

BOYS & GIRLS from page 1A

“I will be coaching a first-second grade and third-fourth grade team this season for BGC basketball,” Perry said. “The plan is to have our coaches put a lot of time and effort into the fundamentals of the game. It is important to begin these skills at an early age so that as we progress through the program and into the school teams, we are properly prepared to compete against the best teams and schools the state has.”

Perry will also work to help train coaches, who are generally parents volunteering their time as a way to spend more time with their kids.

“We will be putting together coaching clinics to teach the fundamentals of the sports,” Perry said. “I expect to find coach-

es who care about the kids and who are eager to teach the fundamentals of the games they will participating in through their grade school years. I’m not sure I would characterize my style in training adults, I just expect them to try and put themselves in the child’s perspective and to be patient with their coaching duties.”

BGC also hopes that the inclusion of coordinated coaching classes will help bring in more adults to the program.

“I hope that we can continue to get larger numbers of participants for all the sports that we offer through the club, and that we can get more parents involved to help coach our youth,” Perry said.

As Perry works to strengthen the sports programs, other BGC staff will focus on academics.

“It goes to healthy lifestyles,” Trent said. “One of the things that Dylan and I have talked about is making sure that, because we have so many student athletes, we continue to have their academics go into the direction they need to go to make sure they graduate on time and stay in the programs. This is a really good partnership, in particular with athletics, homework and mentoring.”

“I hope that there will be other ways the district and BGC might begin to work more together,” Perry said. “I am quite new to this relationship, but I plan to do my best to bring our community closer through all outlets.”

One of those possible outlets is through the creation of a “Microd” club, which Trent hopes could foster a stronger relationship with the district’s STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) programs. “Essentially, it’s miniature hot rods,” Trent said. “They’re souped-up go-karts powered by lawn mower engines that have roll cages, safety harnesses and are low to the ground, so they’re not going to tip over.”

Microd racing began New York in the 1950s, with children building and racing the miniature race cars around dedicated tracks. The cars themselves, made of wood frames, rarely go above 20 miles per hour. While there have been a number of clubs that have popped up on the east coast and Midwest throughout the decades, the sport has yet to take off in the west.

Terry Tomeny, who helped build the successful Florence Air Academy with the BGC, brought the idea to Trent in hopes to build up a robust and popular program for the community.

“What I would like to see is by June, we race these cars,” Trent said. “We could start out with a large parking lot, but the idea is

on Saturdays to have a community event to watch the kids race. ... Eventually we’d like to find someplace where we can actually build a track.”

The education portion of the microd’s come with the students building them.

“We find volunteers to help us buy these microrods, so the kids actually do the work,” Trent said. “They have a mentor who helps them use hand tools, how to do the assembly, the maintenance. Everything from tire pressure to the lawnmower engines to the brakes. It’s really mechanical in nature.”

BGC would start by training older kids in car creation, who could then take their knowledge to mentor younger kids.

“I’ve not talked to the school district yet, but our approach is building bridges,” Trent said. “The school does robotics and the automotive shop. What if we partnered with the automotive shop? We could have some of the kids in the automotive shop help our younger kids build these. The overall idea is to be able to help kids know how to use small tools and basic maintenance.”

Trent said the club already has some sponsors identified to fund the cars — they cost \$500 to build — and others who have volunteered to help teach the design of the cars.

Other STEM projects include teaching by local videographer Gary Quinn of Okey Dokey Video Productions, based in Florence.

“He’s going to teach video production,” Trent said. “We’ll actually have students produce our videos that we want to put on Facebook on our webpage. Then computer repair as well, and Gary owns a commercial drone business that he can teach. We’re going to have several electives for our older kids, and exposure to potential careers.”

In addition, Trent hopes that a partnership can be made with the school district to give BGC members school credit for their work.

“We’ve contacted (counselor) Steve Moser to begin that discussion,” Trent said. “Anything that we can do to help these kids have exposure to potential as they graduate from high school is still a good thing. We’re still in the early stages, but that’s the direction we want to go.”

Aside from partnerships with the school district, BGC is also working to strengthen its own programs, such as Smart Girls, Passport to Manhood and Money Matters. The club kids have even started their own student council, where the kids make their own rules, such as cell phone policies.

“Part of that is to teach the kids how to have a voice in a constructive way,” Trent said. “It’s also helping them understand the consequences of their actions. That’s a really important part of their mentoring and passport to manhood. As they get older, the consequences of their actions are greater when they get older. What we want to do is teach them problem solving skills and coping skills to make informed decisions, and to understand the pros, cons and impacts of those decisions.”

To ensure that the programs at BGC are properly administered, the club is partnering with the Oregon Community Foundation, using the Youth Quality Program Assessment. Through a combination of self-assessments and an outside observer, club staff are scored on areas such as emotional safety, skill building, interaction and engagement with the students.

“We’ll take our self-assessments, combine them with an external assessment that doesn’t have any ties to our club, and

then we get scored on that,” Trent said. “They’ll give us an overall score, and we start building an action plan on areas that will have a bigger impact and meet the needs of our kids. This is a very intensive, three-year program to make sure our staff and programs are outstanding.”

The club has also been working on enhancing their facilities with the inclusion of the Nan Osborn Teen Center, which had its official groundbreaking earlier this year and is now up and running.

The center, which is designed for teens in grades eight to 12, includes two classrooms, a computer lab, a kitchen and an entertainment area that includes a pool table, a big screen TV and two vintage pinball machines.

While the center is fully functional, there is still some cosmetic work that needs to be done.

“We’re having [the teens] help us putting it all together to move forward,” Trent said. “This is their space. What would be really cool is working with some of the local artists in the community to do murals and different things like that.”

Trent also emphasized that the building is for all teens, no matter if they are members or not.

“Any of the high schoolers who need access to a computer to do their homework, they can come in here,” Trent said. “They don’t have to be a club member. The most important thing is that the kids have a safe positive place, be it here, the school district, CROW. Wherever it is, we just want to make sure, working together, we’re doing the right thing for the kids. We want to build bridges with the rest of the groups. It’s our communities’ kids. It truly does take a community to make our kids successful.”

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TREE from page 1A

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al forests. The USDA lists the most popular tree species used for Christmas Trees are Douglas fir, white fir, incense cedar and lodgepole and ponderosa pines. Not every kind of tree will be available in every region.

The Siuslaw National Forest is one of the nearby locations that residents can search to select their own Christmas tree.

Stephen Baker, who handles media relations for the U.S. Forest Service’s Pacific Northwest Region, reported in an email to the Siuslaw News that the program, while inexpensive, is quite popular.

“In 2017, the Forest Service sold 41,618 Christmas tree permits in Oregon, and 404 of those were sold in the Siuslaw,” he said, adding that \$192,160 was generated by the permit sales.

The Christmas Tree Program was used by more than 40,000 Oregonians last year, but can be challenging from a number of perspectives, most notably due to inclement weather and unfamiliarity with the forest area selected.

Baker suggests that permit holders take some basic precautions before entering the forest.

“Check the weather forecast and road conditions before traveling and dress for the weather,” he advised. “Always be prepared for the cold and the snow and start hunting early in the day in order to have plenty of daylight hours. And bring emergency supplies, including water, food and a first aid kit, as well as a map and a compass, as your cell phone may not work in many forests.”

See TREE page 8A

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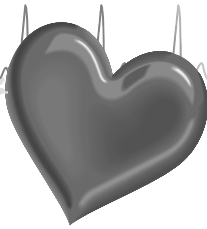
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