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The OCHS will announce its new board Monday

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Siuslaw News

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SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON

NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

Solutions to preventing child abuse

BY DAMIEN SHERWOOD
For the Siuslaw News

(Editor's note: In recognition of Child Abuse Prevention Month, Siuslaw News is offering feature stories, guest viewpoints and editorials focusing on this issue, including this special two-part series to help identify child abuse and some of the local resources for victims as well as abusers.)



For those observing Child Abuse Prevention Month, April is a time to reflect on their communities and the contributions they can make toward securing safe environments for children.

A daunting issue to tackle, child abuse manifests in a variety of ways — and not all of them are obvious. While forms such as physical abuse may appear the most conspicuous and receive the lion's share of public attention, other more insidious forms, such as neglect and psychological abuse, often remain hidden under public radar and go unreported.

In the 2017 fiscal year, there were 1,479 founded incidents of child abuse in Lane County. Adding to the problem, although workable for communities fortunate to have enough Child Protective Services (CPS) staff, the incidents are not reflective of the group's entire workload. In all, Lane County received 8,287 reports of child abuse. The process of assessing how best to deal with each case can be demanding, especially in rural areas.

Caseworkers are expected to make assessments, searches, notifications, visits, team meetings, action plans and referrals, as well as and provide court testimonies and document dozens of cases at any given time. Heavy caseloads can prevent workers from engaging effectively with families and achieving positive outcomes.

When government entities are inundated, the perplexing task of filling in the gaps means communities must take proactive steps to identify and engage local problems.

In Florence's case, the community has risen to the challenge thanks in large part to volunteers and local organizations.

Parental and Caregiver Factors

Ultimately, the onus of child abuse prevention falls into the hands of adults. While creating reasonably safe environments for children can involve community-wide efforts, much of that burden falls to parents.

Last year, mothers and fathers made up 76.4 percent of all perpetrators of child abuse in Oregon. While the myriad of inherent stresses related to parenthood may play into this, certain parental risk factors emerge as salient, yet amendable.

First among these is parent education. The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, which provides federal funding and assigns government roles to numerous prevention and support projects nationwide, cited parent education as a

See **SOLUTIONS 7A**



In the swing of things

STORY AND PHOTOS
BY CHANTELE MEYER
Siuslaw News



Left, aerialists Sally Brewer and Ashly Milliot perform with CROW this weekend. Above, Haylee Cole holds a pose on the silks.

CROW works with Revelers Aerial Works to take 'Tarzan' to new heights

"Sometimes you have to Hulk out" and grab the silks to pull yourself up," Sally Brewer of Revelers Aerial Works said about climbing the green silk "vines" hanging on stage at the Florence Events Center.

She recommended instead that students mostly use their feet and legs in various wrapped positions to climb the silks and hold poses.

Brewer and her colleague Ashly Milliot have been working with Children's Repertory of Oregon Workshops (CROW) since February to bring stunning choreographed aerial artistry to this weekend's production of "Tarzan."

The show opened on Thursday to two packed audiences as CROW entertained students from Siuslaw and Mapleton school districts, Reedsport Elementary School and homeschool students.

These free outreach shows are part of CROW's campaign to give back to the community. In addition, CROW actors visited Spruce Point Assisted Living, Elderberry Square, Kiwanis Club of Florence, Florence Rotary Club and KCST/KCFM Coast Radio to bring a little bit of "Tarzan's" "Two Worlds" to people.

A grant for specialty materials allowed CROW to contract with Revelers and buy other items specifically for "Tarzan."

"The Miller Foundation grant was huge because it created the overall look of the show," said CROW Artistic Director Melanie Heard. "The silks add so much."

See **TARZAN 9A**

Spruce Point hosts Memory Care Fair

Free event offers info, strategies and techniques for caregivers

BY MARK BRENNAN
Siuslaw News

On Wednesday, April 18, Spruce Point Assisted Living and Memory Care Community will be presenting a Memory Care Fair at the group's facility at 375 Ninth St. in Florence.

The free event is designed to provide information on services available to support families, friends and professionals assisting in the care of individuals suffering from memory- and cognition-related health issues.

Lisa Douda, Community Relations Director for Spruce Point, said that Spruce Point wants to present a forum, open to the public, to discuss the challenges facing caregivers and to suggest strategies and techniques that might help people involved in this critical work.

"We have been working with the Alzheimer's Association on having caregiver support groups and education classes, but we wanted to do something community wide that would benefit everyone, not just those who live here with us," Douda said. "This event is meant as a support tool for anyone caring for those with Alzheimer's or other dementia."

She said the event will be a "one-stop shop" for be information on support groups, educational classes, caregiver care, estate and trust planning and palliative care.

"This will help caregivers to ease the burden of having to search out these

See **CARE FAIR 6A**

Children's visitation area at DHS gets upgrades

Every Child, an advocacy group for children, leads the effort to improve old space

BY MARK BRENNAN
Siuslaw News

The Department of Human Services (DHS) received assistance this month in an upgrade to its facilities at 3180 Highway 101. A new organization to Florence, Every Child, spearheaded the refurbishment of one of the areas used to work with marginalized youth.

Cathy Coontz is the director of the Florence Chapter of Every Child and she wants residents to know about the work the child advocacy group is involved with in this area.

"When Every Child starts in a new community, raising money and doing the makeover is one of its first main activities. It is a great way to become known in the community, and to establish a relationship with the DHS staff," Coontz said.

Every Child's website shares the group's mission statement, goals and objectives: "Every Child aims to provide love, care and support for vulnerable children and families in Oregon in partnership with Oregon's Department of Human



MARK BRENNAN/SIUSLAW NEWS

Volunteers and members of the group Every Child recently finished working on an upgrade at the Department of Human Services office on Highway 101. Every Child started a local chapter in November 2017 to assist underserved youth in the Florence area.

Services." According to the website, Every Child states it will fight relentlessly for children in crisis and that it is committed to finding safe places for children to be nourished and supported.

"Every Child just started here in Florence in November 2017," Coontz said.

See **EVERY CHILD 6A**

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THIS WEEK'S WEATHER
Full Forecast, A3

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