



# ON THE MAT

SPORTS — B



# Siuslaw News

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SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON

## Hometown advantage



NYAH PHOTO BY NEPTUNE/INRAGE ENTERTAINMENT

### Rising artist chooses Florence as location for music video

This Saturday, Florence will be the main location for a music video produced by InRage Entertainment, based out of Los Angeles. For the Vollmar family, it made sense to pick a place central to 14-year-old Nyah's upbringing and rising talents in singing, acting and even dance. The party isn't limited to the young performer, either. All of the Florence community is invited to sign up online and show up at 10 a.m. to be included.

"I've recently written a song, and we really want to shoot this music video in Florence," Nyah told the Florence City Council on Nov. 5. "We want to showcase this, because this is my home and I really, really love it."

Along with her father Scott, Nyah spoke to the councilors about including them, city staff and the public in the upcoming video shoot.

Nyah is frank for a teenager, carrying some of the signature dry humor of those born in Generation Y. See MUSIC VIDEO page 11A

BY CHANTELE MEYER  
SIUSLAW NEWS



Sunshine and large crowds were the order of the day for Sunday's annual Veteran's Day Parade. Thousands of spectators lined the sidewalks on First and Bay Streets in Historic Old Town Florence as retired and active veterans, local first responders and U.S. Coast Guard troops passed by to applause and cheers from community members in crowds. In addition, American Foreign Legion Post No. 50, Elks Lodge No. 1858, Florence Chapter of Disabled American Veterans and Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3232 attended a recognition ceremony at the Elks Lodge preceding their participation in parade. See more photos on A12.

## FLORENCE VETERANS DAY PARADE 2018



PHOTOS BY MARK BRENNAN/SIUSLAW NEWS



## Education week recognizes school faculty, staff

BY MARK BRENNAN  
SIUSLAW NEWS

American Education Week, Nov. 12 to 16, is a nationwide annual observance that highlights the importance and dedication of teachers and staff to the education process. Throughout the week, the Siuslaw School District will be recognizing the work done by these dedicated individuals by giving small tokens of apprecia-

tion to faculty and staff throughout the week.

The National Education Association (NEA) was one of the creators and original sponsors of the almost century-old recognition effort, first meeting with the American Legion in 1919 to address illiteracy among veterans of World War I.

In its initial resolution, drafted in 1921, the NEA called for: "An educational week ... observed in

all communities annually for the purpose of informing the public of the accomplishments and needs of the public schools and to secure the cooperation and support of the public in meeting those needs."

U.S. President Donald Trump released a proclamation last week in expectation of this week's observance, highlighting the importance of a good education for all Americans.

According to the official proclamation released by the White House, American Education Week is about highlighting the commitment to ensuring all Americans have access to an affordable, high-quality education, as well as recognizing the hard work of the nation's parents, guardians, teachers and school leaders to ensure every child is prepared to join today's growing workforce.

See EDUCATION page 7A

## IN MEMORIAM OF FLORENCE'S EXPLODING WHALE

Groups commemorate 48th anniversary of Florence's most famous public spectacle

BY JARED ANDERSON  
SIUSLAW NEWS

"Hazel, you got all the whale parts?" James Spangler asked Hazel Raia Monday as they were getting ready to reenact the famed "Exploding Whale" incident which occurred on Nov. 12, 1970, on a beach just south of Florence.

The whale parts were a mixture of kids and adults, dressed in black plastic bags and hand drawn pictures of various organs: A heart, lungs, a liver, a blowhole and a complex digestive tract.

"Where's the eye?" Raia asked. The eye was a big white disk, an "x" representing a dead eyeball. It was held up prominently

as the group huddled together on the sand just outside of Driftwood Shores Resort and Conference Center, creating the semblance of a large, beached whale. Multiple white boxes marked "TNT" were nestled alongside the makeshift marine mammal.

"Do you want to do quick practice?" Someone yelled, and a countdown started: Five, four, three, two, one. The whale parts yelled "Boom!" as they flung themselves across the beach, laughing.

"That was the best blown-up whale I've seen all day," Spangler said.

It wasn't the only blown-up



SIUSLAW NEWS FILE PHOTO

whale reenactment on Monday, the 48th anniversary of Florence's exploding whale. Just

hours before, a video had been released online of the incident, with a small whale replica ex-

ploded by a single firework. Bloody whale blubber (represented by flaming Cheetos) rained down on unsuspecting Barbie dolls.

The video, made by local artist Jo Beaudreau and her fiancé Dan Okonski was produced to help sell "I Love Florence" shirts and sweaters designed by local artist Ed Gunderson as a fundraiser for local young artists.

The three of them showed up to the larger reenactment by Driftwood, however the two projects were not planned in tandem. In fact, neither group knew the other existed until they began promoting their events. "It was such a great idea that

obviously there's a groundswell in the area," Gunderson said about the interest in celebrating the often-derided decision to explode an 8-ton beached sperm whale with half-a-ton of dynamite. In the process, Gunderson, along with the organizers of the Monday night event, spoke about the history of the exploding whale, how it has become a national phenomenon, and the importance of celebrating (and capitalizing on) some of the quirkiest aspects of the Siuslaw region that many locals tend to forget about.

"In two years, it will be the 50th anniversary, and we're going to do it right," Gunderson said.

See WHALE page 9A

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**OCT 15 - DEC 7**

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**NOV 1 - DEC 15**