



INTO THE HALL OF FAME

Siuslaw High School holds Induction Aug. 10

SPORTS — B

Siuslaw News

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SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON

Vehicle vandalism creates racial controversy Tuesday



PHOTOS BY MARK BRENNAN/SIUSLAW NEWS

On Tuesday morning, travelers on Heceta Beach Road spotted racist vandalism on a Honda Civic that had been abandoned along the roadway. Within a few hours, someone else had painted over part of the message.

A small car abandoned by the side of the road is usually not a newsworthy event in Florence. There are some circumstances, however, where the break-down of an old vehicle has a much more significance to local residents.

On Tuesday, Dyllien Jack was heading to work at about 8 a.m. along Heceta Beach Road when he noticed that the vehicle, a light blue four-door Honda with the license plate QJK-343, had been vandalized with a racial epithet written in bright pink spray paint.

“Over the last few weeks, the windshield had been smashed, then the doors were bashed in,” Jack said of the car, which had been there for about three weeks. “But Tuesday morning, I

BY MARK BRENNAN
SIUSLAW NEWS

couldn't believe what I saw. I went back to make sure I was seeing what I was seeing.”

What he saw were the words “Kill N-gers” [sic] sprayed in large letters across the side of the vehicle facing the roadway. Jack posted a photo on the Florence, Oregon Facebook page and, by 9 a.m., had received dozens of comments before the post was eventually removed.

“I waited a long time before pressing the ‘post’ button, but just decided it was important to say something and

deal with the consequences,” said Jack. “I was glad to see so many people not happy with what happened.”

Residents who spoke with the Siuslaw News said they had contacted the City of Florence and were referred to Lane County, which told them there are constraints on what actions could be taken to remove the car.

See VANDALISM page 8A

Local teacher, fisherman loses life at sea

Teacher, coach and fisherman Bruce McKibbin found unresponsive near capsized boat

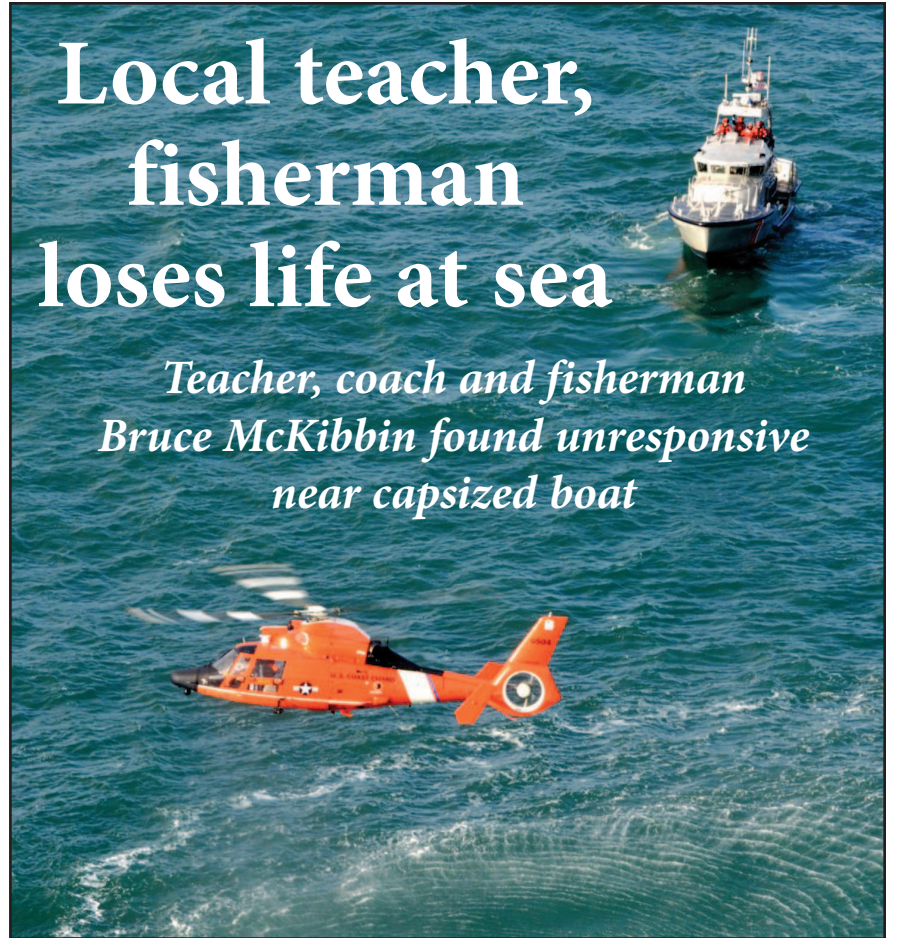


PHOTO COURTESY U.S. COAST GUARD PACIFIC NW

A Dolphin helicopter crew from U.S. Coast Guard Air Facility Newport and two 47-foot motor lifeboat crews assisted in the recovery of an overturned vessel outside the north jetty of Siuslaw River on Aug. 6.

