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SUMMER SKILLS

EVENTS INSIDE — A7

SPORTS — B



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SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON

Oregon Coast Humane Society board members resign

BY MARK BRENNAN
SIUSLAW NEWS

Controversy has resurfaced at the Oregon Coast Humane Society (OCHS), less than 90 days after the Oregon Department of Justice recommended a new board of directors be elected by members to oversee and guide the organization's activities.

To kill or not to kill is the question that seems to be at the heart of the latest tumult at the shelter, with OCHS members, volunteers and community members reacting dramatically this week to the euthanization of two older, unwell dogs.

The action has ignited a slew of emails and telephone calls to current board members and the media, voicing concern that the "no-kill" policies of the OCHS have been violated. Attempts to explain the decision to euthanize the two animals, which were in extreme physical distress, have not quelled the furor surrounding the event.

As a result, Jack Hannigan, who was elected to the board in April and had accepted the role of board president, submitted his resignation to the board, effective July 18.

"I believe that membership voted for each board member with the expectation that we would follow the long-held mission of operating a no-kill shelter," Hannigan wrote in his resignation letter. "Watching members of this board attempt to slowly change the mission to a 'Limited Intake Shelter' causes me and should cause every member great concern. This board is risking future gifts and endowments, as well as putting existing sources of funding at risk of being pulled."

Dolly Brock, who was elected to the OCHS board in April, also submitted her resignation late Thursday, citing the confusion surrounding the No-Kill Policy currently in effect at OCHS.

Shauna Robbers has since been voted into the role of board president by the remaining board members. While she said she is sorry to see Hannigan leave, she also said the policy that is at the heart of the latest controversy at the shelter will remain in place.

"I don't think there is a no-kill controversy," said Robbers. "Just because a handful of people are saying so does not make it true. The mission statement and goals of OCHS remain the same as they always were, as do the Animal Welfare Committee (AWC) Policies and Procedures 2015."

Robbers explained that the board is currently working on a revision to those policies, along with the by-laws, which will be posted on the OCHS website once the changes are adopted.

See OCHS page 6A

Concierge healthcare comes to Siuslaw region

Dr. John Egar & Melinda Gitnes, ANP-BC, open new clinics

BY JARED ANDERSON
SIUSLAW NEWS

"The priority is making it easier for people to get healthcare," Melinda Gitnes said. "It's about access. Not only access, but somebody who will listen and work with you. I've had patients come who've had health issues, but because the clinics were so busy in town, they felt like they weren't getting heard."

Gitnes is a nurse practitioner who, along with her assistant Lisa Douda, runs Northwest Reflections, located just south of Florence in Glenada. For a monthly membership fee, Gitnes will do checkups, physical exams, wellness visits, order lab work, write prescriptions and give referrals to specialists.

"I also do in-home care," she added. "I have two or three folks who, for whatever reason, don't want to come out of their home, but they still need medication and a primary care physician, so I go to their home for no additional charge."

There are a few procedures that Gitnes cannot do, like sur-



Dr. John Egar



Melinda Gitnes, ANP-BC

gical procedures.

"But I'm not interested in doing them anyway," she said. "If someone is above the level of care that I feel comfortable doing, like open wounds, I'm referring them. If they need orthopedics, I'm referring them. It would be best if they see a specialist."

Northwest Reflections is what is known as a concierge clinic, also known as direct pay. These clinics don't have many of the major capabilities that a hospital would have, instead focusing on primary care, and they don't work with insurance companies.

They rely on monthly subscription fees to cover medical costs. Because of that pay structure, they are able to spend more time working with the patient directly, which in turn, creates better outcomes for care.

"Each patient is allotted an hour-long visit," Gitnes explained. "They have time to come in, sit down, get comfortable. We get to know each other, and it's not just, 'Oh, my knee is hurting, just give me a pill.' Your knee is hurting, why? Do you have stairs in your house?"

See CLINICS page 8A

Siuslaw School District loses Title IV Block Grant

Twilight After School Programs denied funding

The Siuslaw School District received some unwelcome news this month from the federal government and the Department of Education. Funding through the Title IV Block Grant, which the district has used for the past 10 years to support the

BY MARK BRENNAN
SIUSLAW NEWS

Twilight After School Programs, has been denied for the 2018 school year.

Siuslaw School District Superintendent Andy Grzeskowiak said the rejection was unexpected and will have a profound impact on the ability of the district to offer any meaningful afterschool program, including tutorial assistance to at-risk students and additional classes that focus on STEAM education (science, technology, engineering, arts and math).

"The denial of the grant was a surprise to all of us in the district," Grzeskowiak said. "We have run a successful program and partnered with other community groups over the years to meet not only the legal components but also the spirit of the program — providing services for students that need extra academic assistance or regular homework assistance, so they can make the most of their time at home with family in the evenings."

The loss of funding for programs that seemed to meet the requirements of the grant will mean that the district's plan for after school activities in the fall will have to change. While there is time before the fall term begins to piece together some type of support, more than likely the prospects for a full slate of activities is slim.

"In short, the program will be phased out," Grzeskowiak said. "The timing of this announcement is poor, so instead of pulling the rug out from under students and families in the fall we are looking at ways to continue a reduced program for at least one year. Typically, these grants applications are processed a year out before the closure of the previous grant."

Siuslaw School District Special Programs Coordinator Lisa Utz was tasked with writing and submitting the grant proposal for consideration, as she has been for several years. Other attempts had been successful, so she was disappointed that this year's application was not awarded funding.

"Out of 43 applications, 24 were funded. Siuslaw was in good company with the other 19 sites that did not receive funds. We were notified in early July, which does not give us much time to regroup," Utz said.

Grzeskowiak added, "Many of the grants that were funded are in larger, metropolitan areas where families have multiple other options for afterschool programs and resources."

See FUNDING page 5A

CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS



PHOTOS BY MARK BRENNAN/SIUSLAW NEWS

The Florence Democratic Club opened a new office Thursday evening at the Munsel Creek Plaza, 4969 Highway 101. The club will provide meeting and campaign space for Democratic candidates, including District Nine State Rep. Caddy McKeown, who was on hand for the event. Maureen Miltenberger, a candidate for the Florence City Council, welcomed area Democrats to the opening of the group's new office and introduced McKeown. McKeown spoke briefly about her support for the Siuslaw School District bond levy effort, her background as an educator and the uphill battle she faces in the November election.



INSIDE	Classifieds	B5	Sideshow	B4
	Community	A3	Sports	B
	Opinion	A4	This Week on the Coast	A6
	Records	A2	Weather Data	A2

THIS WEEK'S WEATHER Full Forecast, A3

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
68 51	71 54	75 55	72 54

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2 SECTIONS | 16 PAGES
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JIM HOBERG
Broker/Owner

Jim Hoberg is a Florence native, and has been working in Real Estate since 1989. He has served as a Principal Broker for 29 years. He has obtained several designations that require continuing education, which keeps him on the cutting edge of the industry and he is constantly looking for ways to expand his areas of expertise. Jim enjoys helping people find solutions to their real estate needs and discovering why Florence is such a great place to live.

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