

Greater Florence Area

Business Quarterly



NATIONAL FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

SPECIAL EDITION INSIDE

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SPORTS — B



Siuslaw News

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SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON

EMAC proposes to curb single-use plastic bags

Survey seeks community input on plastic bag use

BY MARK BRENNAN
SIUSLAW NEWS

The problems with plastics continue to grow. Landfills are now the end destination for most plastic containers and plastic grocery bags used by consumers in Lane County and in much of Oregon.

The dangers of plastic in the environment are becoming more widely known and communities around the world and across the state are attempting to reduce the environmental damage by eliminating single-use plastic bags.

Florence is now in the initial stages of a process that will determine if it joins this growing list of municipalities.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), over 380 billion plastic bags are used by Americans every year and 100 billion of these are single-use carry-out plastic bags.

The average length of use of the single-use plastic bags is 12 minutes, with only one in 200 being recycled. Even cities that continue to offer plastic recycling for their residents often do not accept the single-use plastic bag, as they can damage machines used in the recycling process.

See PLASTIC page 7A

Officials urge residents to get flu shots

Following a season of high mortality, vaccination is highly recommended

BY DAMIEN SHERWOOD
SIUSLAW NEWS

Dips in the thermostat mark the annual return of flu season. Health authorities are priming to fight the virus with a well-vaccinated public.

“We have received our first confirmed test of influenza — and it’s a type B influenza — in Lane County,” said Lane County Health and Human Services Public Information Officer Jason Davis. “That was about a week and a half ago, so we definitely have it.”

Health authorities recommend that everyone age six months and older get their flu vaccines, particularly those in at-risk groups.

“Getting the vaccine in especially important for those who are at high risk of having serious flu-related complications, including young children, older adults, pregnant women and people with chronic medical conditions or disorders,” said Dr. Ron Shearer, medical director at PeaceHealth Medical Group at Peace Harbor, in a press release.

Colder times of the year tend to see an exponential rise in influenza cases. Flu season is broadly considered to be between the months of October and May, with peak outbreaks between December and February.

Influenza viruses infect millions

of Americans annually, hospitalizing hundreds of thousands and causing tens of thousands of deaths. Yearly vaccination is recommended by both the World Health Organization and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to reduce the viruses’ effects. The CDC estimates 5.3 million influenza illnesses were prevented by immunization efforts during the 2016-2017 season.

Last year, however, marked one of the deadliest seasons in 40 years, resulting in what the CDC estimates to be as many as 80,000 flu-related deaths nationwide.

Two years ago, Florence itself saw a particularly heavy inundation of flu-related illnesses among school-aged children.

Influenza is a viral respiratory infection and most deaths are caused by the resulting complications rather than the virus itself. The most common indirect cause of death is bacterial pneumonia, but other complications such as multiple organ failure and inflammation of the heart, brain or muscle tissue can be fatal as well.



DAMIEN SHERWOOD/SIUSLAW NEWS

Pharmacies, medical clinics and doctor’s offices are beginning to offer flu shots to counter flu season, which usually runs from October to May each year.

There are two kinds of influenza — A and B — which commonly spread in human populations and vaccines are made to target three or four particular strains of these types.

Flu vaccines contain inactivated virus particles which prompt antibodies, a protective protein, to develop as an immune response.

“Since the antibodies from the vaccine take about two weeks to full-

ly offer protection, getting [a vaccine] as soon as possible is critical,” Shearer said.

Vaccines cannot cause flu illness, though side effects to the vaccine are possible and can vary per individual. For some, the immune system response as the body “learns” to fight the virus may cause achiness or low-grade fever.

See VACCINATE page 7A

GET READY TO PLAY

Siuslaw Vision hosts all ages ‘Play Day’ on Oct. 13

BY MARK BRENNAN
SIUSLAW NEWS

Siuslaw Vision 2025, a community-focused, regional effort to improve quality of life for local residents, is coordinating an all ages Play Day on Saturday, Oct. 13, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The purpose of the event is to provide adults and youth the opportunity to participate in a number of free activities for the simple purpose of having fun.

There is a growing appreciation among scientists and researchers that “playing around” can have a much greater positive impact on overall wellness than previously thought. Research has shown that laughter created when people play with family and friends, and pets, can relieve stress by releasing endorphins in the brain that activate the body’s opiate receptors, causing a pleasant analgesic effect in the body. Playing with others helps people feel good and improves their physical and mental wellbeing.

Playing has also proven to improve communication among family members and life partners, in addition to fostering empathy, cooperation, compassion and trust.

Siuslaw Vision Coordinator Stephanie Sarles feels that giving adults and children a chance to participate in activities designed to relax and entertain is also a great way to spend some free



SIUSLAW NEWS FILE PHOTO

Siuslaw Vision brings a giant game of stackable blocks to its events around town. The Vision’s next event, Play Day on Oct. 13, will feature the game, as well as a chance to play in the area’s parks.

time in one of the city’s parks.

“This is the first of our Siuslaw Play Days featuring recreational activities in our region,” she said. “We want to showcase what’s available

See PLAY page 5A

COLLEGE BOARD DAY 2018

BY STEVE MOSER
SIUSLAW HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR

For many students, taking the PSAT is their first tangible step towards college. Created in 1959 by the College Board, the Preliminary SAT (shorted to PSAT later on) is distributed annually to all sophomore students at Siuslaw High School during October in order to test each student’s abilities in math, reading and writing. Additionally, juniors may also take the PSAT, as it is used as a qualification standard for the National Merit Scholarship program.

Juniors and seniors also have the option of taking the SAT, which many colleges use as a reference point for admittance. Taking the SAT is an incredibly important step for attending a university. It can benefit students looking at two-year schools as well since scores on the SAT can replace the need to take placement tests.

In years past, Siuslaw offered the PSAT and the SAT only a single time per school year, in October and December respectively; however some Siuslaw seniors and juniors were required to travel to other schools to take the SAT if they are unavailable to take it in Florence, or if we reach our limit for students who can test on a single SAT testing day (which we did last year).

This year though, Siuslaw High School will hold its inaugural College Board Day, which will be an amazing day of PSAT and SAT testing.

Most schools are only authorized to administer the SAT on a single Saturday during the school year, and each school is limited to one day in October to administer the PSAT. Furthermore, the PSAT is free for students to take, but the SAT costs each student upwards of \$60, unless they receive a fee waiver. Even then, students have been limited to the single testing date or they must take

it at another SAT administrative school. The next closest SAT testing school is nearly 50 miles away. That situation includes additional negative variables like travel time and testing in an unfamiliar environment.

So Siuslaw asked how it could make taking the PSAT and SAT more favorable for its students. How can we limit those undesirable points of contention with scheduling and cost and at the same time strengthen students’ college-going mindset?

With support from the district and funding from Measure 98, Siuslaw High School will hold College Board day on Wednesday, Oct. 10.

SHS College Board Day, held for the first time this year, will include our regular scheduled PSAT testing for sophomore students — 104 total — in addition to adding an SAT testing time for juniors and seniors.

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