



## SIUSLAW SEEKS NEW FOOTBALL COACH

SPORTS — B

## WLCF awards \$73,700 in grants

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# Siuslaw News

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SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON



## Students 'walkout' to protest school violence

*Hundreds of students gather silently in front of Siuslaw High School March 14*

BY MARK BRENNAN  
Siuslaw News

*"We are out here because things need to change. People are dying when they go to school. I think school should be a safe place for everybody. When kids die at school, it is wrong." — Kiger Johnson, Siuslaw High School sophomore*

Hundreds of students from the Siuslaw School District's Middle and High Schools, joined hundreds of thousands of students across the country, by leaving school without permission on Wednesday morning.

The students left classes and school buildings in support of the walkout initiated by student activists at

Marjory Stoneman Douglas High in Parkland, Florida.

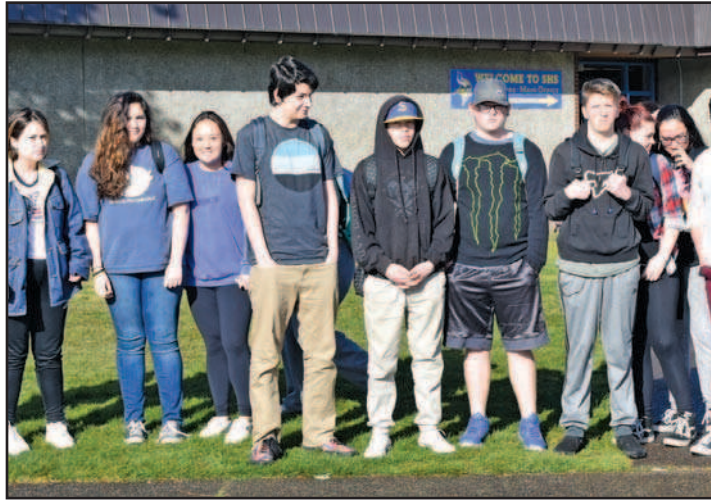
Stoneman was the scene of a mass shooting in February, and survivors of the school massacre are marshaling support for gun reform.

The nationwide protest was held on March 14 to commemorate the 17 students and educators killed in Parkland, exactly one month prior.

The walkout began at 10 a.m. local time and lasted 17 minutes, one minute for each of the those killed.

The somber students participating in the Siuslaw demonstration said they hoped to draw attention to the ongoing issue of gun violence and student safety.

A student, who asked to remain anonymous, said, "We



PHOTOS BY MARK BRENNAN/SIUSLAW NEWS

**Students from Siuslaw School District walked out of class March 14 without administrative approval in support of student activists across the nation protesting school violence.**

don't want to feel unsafe and scared when we go to school. We can't learn that way." Another student said, "We

want to make this about the students who died, instead of

See **STUDENTS 9A**

## Walking out of schools and into national conversation

BY CHANTELE MEYER  
Siuslaw News

Students across the U.S. stepped into a national conversation Wednesday as they chose to participate in the National School Walkout — or chose not to.

According to organizers of the March For Our Lives, "This movement is for kids and by kids" — specifically, survivors of the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas (MSD) High School, in Parkland, Florida, on Feb. 14.

A group of 20 student activists began using the social media phrase

"#NeverAgain" to advocate for school safety and an end to school gun violence. They formed the group Never Again MSD.

In just one month, survivors have spoken at rallies, protests, talk shows and schools in support of their 17 slain classmates and school staff, calling for "sensible gun legislation reform."

"In the tragic wake of the 17 lives brutally cut short in Florida, politicians are telling us that now is not the time to talk about guns. March For Our Lives believes the time is now."

See **WALKOUT 7A**

## Department of Justice says humane society election on right track

The controversy surrounding the Oregon Coast Humane Society (OCHS) is working towards resolution, according to Oregon Department of Justice (ODJ) Senior Assistant Attorney General Elizabeth Grant.

If things continue as Grant expects, OCHS members in good standing will soon have the opportunity to vote for a new board of directors under the supervision of the ODJ.

See **OCHS 9A**

## Norma Barton to resign from Florence Food Share

*Outgoing executive director cites accomplishments and volunteer contributions to effort*

BY MARK BRENNAN  
Siuslaw News

Florence Food Share Executive Director Norma Barton has announced she will be leaving her position as head of the organization at the end of March.

