

WATERSHED PLAN, COHO RUNS TO BE FEATURED AT STEP MEETING

Eli Tone Siuslaw watershed director will discuss the Watershed Council's 10 Year Strategic Action Plan for Coho Salmon Recovery. The Siuslaw Coho Partnership is a group of public and private partners

dedicated to the broad-sense recovery of Siuslaw coho salmon. This Strategic Action Plan (SAP) was developed by a "core planning team" of these partners. The Siuslaw River once

supported one of the largest runs of wild Coho salmon along the Oregon coast. However, over 150 years of resource use and development in the Siuslaw River watershed have contributed to a long and

steady decline in the population. By merging the best available science with local knowledge of the watershed, the strategic plan seeks to pinpoint the specific projects that can

enhance watershed function and ensure the long-term health of the Siuslaw River Coho population. Eli Tone will be the featured speaker at the Wednesday, Aug. 7 meeting of the Florence STEP

group. The meeting begins at 7 p.m. at the Elks' Lodge in Florence. As always, the public is invited to attend.

Coach from 1B

School Football history — and they have a bunch of those nice, shiny rings to prove it." Johnson said that his family never pushed him into football; his father would have been happy with whatever path he chose, "But we just wanted to follow in their footsteps," he said. "They're about the greatest guys I've ever met. It's like, we know how it affected us, and we've seen it affect thousands of boys' lives. We want to be a part of that.

"I would definitely not be sitting here today if it wasn't for high school football." Johnson takes over the coaching helm at a time when the program has been experiencing a slump in recent years — including being the third coach in just four years for the Vikings. Prior to that, Siuslaw football had seen just two head coaches — Lutero and Dodson — in 50 years.

As the Vikings began losing games (Siuslaw went 1-15 over the last two seasons), Johnson said he watched the program and town lose some of its spirit. "In 2008, the stock market crashed and we were struggling as a country — but the football team was pretty good, so everybody in town was fine," Johnson said. "Coming back here now, there's a different mood around town. The economy is great, but the football program is struggling."

But that's something that Johnson is looking to change. "In the coming years, Siuslaw football will get back to winning a lot of football games, but just winning will never be our focus," Johnson said. While he describes himself as a competitive person who understands that to many fans football is more than "just a game," to focus entirely on winning and losing is missing the point.

"We're going to win because we do the little things right," he said. "When we win in life and do the right thing, Friday night just takes care of itself. That's when you win state championships." It's a philosophy born from those who coached him, including his father, Andy Johnson, who coached Siuslaw Middle School football.

"If it was just about football, I don't know if a lot of us would have stayed and played. But when we you get the players to buy into something that's a lot bigger than themselves, it means more and inspires a winning attitude," Johnson said. "I would much rather our players learn the valuable lessons of life — which we can teach through football. If we only worry about winning, we're going to have jerk football players. But if we worry about the little stuff like being a good person, opening doors for people — all that 'little' stuff, we'll play like winners and become winners. That's tough to say because a lot of people don't think that."

Johnson said the proof is in the pudding with his uncles Marty and Lane at Sheldon. "They always focused on doing the little stuff right, and they've got a full hand of state title rings. "It's going to take time to instill doing the little stuff right. But our kids are really good kids, really respectful. We're already off on a good start with that." Johnson said that philosophy starts early on with programs like the Boys and Girls Club. When Johnson played for that program as a child, he said he learned the importance of teamwork and the fundamentals of the game. The assistant coaches came from the junior varsity high school teams, "and it was just the coolest experience ever," he said. "Those guys are like gods to you. You look up to them and everything they do."

By the time he got to play for Siuslaw, he found himself within an even larger family. "It was better than anything I could have imagined it up to be when I became a part of that team," recalled Johnson. "It's like you've gotten 40 new brothers for four straight years. You see them way more than your family at home because you have morning lifts together, then you go to school with them, then you have three hours of practice four days a week and play on Friday. To me it was the greatest experience I've ever had sports wise.

