SN
Siuslaw News

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Rotary Club of Florence, Oregon
INVITES YOU TO OUR VIRTUAL AUCTION 2021 To be held over (4) weekends starting on Thursday June 24th and running through Sunday July 18th
AUCTION #1 NOON THURS JUNE 24– 7 PM SUNDAY JUNE 27
AUCTION #2 NOON THURS JULY 1 - 7 PM SUNDAY JULY 4
AUCTION #3 NOON THURS JULY 8 - 7 PM SUNDAY JULY 11
AUCTION #4 NOON THURS JULY 15 - 7 PM SUNDAY JULY 18
SPECIAL WINE AUCTION SATURDAY JULY 17 ; 7AM – 7PM
For More Details and to Register for the Auction, Please go to Our Website www.theflorencerotary.org

Community Voices

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Siuslaw News
NEWS & VIEWS THAT DEFINE OUR COMMUNITY
VOL. 131, NO. 50
JUNE 23, 2021
FLORENCE, OREGON

WEATHER

Partly cloudy with a high of 62 and a low of 52.
Full forecast on A3

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'The power of words, the power of actions'

Juneteenth celebration unites education, symbolism

STORY & PHOTOS
BY MARK BRENNAN
SIUSLAW NEWS

On Saturday, June 19, members of the Florence community celebrated the enactment of the first official "Juneteenth" federal holiday with a rally and speeches commemorating the day.

The "Juneteenth National Independence Day Act" belatedly recognizes the emancipation of enslaved persons in Texas, in 1865, the last confederate state to do so.

U.S. President Joe Biden signed the legislation authorizing the enactment into law on June 17 and the bill took effect immediately.

This quick turnaround from vote to celebration was made possible by the unanimous passage of Senate Bill S. 475 on Wednesday by the Senate. The House of Representatives had previously voted 415-14 to forward their version of the bill to the Senate.

The newly minted holiday drew approximately 100 people to the rally site at the Florence United Methodist Church, located at 333 Kingwood Street.

The Rev. Karen Basinger, pastor of the church, opened the rally with a prayer and an expression of appreciation for the recognition of the need for the holiday, before turning over the microphone to other speakers. These included local advocate Lenora Kent, Florence City Councilor Sally Wantz and newly elected Siuslaw School Board Director Maureen Miltenberger.

Florence's Juneteenth celebration included the symbolic removal of chains as special speaker Holli Johnson encouraged attendees to engage with the meaning of the USA's newest federal holiday.

"I want to start by saying our youth are our most valuable and precious resource, making it a great honor that I was elected on our local school board as a director," Miltenberger said.

She quoted Oregon Department of Education statistics which showed, as of 2019, that 22 percent of local students were non-white.

"I just want to share with you two segments from the district's mission statement that I think are appropriate for today's celebration: 'We believe in providing a safe, positive and a mutually respectful educational environment for all of our students' and 'we believe that the involvement of the entire community is essential to our children's success.' And there are many ways we as a community can get involved, including donating to the Siuslaw Education Foundation, and by attending or watching school board meetings and other educational events."

Also speaking at the rally, Lane Community College (LCC) Florence Center Dean Russ Pierson spoke to the crowd about the need for the holiday, both from a historical perspective and from a personal one, and to continue to fight for a reversal in the racism that seems to many be an inherent element of American society.

"Juneteenth is about the power of words, the power of actions, and the inherent superpowers we can all find at the crossroads of diversity, inclusion and equity," Pierson said.

He quoted economist Heather McGhee and "the zero-sum paradigm" she wrote about in her recent book, "The Sum of Us."

"'The zero-sum paradigm' is a concept that presumes that if one group gains something, then another must be losing something. In my mind, many of us wrongly believe that when people of color achieve rights or benefits, white Americans must be losing ground. But the truth is that all citizens can and do profit from a more just society, with greater access to public goods and

See **JUNE** *page 6A*

Port continues partnerships

Plans move forward on July 4 fireworks

BY MARK BRENNAN
SIUSLAW NEWS

The Port of Siuslaw Commissioners met on June 16 with a modest agenda of action items, but an important agreement between the port and the City of Florence was approved and the public received an encouraging Fourth of July Fireworks update.

Commissioner Bill Meyer chaired the meeting and began by changing the agenda and moving a discussion with City Economic Development Coordinator Kelli Weese to the first order of business. The move allowed for an earlier consideration of Resolution 6-16-21, which proposed an extension of the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) which exists between the city and the port regarding underused, commercially zoned properties.

See **PORT** *page 7A*

Siuslaw approves 2021-22 Budget

On June 17, it was announced that current Siuslaw Elementary Principal Michael Harklerode will be the next principal of Siuslaw High School. The elementary school staff worked with As Designed, based in Mapleton, to rush order dozens of matching shirts declaring their love for "Mr. H," which they showed in a gathering on Friday.

BY CHANTELLE MEYER
SIUSLAW NEWS

The June 16 meeting of the Siuslaw School District Board of Directors was a chance to tackle a lengthy to-do list in preparation for the July meeting, when two new directors join the board in place of outgoing members Paul Burns and Suzanne Mann-Heintz. Last week's meeting also provided an update on staffing, reviewed policy and adopted the 2021-22 budget.

Four school board members were able to attend the meeting in person, directors John Barnett, Burns, Mann-Heintz and Guy Rosinbaum, and directors Dennis King and Diana Pimlott attended via Zoom. Board Chair Bob Sneddon was absent for the meeting, so Burns led the meeting as vice chair.

The meeting included first readings of policies related to school board standards of conduct and staff participation in political activities, but the board chose to discuss those further with the new board, which will be seated July 28. The board also heard the second reading of Policy EEAE, "Student Transportation in Private Vehicles," and approved it unanimously.

However, Policy ACB and ACB-AR, "Every Student Belongs," required a little more conversation.

According to the explanatory statement provided by Siuslaw Superintendent Andy Grzeskowiak, in September, the Oregon State Board of Education adopted a temporary Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 581-022-2312 that requires that districts, ESDs, public charter schools and others receiving

See **SCHOOL** *page 7A*

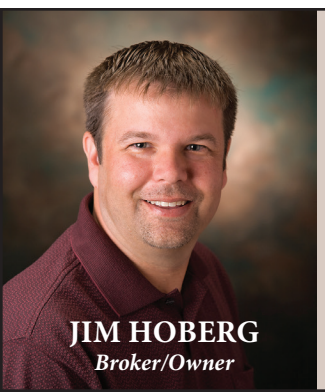
Three dead, Hwy 126 closed as June 18 manhunt extends from North Bend to Noti

Suspect Oen Evan Nicholson turns himself into authorities

BY CHANTELLE MEYER
SIUSLAW NEWS

Multiple law enforcement agencies were part of an extensive search for a suspect linked to three deaths in North Bend, Ore., on Friday. The incidents were connected to 30-year-old Oen Evan Nicholson, who Coos County District Attorney R. Paul Frasier identified as the subject at Saturday's press briefing. After a manhunt between North Bend and Noti on Highway 126, which caused a closure of the highway, Nicholson escaped. By Sunday morning, he had turned himself in to authorities in Wisconsin.

See **MANHUNT** *page 6A*



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