



Kickin’ it with beach soccer

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Siuslaw News

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FLORENCE, OREGON



Aging in Place Forum keynote speaker Jatunn Gibson, Aging in Place Manager for Habitat for Humanity International

‘We are not old’

By JARED ANDERSON
SIUSLAW NEWS

“You can’t define old,” keynote speaker Jatunn Gibson told a crowd of mostly 65+ Florence residents at the Aging in Place Forum last week. The forum was a gathering of local, county and state resources for issues related to aging.

“Old” is in your mind,” Gibson said. “Nobody in here is

old. But we do use the word ‘older,’ just as we use the word ‘younger.’ There’s older, middle age, but we are not going to say anyone is old.”
Gibson is the Aging in Place Manager for Habitat for Humanity International, a non-profit organization that helps people in communities build or improve homes.
For Gibson, the main goal is to improve homes for those 55 and older.
“Habitat was doing a lot of repairs, and noticed 50 percent of its repairs were for people over

Forum discusses what it means to grow old, how to remain in one’s home

the age of 55,” she said. “Habitat can help you repair and modify your homes. Modifications are changing things that better fit you.”
The purpose of these home enhancements is to allow the aging population to “age in place.”
“Aging in place is living in your home and your community as long as possible,” Gibson said. “The best time to do things before you age in place is before you are forced to do them. Do them on your own, do them while you are aging — not when there’s an emer-

gency. It’s a process.”
Gibson stated that the number one fear for those who are older was losing their independence, with one survey stating that 26 percent of people feared that, 13 percent feared moving into a nursing home and only three percent feared death.
“The majority feared losing their independence,” Gibson said. “In that sense, we’re talking about moving you out of your home and community and moving you somewhere else.”

See AGING page 8A

Transit Advisory Committee makes plans for transportation services

LTD approves design, places order for new Florence to Yachats bus; start date still uncertain

By MARK BRENNAN
SIUSLAW NEWS

The City of Florence’s Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) met for the group’s monthly meeting on June 20 to talk about current pending matters regarding bus service for the community. These services could dramatically impact potential bus ridership to and from Florence and the surrounding areas.
The scheduling and start of a round trip bus route from Florence to Yachats was the most anticipated item on TAC’s agenda. An update on that project was provided by Lane Transit District’s (LTD) Accessible Services Specialist John Ahlen.
Ahlen has been the point person during LTD’s effort to provide service from Florence to Yachats, which at this stage has been approved and funded.
Ahlen worked with planners from the city and members of TAC during the development and feasibility stages of the process. At this meeting, he provided an update on the final stages of the route’s progress.
While there has been nearly a year-long delay in the purchase and subsequent production of the customized buses for the new Florence to Yachats route, the wait is almost over, according to Ahlen.

See TRANSPORTATION page 7A

Smoke spotted on docks in Old Town



Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue firefighters soak the dock near Mo’s Restaurant, 1436 Bay St., after restaurant employees reported smoke coming from under the dock Monday. See FIRE page 11A.



PHOTOS BY NED HICKSON/
SIUSLAW NEWS

Florentine Estates votes to limit rentals

By JARED ANDERSON
SIUSLAW NEWS

Residents in Florentine Estates voted strongly in favor of limiting rentals in the 55+ community on Friday night, after a sometimes-contentious campaign that included accusations of voter intimidation and fears that the final vote count would be tampered with.
To pass the measure, a supermajority of 75 percent of the 449 homes in the estate needed to vote in the affirmative. At the final tally, 82 percent of homeowners voted “yes.”
“Of the 401 countable ballots, there was a total of 33 ‘no’ votes and a total of 368 ‘yes’ votes,” said

Florentine Estates General Manager Jason Nelson, who oversaw the voting process. “We needed 337 to change the declaration, so, the declaration does pass.”
The measure will not create an outright ban on rentals, instead limiting reasons as to why a homeowner can put their property up for rent. Those who buy property in the community solely for rental purposes would be prohibited, while residents with extenuating circumstances, such as long-term health problems or financial hardships, can place their homes on the rental market.
Properties that already have existing rentals will be immune from the new rule.

“We’re happy that the voter turnout was strong, and residents were able to make their voices heard,” Nelson said.
The campaign to get out the vote was met with controversy, with some residents claiming that Florentine’s homeowner’s association used aggressive tactics to sway people’s votes, including harassment. The Siuslaw News, in an article published on June 16, looked into the accusations and found no evidence of intimidation.
At that time, several residents questioned the newspaper’s use of anonymous sources in the article. However, multiple individuals had come forward with concerns about

impartiality in the campaign, but because of the small population of Florentine residents, the individuals requested anonymity in fear of retaliation from neighbors.
Ballots were sent out to every property owner in Florentine, including banks who owned properties through foreclosures. According to Nelson, those votes are generally not returned.
The “no” campaign had the edge at the beginning of the night. Out of 449 lots, only 403 ballots were received. Not voting counted as a “no” vote, so at the outset, opposition to the rule was ahead by 46.

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THIS WEEK’S WEATHER
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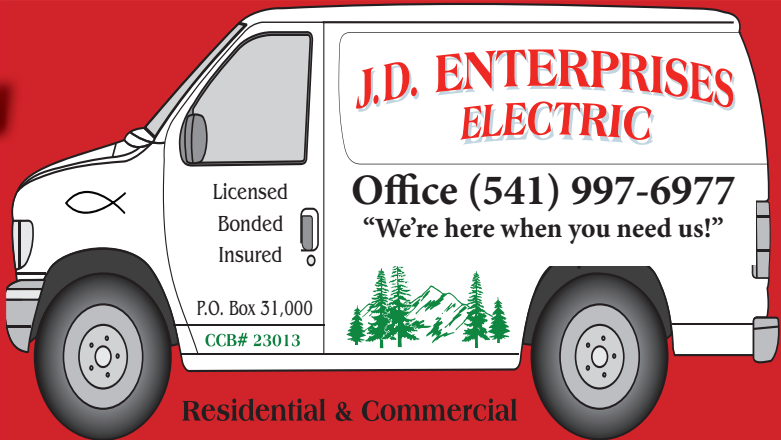
SATURDAY

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