

People of all ages and abilities are encouraged to join the race or watch from the sidelines.

"This event means so much because everyone is just ready. We're ready to experience an event outside — a safe, fun, colorful event at the end of the school year," Osburn said. "I'm more than excited. It's going to be so fun."

Florence's first Color-A-Thon was planned by the Florence Community PTA in 2016. Since then, hundreds of people have been able to participate. Some classrooms at the Siuslaw School District even get into the fun, creating chances for students to earn

prizes like sunglasses and wacky wigs to wear during the event.

People often dress up for the race, too, with tutus, glitter and a lot of white clothing that can best show the showers of color.

The 2021 event is sponsored by Central Coast Timber LLC, Coast Road Construction, Coastal Fitness & Aquatics, Coldwell Banker-Aric Sneddon, Dan Lewis Construction LLC, DJ Al Rojas, Evergreen Concrete and Precision Cutting, Florence Eye Clinic, Florence in Bloom, Haberly Painting, J. Johnson Tree Service, Jawsome Kids Resale, John's Construction and Painting, Kaimana Bodyworx, Les Schwab Tires, Little Brown Hen Café, Recreation Station/Reedsport, River Cities Taxi, Socks To A T, The Shippin' Shack, Torex ATV Rentals and Wildflower Montessori.

"Join us in giving a big shout out to all of our local business sponsors that are supporting a blast out of this school year. Each one of these local businesses are supporting healthy activity to all the kids at the school district and we can't thank them enough," Osburn said.

Donations to the event are



SIUSLAW NEWS FILE PHOTOS FROM 2019

tax deductible and will go towards providing funding for items and experiences that help keep kids engaged and excited about school at the elementary, middle and high schools in Florence.

"We look forward to seeing you all there to help blast off the colorful summer were all going to have!" Osburn added.

For more information on the Color-A-Thon, contact Siuslaw Elementary School at 541-997-2514.



Shopee LOCAL
#MyFlorence
Shop. Eat. Support.

SAVE. SHOP

WALLY'S
Septic Tank Pumping
\$25.00 off Pumping or \$10.00 off a Service Call
Call Today to Schedule an appointment
Call 541-997-8885
Payment must be made at the time of service to receive discount.
Discount does not apply to credit card or mailed payments.
Coupon expires - May 31, 2021

Swanson's Pest Management
Get Ready for Fall
FREE Inspections
Inspect-Correct-Protect
Sustained Pest Management solutions for your home and businesses.
541-997-4027 • 800-622-8993
www.swansonpm.com
CCB#79884

Hobergs
Complete Auto Repair
SAVE \$25
On a New Car Battery
When you present this coupon
(541) 997-2413
345 Highway 101 - Florence
Expires April 30, 2021

Denture Services, Inc
OFFERING FREE Consultations
William Foster, LD
(541) 997-6054
524 Laurel Street - Florence
(coupon required)

Bud's Upholstery
10% off Materials on any new job
When you present this coupon.
expires May 31, 2021
541-997-4856
4981 Hwy. 101 N., Florence

SUPPORT

Cross Road
Assembly of God
We will be live streaming from Facebook at 11am Sunday morning.
www.florencecrossroadag.org/church-online.
Corner of 10th & Maple
541-997-3533

AWARD from page 1A

Hickson's last day at the Siuslaw News will be Monday, May 31.

According to Publisher Jenna Bartlett, "Ned's work is part of our mission, 'news and views that define the community.' His win is a win for all of us at the Siuslaw News, and especially the newsroom at the time. What a great legacy to leave 23 years at the newspaper with a recognition for the enduring power of quality journalism."

Hickson submitted three editorials in his category: "Learning from The Mistakes That Got Us Here," Aug. 8, 2020; "The Danger of Division Through Anonymity," Aug. 29, 2020; and "Let's Move Forward Expecting Better from Ourselves," Nov. 7, 2020.

"This series is specifically about our investigation, which was the hardest and best work we've ever done. It made it particularly poignant for me," Hickson said.

In the first, he wrote, "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."

This was the community's introduction to a long-running investigative series penned by the Siuslaw News staff at the time, which consisted of Hickson, Jared Anderson, Mark Brennan and Chantelle Meyer. The series examined several aspects of life in Florence and tried to get to the heart of the division that seemed to be tak-

ing root in the community.

"Nothing has approached what we are experiencing at this moment as nationally driven agendas on both sides of the divide — aided in no small part by wielding the power of social media — have trickled down into local conversation through grassroots efforts aimed at influencing, dividing and claiming territory within local government, agencies and committees," Hickson wrote.

The series seemed to strike a chord in the community, especially as an anonymous mailer soon reached the mailboxes of many people. In bold print on one side, the flyer read: "Walk Away From the Siuslaw News." On the flipside of the flyer was the accusation that "The Siuslaw News Has Gone Too Far," followed by a list of denunciations calling the paper "divisive," "fake news," "unethical" and "seditious."

In "Division Through Anonymity," Hickson stated, "Regardless of whether someone agrees or disagrees with our reporting, feels we are biased or unbiased, thinks we lean right or left, liberal or conservative (we've been accused of all of

these), we stand behind every edition that rolls off the press and is delivered into your mailbox."

