



**SIUSLAW NEWS:
A LOOK BACK AT 130 YEARS**

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Siuslaw News
NEWS &
VIEWS THAT
DEFINE OUR
COMMUNITY
VOL. 130, NO. 63
FLORENCE, OREGON

WEATHER



Sunny and windy with a high of 69 and a low tonight of 50. Full forecast on A3

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EDITORIAL: LEARNING FROM THE MISTAKES THAT GOT US HERE

What follows is a departure from what would traditionally be in this space above the fold. I'm referring to the decision to speak to you directly for the first time ever on the front page of this newspaper. We did not arrive at this decision lightly and realize there will be those who may criticize this as intentionally blurring the line between news and opinion — something I, too, have been critical of in regard to national broadcast journalism. However, though it is extremely rare for a newspaper to run a front-page editorial, it is not unprecedented when the subject is deemed important enough.

We feel this is one of those rare times. For the past year, the *Siuslaw News* has been examining the growing influence of politics and partisanship within our community — through social media, local activism, political groups, special interests and others — in order to understand

how we have arrived where we are today as a community struggling with a political divide.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK
Ned Hickson

In addition, we deemed it equally important to examine ourselves, and the role we have played as a newspaper in contributing to that growing partisanship and political divisions sown within our community and its local government. To be sure, we have made mistakes. Despite our best intentions, we have struggled against a steep learning curve, trying to find equilibrium in a time of unprecedented political fracturing that primarily began in 2017 and continues today.

In January 1997 in the *Siuslaw News*, then-editor Robert Serra wrote the following in an editorial about a Florence City Council meeting where

discussion was happening over a proposed outlet mall at Highway 101 and Munsel Lake Road:

"An atmosphere of civility prevailed at Monday Night's city council meeting to consider alternative sites for a proposed outlet mall. There was never any doubt about how either the councilors or more than 200 members of the audience felt about the issue ... which encompasses not just growth, but all the elements and emotion relating to community development. We as a community have been down this road before during the bloodletting process to consider [a casino] in Florence. That process helped us prepare for the current issue by reassuring us that community debate is healthy."

That kind of "community debate" is a stark contrast to what we have been experiencing over the past few years, and has become anything but "healthy."

See EDITORIAL page 5A



Air Academy cautiously lifts off

Participants in the Boys & Girls Clubs of Western Lane County's 2020 Florence Air Academy keep physically distant as they pose with Aero Legends' Stearman Model 75 biplane at the Florence Municipal Airport this week.

Boys & Girls Club program makes changes among COVID concerns

STORY & PHOTO
BY MARK BRENNAN
SIUSLAW NEWS

The fourth annual class attending the Florence Air Academy, a joint effort between the Boys and Girls Clubs of Western Lane County and the local aviation company Aero Legends, is now underway at the Florence Municipal Airport.

The local Boys and Girls Club Executive Director Chuck Trent

and his organization have been the beneficiary of the generosity and mentorship of Terry Tomeny and his wife Winette, owners of Aero Legends. Together they have financed and coordinated the Air Academy curriculum for the past three summers since they began the program in 2017.

This year, there was a major discussion concerning the question of whether to hold the summer aviation classes at all. However, after close communication with state, county and local health authorities, the decision was made to move forward.

Trent and Tomeny wanted to assure the community that the classes

are being conducted under stringent guidelines which have been taken directly from the Oregon Health Authority, with additional input from Siuslaw School District.

Trent has been in communication with both groups and has gone to extreme lengths to protect the young people under his and Tomeny's care.

He also wanted to point out the need to continue social interactions that are essential to the development of all young people.

"Since the beginning of this crisis, nonprofits that provide 'out-of-school' programming like Boys and Girls Clubs and YMCAs

See FLIGHT page 6A

OSAA rules on school sports for 2020-21

Sports seasons shift under new schedule

BY JARED ANDERSON
SIUSLAW NEWS

This week, the Oregon School Activities Association (OSAA) released a roadmap for school districts on when sports programs can begin in the 2020-21 school year. While practices could possibly be allowed throughout 2020, actual contests will not begin until January, starting with the traditional winter sports of basketball, wrestling and swimming.

From there, shortened seasons for all remaining sports will be spread out throughout 2021, ending in June with traditional spring contests.

"We're compressing our sports from an eight-month calendar year into a sixth-month year, so we have fewer contest dates," said Siuslaw Athletic Director Chris Johnson. "There's never been a season like this. It's unprecedented."

And it's also not set in stone. Districts throughout the state have had multiple reopening plans altered due to changing state protocols involving COVID-19 rates.

See SPORTS page 6A

Summer music education in motion

BY NICK SNYDER
FOR THE SIUSLAW NEWS

It's been a summer unlike any seen before.

Due to concerns surrounding COVID-19, many typical activities and summer recreation opportunities have all but disappeared in order to ensure community safety. Children in particular have had little chance to safely recreate and engage with their peers, leading to a season of relative inactivity and isolation.

On Monday, Aug. 3, Florence-based musicians Jason Wood and Sheena Moore began trying to change that as their "Music in Motion" online summer camp kicked off its inaugural year.

"Music in Motion" is a camp geared towards children age 5-8, running from Aug. 3-27, that pro-

vides campers with a weekly instructional video every Monday, followed by an online group session every Thursday where Wood and Moore can interact with the children, see what they've learned and give them a forum to interact with one another.

The focus of the camp is on the relationship between music and the body, performance, and a basic understanding of things like beat, rhythm, pitch and general musical literacy.

"We do hope that they walk away with base knowledge of concepts like pulse and how to tell a story with their body," Moore said, "but we also hope that they walk away with this sparked interest in learning more. Music is a rabbit hole and it's a really wonderful rabbit hole."

Based out of Florence, Ore.,



PHOTO COURTESY OF SHEENA MOORE

Florence musicians and educators Jason Wood and Sheena Moore as seen via webcam during lesson one of their online summer music and performance camp "Music in Motion."

Wood and Moore both have extensive backgrounds in both music and music education. Wood moved to

Florence around 10 years ago from Southern California —

See MUSIC page 5A

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