

MAPLETON *from page 1A*

The family had come to the high school after a family barbeque.

“I like to see my niece so happy and excited,” Malena said.

“And blow stuff up,” Jesse added. “We’ve just got some sparklers and stuff, but we’re waiting for the big stuff.”

Malena laughed — “All American,” she said.

It had been two years since the last fireworks show happened in Mapleton. The property that originally acted as a staging area for the traditional river show sold, and the new owners wouldn’t allow fireworks to be set off there. Those owners moved on, and the new owners said they would allow the show to continue, but not this year.

“They have to do some repairs to the area,” said Janine Maree Halverson, who was handling publicity for the show. “They didn’t do it this year, but we’re praying that it’s ready for the Fourth of July next year, and we’ll try and go back to the original spot. That’s our ultimate goal — to view them from the river again.”

This year’s show was set off just south of the Siuslaw Watershed Council building, which is located in the high school parking lot.

The community began gathering in the parking lot hours before the big show began at 10 p.m., meeting up with old friends and family.

Tyler Packebush was showing off his newborn girl, Emma Jean.

“She’s almost four months old,” he said. Fourth months and two days. “I graduated from Mapleton and I usually work in Wyoming, but I’m back now.”

Packebush was spending the week with his family, eating hamburgers and showing off Emma. The family gath-

ered around the baby. “It’s her first fourth,” he said.

Just a few yards away, a young boy screamed, “A smoke bomb! Duck and cover!”

A group of youth were setting of various fireworks throughout the evening — firecrackers, smoke bombs, whistlers.

“Guys, watch this, watch!” one of the boys said as he lit a Whistling Bee. “Run, run, run!” he yelled as embers began to fly over their heads.

“Whoa, that one shot all the way over our car!” he exclaimed as other families laughed.

Watching them were Larry and Lanell Baker.

Lanell said the fireworks were important because they bring community together.

“It brings people and families together to do things,” she said.

When asked how their family had spent their fourth, Larry said, “We went riding today.”

“We took grandma, she’s 86,” Lanelle added.

“She still rides with us,” Larry agreed. “We rode to Ada, a little town over the ridge there. I wouldn’t say it’s a Fourth of July tradition. But any excuse to go riding with family.”

Melissa Moffett, who had never seen fireworks in Mapleton before, also believed that the day was about family.

“We’ve been here for about two and a half years, and this is the first time for fireworks,” she said. “I think it’s important locally because we’re a little community, and we enjoy supporting



PHOTOS BY JARED ANDERSON/SIUSLAW NEWS
Katie and other kids joined their families in watching fireworks in Mapleton on Thursday.

each other.”

Moffett said that her Fourth of July tradition was usually just watching fireworks with her family: her two daughters, her little sister and her father, who had just come in from Idaho.

“We only do sparklers, but we don’t set them off,” she said. “But usually if we can be together as a family, that’s the most important thing.”

Moffett’s baby daughter began to cry, but not because of the various explosions going off.

“She says, ‘I’m getting teeth,’” Moffett said.

Not long after, the first firework went off.

“It’s starting, it’s starting!” another kid yelled as people started to rush over to where they could view them.

Unlike previous years, a new effect had taken over the 20-minute show, as the smoke from the fireworks became trapped in between the tall hills. The thick cloud didn’t obscure the fireworks outright, but enhanced them at times and creating an otherworldly effect.

“When you’re down on the river, you don’t get the smoke because it’s



already going down river,” Halverson said. “I was personally bummed by the smoke at times, but it would clear and come back. It was pretty cool.”

And it was loud, as each boom of an exploding firework created an echo chamber throughout the valley.

Some of the audience, who had gathered on the track field by the middle school and had some difficulty seeing the show, came down to the lower field to see the show more clearly.

“Everybody thought it was spectacular, they’re all very happy to have the fireworks back,” said Halverson, reiterating that the hope is to bring back the fireworks to its original place next year.

The deadline for donations is February to ensure that technicians, which this year included Terry Saubert, Carl Halverson and Chris Ellis, among others, can set up a good show.

“Our ultimate goal is to keep doing it each year,” Halverson said.

Siuslaw News



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Florence Bahá'í community gathers

The membership of the Florence Bahá'í Community invites all who are interested in learning more about the Baha'i Faith and to commemorate the anniversary of the execution of the Báb, which occurred in 1850 Ta-

briz, Persia. The event will be Wednesday, July 10, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Bromley room of the Siuslaw Public Library. Refreshments will be served.

A movie about the Báb's life will be shown, along

with a short play about him, and devotions will be held.

The Báb called for revolutionary changes to the prevailing system of religious belief and governance, and taught the unity of all religions.

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FUUF contemplates 'consideration'

On Sunday, July 7, from 10 until 11 a.m. at the Florence Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (FUUF), the Rev. Marcia Pearce will share a message titled, "Consideration."

Pearce shared a Louise Hay quote: "Though I walk through the valley of death, I do not have to build a condo there."

"We need to find new ways of looking at old ideas, especially regarding ourselves," Pearce continued. "What if

we could find just one good old lie to knock the edge off a hidden splendor? For example, it is absolutely not true that weeds have no earthly value — I can introduce you to a very healthy goat."

FUUF is located at 87738 Highway 101. Each service concludes with refreshments and a dialogue circle to explore the questions that come up during each worship service.

For more information, visit www.florenceuuf.org.



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the Siuslaw News at 997-3441, or drop off
information at 148 Maple St., Old Town, Florence.