottom of the triangle is the law enforcement task,” Ott said. “It is certainly not any bigger or more of a part than the other two. Law enforcement is really only a third of that job. I like that analogy.”

Since the beginning of the

2017-18 school year, Ott and the SRO program have worked to improve school safety by having an increased presence in school facilities; detect and apprehend students who miss school; conduct driver safety talks with teen drivers for Teen Driver Safety Week; and assist in traffic enforcement and safety around the Siuslaw schools on Oak Street.

“There was a big increase in the positive interactions with students, both on and off campus,” Ott said. “Even in this short period of time, I’ve run into these kids at the grocery store and they recognize me as an officer, even when I’m not working. They want to come talk to me about stuff. It’s been a huge rapport-building experience with a lot of the ‘littles.’”

In addition, Ott said he also investigates thefts at the school.

“They tell you that the No. 1 thing you’re going to do from a law enforcement perspective in the school is investigate stolen cell phones and iPods. I was like, ‘Really?’ I didn’t think it was going to be a thing, but it is. So, hold on to your cell

phones and iPods,” he said.

Florence Police Department solicits donations from private parties to provide National Child Safety Council materials for area youth, such as online and real-life safety information, anti-bullying pledges and other educational handouts.

“They have some really cool stuff for all sorts of different age groups, like age-appropriate materials for internet safety,” Ott said. “They also have cool stuff like stickers and bracelets, which I call ‘currency’ at the elementary school. There’s no quicker way to getting a kid’s attention.”

Florence Police Chief Tom Turner said that the SRO program was able to participate in Bullying Prevention Month and drug prevention activities in October.

Using the National Child Safety Council materials, Ott was able to visit classrooms and interact with students while promoting healthy behaviors.

“It’s just great community interaction,” Turner said.

National Child Safety

Council also provided reflective trick-or-treat bags which Florence Police Auxiliary members handed out at Florence Justice Center on Halloween.

“Other than that, we’ve just been having fun,” Ott said. “I went on a field trip to Sweet Creek Falls last month. The kids thought that was pretty neat. I also got to let kids pull the fire alarm for a fire drill, they thought that was super cool. It’s just been really fun.”

He said that he gets positive feedback from students and staff, though it wasn’t always that way. For the first month, students were confused by the officer’s presence and wondered if something was wrong.

“Now, when I’m not there, they wonder where their officer is at. Just in that short period of time,” Ott said. “In a couple years, we’re going to see some huge rewards from this program.”

Bailey agreed.

“The kids are much more receptive to the police,” he said. “That is the community caretaking and building up that

we are doing there. That’s already showing and taking effect. It’s very beneficial, even at this point, and I’m excited to see where everything goes.”

When he officially steps into the role, Bailey said he looks forward to growing the program.

According to Ott, the Siuslaw students are making him and the SRO program feel welcome.

“The kids are super creative and make all sorts of really cool and cute ‘thank you’ stuff. They give it to us on a regular basis,” he said.

He added that he puts their art up in his office.

Florence Mayor Joe Henry said, “We really appreciate your service and efforts. I think

it’s something that builds long-term and gives a fair perspective on what the police are about.”

“It’s great to see the police giving back to the community and working with the kids,” Councilor Joshua Greene said. “This is all very helpful for people to realize. The police are with us, they take care of us, they are here to protect us and they can still train and teach the kids. I think that’s all very wonderful. Thank you for what you’re doing.”

For more information about the Florence Police Department, visit ci.florence.or.us/police or read the department’s monthly newsletter at ci.florence.or.us/police/monthly-reports.

Meals from 1A

County residents as possible given the funding available.”

She said that clients can request frozen meals to be delivered to supplement their hot meal deliveries.

In Florence, hot meals are delivered on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

“Those requesting additional frozen meals to supplement the hot meals will receive them along with their hot meal,” Demsky said.

She also pointed out the ongoing need for volunteers in Florence.