BY JARED ANDERSON
SIUSLAW NEWS

On a routine flight between Newport and North Bend, pilots with the United States Coast Guard (USCG) Air Facility Newport noticed an overturned vessel just outside the North Jetty of the Siuslaw River on the afternoon of Monday, Aug. 6. After searching the area, USCG swimmers retrieved the unresponsive body of longtime Florence resident Bruce McKibbin, transferring him to medical personnel, where he was pronounced deceased.

Two USCG 47-foot motor lifeboat crews inspected the jetty for other possible survivors but found that McKibbin

was alone on the vessel when it capsized. McKibbin was known throughout the community as a coach, teacher, fisherman and mentor to many in the Florence area.

“We are devastated at the port,” said Port of Siuslaw Manager David Huntington, a longtime friend of McKibbin. “Bruce was a huge part of the local fishing community. He was not only a great friend of mine, he was a great friend and mentor to so many others who grew up in Florence.”

“He embraced life,” said retired Siuslaw School district teacher M.J. Church, who taught with McKibbin

See BOATER page 6A

REVISING REVISION FLORENCE

BY CHANTELE MEYER
SIUSLAW NEWS

The City of Florence, Florence Urban Renewal Agency and Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) will continue to move forward with a revised timeline for the Highway 101 ReVision Streetscaping Project. This comes after the agencies' June decision to repackaging the project after the initial bids for construction came in well over the projected estimates.

ReVision Florence is a beautification and streetscape project of Highway 101 from the Siuslaw River Bridge north to the intersection of Highway 126, and then extending east to Spruce Street.

It's “the big topic” for Urban Renew-

al right now, according to Chairperson Joshua Greene.

Construction on the project is scheduled to begin in January 2019.

City Project Manager Megan Messmer released a new timeline for ReVision at the end of July and presented a letter to Urban Renewal on Aug. 1, detailing the expected changes to business and property owners in the project's corridors.

“Since most of them came to our open house, I just want to keep them up to date on the new process,” Messmer said. “They are now aware that the project has been delayed and that we won't be starting construction later this month.”

The initial timeline — which planned to begin construction in Au-

gust and finish by next spring — was scrapped after ODOT received bids significantly higher than the project's \$7.4 million budget. The contractor portion was estimated to cost \$4.4 million, but the lowest estimate was 47 percent higher than that.

“Over the past month, our staff have been working with Murraysmith Engineering, Dougherty Landscape Architects and ODOT to address some of the items that came out of the first bid process,” Messmer said.

This included removing some items from the “biddable items” that the potential contractor would have to purchase, such as benches, bike racks and some parts of the lighting, and having the city purchase and install those directly.

City, Urban Renewal adapt streetscaping project to address high bids, confusion

“We don't need to pay the profit margin of a contractor, subcontractor and engineering management from ODOT to acquire those,” Messmer said. “We can much more easily purchase those outside of the contract, and Public Works has the capability of installing those. We'd also track their work as part of this project.”

In addition, ReVision will feature some economies of scale not present in the initial bid process by bidding the project under one proposal. This will cover both ODOT's paving of the roadways and the city and Urban Renewal's streetscaping.

“Our philosophy as we move forward with this is we do want to maintain all the infrastructure pieces and the hardscape — the sidewalks, the

ADA ramps and the plazas ... and updating the lighting, the irrigation, undergrounding — all those things that will be difficult to do after they pave the road,” Messmer said. “That's the direction we have provided to our engineers.”

Some components will be postponed until the main construction is finished and completed by either another contractor or Public Works.

Under the new timeline, the final design is due to ODOT on Aug. 10. Once it is reviewed, ODOT will pass it on to the Oregon Office of Project Letting, which will send it out to bid around Oct. 11. The bid application process will be open for five weeks.

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THIS WEEK'S WEATHER
Full Forecast, A3

TODAY
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THURSDAY
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