

City Lights shows "After Parkland" documentary

INSIDE — A3

Who will be named Florence's next First Citizen, Future First Citizen?

BY CHANTELE MEYER
SIUSLAW NEWS

Tonight's Siuslaw Awards recognizes not only outstanding business leaders in the Siuslaw region, but the stand-out volunteers from 2019 who keep Florence Oregon's premier coastal community. With the Florence First Citizen Award and the Future First Citizen Award, the Florence Area Chamber of Commerce will celebrate these eight special nominees.

FIRST CITIZEN NOMINEES

Look over the variety of volunteer work, specialties, passion projects and skills of the four nominees for First Citizen, and there won't be a lot of similarities. What unites these men is a dedication to the Siuslaw community and its residents.

See NOMINEES page 6A

'Spirit of Aloha' inspires generous giving

Fraudville raises \$79,930 for Boys & Girls Club

STORY & PHOTOS
BY CHANTELE MEYER
SIUSLAW NEWS

On Feb. 8, the community experienced the tropical breeze of "The Spirit of Aloha" at Boys & Girls Clubs (BGC) of Western Lane County's Fraudville, held at the Florence Events Center.

"Aloha. It means everybody's welcome, everybody's loved, everybody's accepted," said auctioneer Tyson Baker. "That's what happens when kids step inside the Boys and Girls Club. When you step inside, you are at your second home. You are with your family. You are safe. You can see that every one of those kids feel those things."

Part of that spirit was evident as the event's totals were tallied, surpassing BGC's goal of \$50,000 to reach \$79,930.

According to BGC Executive Director Chuck Trent, "Fraudville funds our teen and after-school programs. All the funds that are being raised tonight are going directly to the kids in Florence. ... We're here to make sure that all kids have opportunities for a great future."

Fraudville is an annual lip-sync competition that allows community members, nonprofit organizations and businesses to dress up, perform and show a little silliness all in the spirit of giving. It is BGC's main fundraiser each year.

This year's event featured island décor, catering by The Hukilau, a custom-built tiki bar, shaved ice and games. In one, attendees could pay to maroon other guests on Castaway Island until another guest paid their way to free-



The 2020 Fraudville Champions are Boys and Girls Clubs' "The Chicken Nugget Warriors" (top photo). The event also featured an auction and "Spirit of Aloha" décor.

dom. Notable attendees such as Florence Mayor Joe Henry, his wife Pam and BGC Board Secretary Nancy Pearson were often designated to the island.

See FRAUDVILLE page 5A



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WEATHER



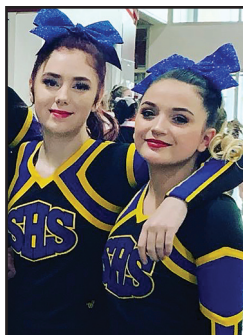
Partly sunny with a high of 51 and a low tonight of 35.
Full forecast on A3

COMMUNITY



Review of SEACOAST's Bettman & Halpin concert
INSIDE — A3

SPORTS



Vikings go to state
INSIDE — SPORTS

Setting priorities for 'the community's school'

Siuslaw School District seeks community input on Student Success Act

BY JARED ANDERSON
SIUSLAW NEWS

"Last year, the state senate passed the Student Success Act (SSA)," Siuslaw School District Superintendent Andy Grzeskowiak said. "It really brings us back to a level, service wise, of where we were 25 years ago. It's filling in a lot of gaps."

Grzeskowiak was opening the first of three community forums surrounding the SSA, which is expected to bring approximately \$1.14 million to the district. The funds are designated for meeting students' mental and behavioral health needs, reducing academic disparities for students from historically underserved populations, providing access to academic courses, establishing and strengthening partnerships and allowing teachers and staff time to collaborate, review data and help students stay on track to graduate.

The broad categories of allowable investments of the funds are to improve class size, to provide a well-rounded education for all students, increase instructional time, and address health and safety for students.

"Part of getting that extra money into the district is making sure we have input from people in the community as to the priorities of programs," Grzeskowiak said. "Otherwise, it just becomes an exercise of administrators and boards guessing at what the school needs."

The meeting he was attending,

scheduled in the morning, was sparsely attended — it's expected that the next meeting, held at 6 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 20, at the Florence Events center, will have greater attendance.

"This is the community's school. I was elected to help the community run the kind of school they want to run. I'm interested in what they have to say, and I'm sure the rest of the board is interested in what they have to say."

— Guy Rosinbaum, Siuslaw School Board President

The meetings each consist of an introduction and then input sessions from community members, who are given copies of student and district data from the Oregon Department of Education to help them in making choices about the programs. After each session, the community is invited to fill out a survey to give input off of the information discussed. For those who don't attend the forums, a general link is available at http://bit.ly/SIA_SNEWS.

Despite the low turnout at the January session, the district has already been reaching out to gain input on the data, from parents and administrators to local governments.

During the next few issues, *Siuslaw News* will look at the broader issues facing the district when it comes to SSA funding, with topics that range from graduation rates and Career Technical Education (CTE), to class size, absenteeism and cultural differ-

ences within the district.

"This is the community's school," said District board chair Guy Rosinbaum. "I was elected to help the community run the kind of school they

want to run. I'm interested in what they have to say, and I'm sure the rest of the board is interested in what they have to say."

GRADUATION RATE

One of the first goals of the funding, and one of the greatest misconceptions surrounding Siuslaw School District, is its graduation rate, which is currently on par with the Oregon average, resting at 79 percent. However, this is down six percent from the previous year.

"In '17-18, we had a graduation rate of 85 percent," Grzeskowiak explained. "We had, in essence, 85 out of 100 kids graduate. So last year, in '18-19, you had 79 of the same class graduate out of roughly 100."

From that number, it would seem that the district is having trouble with graduating seniors. But the graduation rate doesn't tell the full story.

The "five-year completion rate,"

which includes students who passed the GED, rose 5 percent in the '18-19 school year to 92 percent, seven points higher than the Oregon average of 85 percent.

"So the graduation rate went down while the other went up," Grzeskowiak explained. "Kids that complete a GED are not considered 'graduates' by the state definition. Our overall completion rate is going up because the average number of kids completing a GED is also going up. When you put those numbers together, the number of kids that completed in total is 91 percent."

It should also be noted that with such a small graduating class size, even just a handful of students delaying graduation can make it appear that there is a giant dip in a graduation rate. We're talking about the economy of scale. Six kids move out of the senior class in Springfield or Eugene, they're not noticed. ... Our rate will make minor changes and they'll be fluctuations there, but getting a kid completed is really what's important."

Grzeskowiak points to the relationships that staff and students build into the system as to a reason the completion rate is high.

"We have a good enough environment that kids who don't finish in their fourth year are actually coming back to finish," he said.

"We're sticking with them," Siuslaw Elementary Principal Mike Harklerode added.

See GRADUATION page 7A

RECORDS

Obituaries & response logs
INSIDE — A2

NEW: TV GUIDE

INSIDE — A10-11

KIDS CORNER

Activities for kids
INSIDE — B5

CLASSIFIEDS

Listings and notices
INSIDE — B6

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Medicare 101 Workshop

Learn how to find the best Medicare plan for you.

An advisor will be on hand to answer your questions and show you different plan options.

- Gain an understanding of How Medicare works.
- Learn the difference between Medicare Advantage and Medicare Supplement plans.
- Discover how Medicare Prescription Drug Plans work.



February 18 - 11:00pm

Siuslaw Public Library, Bromley Room
1460 9th St Florence, Oregon

To reserve your seat please call 541-997-1410.