He encouraged people to contact news staff and communicate.

"We can openly agree or disagree; we can each defend our position or perspective; and we can create an opportunity to at least understand one another even when we don't agree," Hickson wrote. "This is the very principle foundation of democracy — with local newspapers providing the conduit through which these important conversations take place."

By November, the editorial staff had wrapped up the investigative series. People in the community responded by Letters to the Editor and Guest Viewpoints, by social media posts and even public comments at council, board and commission meetings. Then, on Nov. 3, the U.S. held its General Election, which saw the selection of President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala D. Harris. It also saw the election of local candidates to local seats.

"With the final tally of elections essentially over, and taking into account the

historic participation made by fellow Americans, I hope we can finally begin talking about the things that unite us and the common good that defines us as family, community and ultimately as Americans," Hickson wrote in the third submission to SPJ's contest.

It was a request to move forward, to do better — and also to take action to reunite as a community.

"I still believe that, despite how our divisions have been amplified, we ultimately share more common ground than our surface tribalism would have us believe," Hickson concluded. "We can expect better as

we move forward. And we should."

In his last week at the Siuslaw News, he wants to reassure people about his continued presence in town.

"Although I'm leaving the paper, I'm not leaving the community," Hickson said. "I still plan to be a part of it. I'm going to take some time to just go to a job and come home and be with my family for a while, but I definitely have plans to get more involved in the future."

He also plans to bring back his syndicated humor column, which he ran for 16 years.

FLORENCE FARMERS MARKET
Tuesdays from 3 to 6 pm
WALK-IN MARKET- FRESH LOCAL PRODUCTS AT INTERSECTION OF BAY & KINGWOOD
WE ACCEPT OREGON TRAIL CARDS AND OFFER DOUBLE UP FOOD BUCKS!
Pre-Order Online Shopping Available. WhatsGood
Details at www.FlorenceFarmersMarket.org
Thank you for helping keep our market safe.

OFF BAY STREET BISTRO
3pm to 9pm
Thur. to Sun.
Early bird 3pm to 4pm
15% off your bill
Dine-in only
Closed Mon., Tue., Wed.
Covered heated porch, In-door dining and ToGo's
Reservations highly recommended
LOCATED IN OLD TOWN
541-590-3569
165 Maple Street, Florence, OR
Offbaystreetbistro.com

Surfside Restaurant
at Driftwood Shores Resort
Is Open for Dine-in & take out from 4pm - 8:30 pm
Tuesday - Saturday
Call 541-902-6447
SurfSide
RESTAURANT & CLASSIC COCKTAIL LOUNGE
Driftwood Shores Resort
88416 1st Avenue, Florence

We are open and ready to assist you!

Johnston Motor Company
Since 1939
2150 Hwy. 101 • Florence
(541) 997-3475 • 1-800-348-3475

Tires LES SCHWAB
LES SCHWAB TIRE CENTERS
Tires • Brakes • Shocks
Alignments
4325 Highway 101
Florence, OR 97439
541-997-7178
PRIDE IN PERFORMANCE SINCE 1952

Alva Bracey
Broker
Your goals are my top priority.
Let's get together!
Call, Text or Email
Cell: 541-505-1180
Alva@CBCoast.com
541-997-7777
100 Hwy. 101,
Florence, OR

COLDWELL BANKER

COAST REAL ESTATE

Since 1983
P.E.S.T. SWANSON'S
Management Inc.
Insect & Pest Removal
Trapping • Mole/Gopher
Dead Animal Removal • Honey Bee Removal
Crawl Space Cleaning • Exclusion Work
Fumigation of Antiques and Commodities.
(541) 997-4027

ESTATE JEWELRY AND ANTIQUE FURNITURE!!!
We buy, sell and consign quality estate/heirloom jewelry & furniture.
Gold, silver, platinum jewelry with precious & semi precious stones.
Call 541-997-8104,
Florence Antiques & Coast Jewelers

STREETS Insurance
Auto, Home, Life, Business
Flood, Antique Auto, RV's
Medicare Advantage Plans
Medicare Supplements
Health Insurance
Phone (541) 997-9497
1234 Rhododendron Dr / Florence

MODEL TRAIN ENTHUSIASTS
Over 50 Years Experience!
CALL ME TO BUY, SELL OR TRADE! I'M LOCATED HERE IN FLORENCE.
541-255-9822 - Larry
land1316@live.com

Us TOO Florence
Private Cancer Education Support on the Oregon Coast
www.ustooflorence.org
BOTH MEETINGS ARE CURRENTLY ON HOLD.
WATCH SIUSLAW NEWS FOR RESUMPTION
• Tuesday Evening Group (2nd Tuesday)
5-7 p.m. - Ichiban Chinese/Japanese Restaurant
• Urologist Dr. Bryan Mehiloff attends.
• Tuesday Lunch Group (3rd Tuesday)
12 noon - 1:00 p.m. - Ichiban Chinese/Japanese Restaurant
• Urologist Dr. Roger McKimmy attends.
Contact Bob for more information:
(H) 541-997-6626 • (C) 541-999-4239
maribob@oregonfast.net