“Our noon meals are packaged and delivered by volunteers. We have two distinct volunteer opportunities and way to help in your community — become a Meals on Wheels

Delivery Driver or assist in our Café 60 Kitchen and help package meals for delivery and serve our guests in the dining room at Florence Senior Center,” Demsky said.

Individuals do not have to be homebound to receive food support from Senior and Disabled services, as they can stop by the Senior Center and sit down and to eat a hot, freshly cooked meal.

Demsky said “a dedicated team of volunteers and generous support from the community” makes meal delivery possible.

The Senior Meals Program serves meals and opportunities for friendship to people over age 60, regardless of their income, in 11 Café 60 Dining Rooms in Lane County. A federal grant makes this possible.

Locally, Florence Senior

Center, 1570 Kingwood St., hosts the Café 60.

“The Florence Café 60 invites area seniors to join us for lunch at 11:45 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays,” Demsky said. “Meals for both programs are offered on a donation basis to participants.”

However, Café 60 observes the same holiday and furlough day schedule as the Meals on Wheels program.

On Café 60 days, people under 60 may purchase meals at Florence Senior Center for \$8. For more information, call 541-997-5673.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, Singing Pines Café at the Senior Center serves meals for \$7 for all. For more information, call 541-997-8844.

Another concern for Demsky moving into the new

year is the future of the program.

“Funding is always a concern as federal funds cover only 70 percent of the costs required to operate at current service levels,” she said. “Congressional decisions about funding levels for non-defense, discretionary spending can directly impact this funding. At the present time, meal programs across the nation are waiting to see what Congress decides for the remainder of the federal fiscal year.”

Demsky said that donations provide 21 percent of the organization’s funding.

Individuals interested in assisting Meals on Wheels are encouraged to send a charitable gift to the Senior Meals Program; PO Box 2313; Florence OR 97439.

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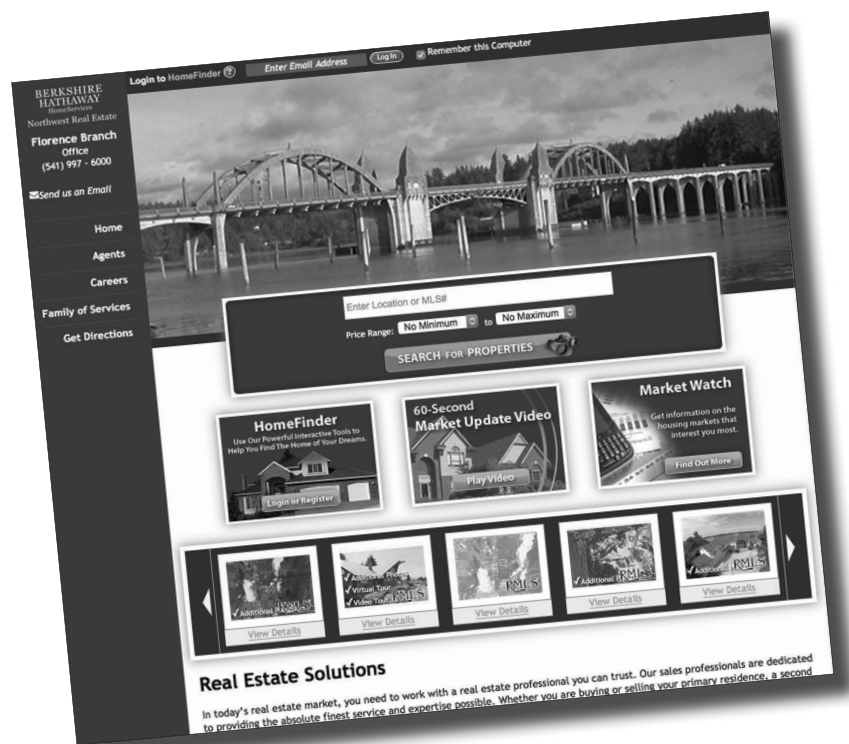
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