Barton has taken a position in Bend but the decision to leave the Florence community was a difficult one to make.

"Florence Food Share has been the best career experience for me

thus far. The staff and the volunteers are the most dedicated group of people I have ever encountered. It has truly been like a big family, and I was welcomed from the start with open arms," Barton said. "As with any family, there are ups and downs, but all in all the love we shared for the mission of Florence Food Share bonded us together through thick and thin. ... It's hard to leave when things are going well, but I believe this is the right time for me to make this transi-

tion."

Florence Food Share Board Secretary Judy Plummery said the organization will miss Barton's leadership.

"We will miss her organization, fundraising and community involvement skills, but wish her well, and are grateful for all that she's brought to food share and the Florence community. We are a better community because of her," Plummery said.

Barton has overseen major

improvements to the physical and financial components of food share during her tenure, particularly in the area of client services.

"Florence Food Share has experienced incredible growth in the past four years," Barton said. "When I initially came on board, we had a grant for a new floor but no plans to install that floor. I moved our operations to the warehouse shortly after beginning my

See **DIRECTOR 10A**

## Siuslaw School District discusses upgrades, Indian Education program

BY MARK BRENNAN  
Siuslaw News

The Siuslaw School District (SSD) Board of Directors met on Wednesday, March 24, with a short list of agenda items on the docket.

Directors spent much of the evening on procedural matters, approving updates and revisions to policies dealing with accident reporting, medical and communicable diseases and with complaints and appeal procedures.

The subject of most interest to directors, and to the public, was the scheduled discussion on facility planning.

Facility planning refers to the ongoing debate over the need for replacement or

upgrade to all three school buildings managed by the district.

There have been numerous work sessions, steering committee meetings and public forums held during the past year to formalize the final plan that will be presented to the voters, if it is decided by the board that a bond measure is needed.

The work done at the previous meetings has determined the improvements most needed in the district, and those that might be delayed or modified, to reduce the amount of funding the voters will be asked to approve.

Directors discussed the need to narrow the choices the board will consider, before asking the

public to support a bond measure.

The board members are still unsure of the need for many of the upgrades, suggesting for example that a proposed gymnasium might be used as a multi-purpose activity center and questioning the need for a dedicated soccer field.

It was decided that an in-depth discussion of these and related matters was needed, so directors set a work session for April 4 to determine the needed changes the board will recommend.

Siuslaw Middle School Principal Andy Marohl gave one of the more encouraging presentations of the evening,

See **DISTRICT 7A**

## Salvation Army rings in the cash

*Siuslaw region's donation percentage is best in the state*

BY JARED ANDERSON  
Siuslaw News

The Siuslaw region stepped up to the kettle this past holiday season as the Salvation Army (SA) released numbers on its annual holiday campaign, a hefty sum that the organization needs help in distributing back to the community.

The Red Kettle Campaign, which ran from Nov. 24 to Dec. 23, 2017, brought in \$27,555 in donations over the period, for a per capita donation amount of \$3.19.

In comparison, cities such as Newport and Coos Bay averaged \$1.83 and \$1.33, respectively. The City of Eugene averaged \$0.66,

while the national average donation is \$0.44.

"The smaller communities give so much more than the larger communities," SA Oregon Service Representative Debi Leighton said. "It's just amazing."

Along with the donations dropped into the kettles, an anonymous donor made a matching gift of \$27,000, which will be added to the Western Lane County Endowment, with a fixed percentage of that fund restricted for use in the region.

The all-volunteer campaign, which was coordinated last year by Florence resident Sam Spayd, utilized over 100 volunteers to brave the cold weather and entice people to

donate to their community.

Now, SA needs assistance in determining where the donated funds should be directed.

"We're working on an advisory committee that I'm looking for members to be a part of," Leighton said. "We would meet every other month and oversee how we spend the money in the community."

Thousands of dollars from 2016's drive have already been distributed, including food for Florence Food Share, emergency clothing for Mapleton and Siuslaw elementary schools, tennis shoes for the Boys and Girls

See **CAMPAIGN 9A**