"Now I get to create that culture for another generation of kids." And it's a culture based on respect. Johnson said Dodson ensured that his players went beyond the stereotypical cliques that football players can be seen as; the hard partying "jocks" who are the kings of the school.

"We would eat lunch and it was never, 'The football team sits here,'" Johnson said. "That was ingrained in use from Tim. He would always say that we were raised to be the 'men of the school' and we needed to lead by example. We made sure to go and open doors for everybody. We made sure to sit with everybody. If you saw people sitting alone, there was going to be at least two football players sitting with them. We took pride in that.

"At the end of the day, those are the people coming out to support you on Friday night. If you have a bunch of jerk football play-

ers, no kids are going to come out to support them. You have to be nice and respectful to everyone." Making "good men over good football players" is a key mantra for Johnson, who sees football as a way to create strong members of the community.

"If I go into a state championship and I've got 19 kids that have been in trouble, I've done something wrong," he said. That philosophy is reflected in how Johnson views his greatest and worst moments in his varsity years. His best play occurred when a teammate scored a touchdown.

"Andrew Tupua had a 75-yard touchdown run, and I sprung a block late," Johnson recalled. "We had been preaching that we're going to do our job, we're going to pick each other's slack up. My slack was that I couldn't block that guy by myself. When the tight end came around and timed it perfectly to make that final block for Andrew, I thought it was the coolest thing in the world." As for the worst play, that came in 2011 during a state title game against La Salle.

"We had an onside kick that went a little deep," Johnson said, recalling the moment vividly. "We ran for it but right off the bat I slipped. I was a step late recovering the onside kick and La Salle recovered it. There was a long time where I thought that if I didn't slip, we would have won the state championship. All I could think was, 'I screwed up.'"

But Dodson set him straight. "He broke it down, explaining there were a million of things that happened," Johnson said. "Win or lose, It's never just about you."

That doesn't mean winning a state championship again isn't a goal for Johnson. He's taking his coaching lessons from his wide variety of mentors. Among those lessons is not forcing the kids into plays they are unable to do, but rather to build plays around his players' ability.

"Sure, every player that played for Tim knew they were going to run 'belly-right' 25 times a game, and we did that with no matter who we had," said Johnson. "But we would do it with different formations. We would spread it out to make things easier for a fast running back. You would shrink things down for powerhouses

like Sonny Tupua. It would be the same plays, but he would do it out of different formations to fit the players he had."

But it's going to take time for Johnson to figure that out. "At the end of the day, the oldest kids will be 18," he said. "But we've got 14- and 15-year-olds out there who are still learning — and we're going to teach them how to do stuff the right way."

Even if Johnson does bring home a fist full of state rings by the end of his career, he would not use that as a measure of his success.

"The real measure of success will come when the members of the 2019 Siuslaw football team are 40 years old. Are they doing a good job raising their kids and loving their wife or husband?" Are they doing a good job being a citizen of the world? Are they representing this town well? Not many people remember who won which state football championships, said Johnson. "But they'll remember the kid who grew up and went on to become the governor, or a great teacher or business owner. If they do things the right way in the next 20 years, and I have a tiny part of getting them there, that will be where I get joy and success from."

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Multi-Family Fri-Sat. 8/2-8/3 9am-4pm 1515 Xylo Street Lots of Misc.	8/2-8/4 8am-3pm 2073 E 17th Street Tools, gardening, lawn mowers, gas powered scooters, bicycles, trailer, household items plus lots more!
Fire Sale & Multi-Family Friday 8/2 11:30am-5:30pm Sat 8/3 9am-3pm 2010 Kingwood. Proceeds go to Benevolent fund & bibles for Kenya.	Friday Only August 9th 9am-4pm 4746 & 4742 Seabreeze Lane Jewelry bits & bobs, furniture, housewares, garden tools, lamps, clothes & more!

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