

Editor's Note: Due to a printing error in the Friday, Dec. 24, edition of the *Siuslaw News*, the *News* is reprinting some of those stories. The stories are also available to read at www.TheSiuslawNews.com. Thank you for your understanding.

MAKING MERRY

People in the region regularly give to others during the holiday season, including Twin Lakes Store (above) and the Baunachs' donation site for Florence Food Share at their home in Florentine Estates.

STORY & PHOTOS
BY MARK BRENNAN
SIUSLAW NEWS

In and around Florence, the holiday season is often about helping others.

That was certainly the case this week at the Twin Lakes Store on Highway 101 as a number of local families received toys from Santa and his elves on Dec. 21. Rain and wind didn't slow down the line of cars waiting to pick-up their gift bags

Karen Crowder manages the Twin Lakes Store and helps store owner Vicki Ambrosio coordinate the giveaway, which allows teens to make a wish list that the community then fulfills.

"The toy giveaway went really well this year. The kids that came by to pick up their toys and gifts were really happy. This is the second year we had



to be careful due to COVID, but we had close to 50 families that received gifts they had requested," Crowder said. "As always, we couldn't have done this without the support of our customers and friends."

Community members frequently donate individual gifts, all of a teen's wish list or make cash donations to help with the effort. This year, local Santa surrogate Mike Bones was on hand to greet the recipients in the pouring rain.

The Twin Lakes event wasn't the only effort to help members

Commissioner Bozievich to retire at end of current term

On Dec. 17, Lane County Commissioner Jay Bozievich announced that he will not be running for re-election and will retire at the end of his current term. Bozievich is currently serving as a county commissioner for the West Lane – District 1 through Jan. 3, 2023.

"I am proud of what Lane County has accomplished while I served," Bozievich said. "We went from being on a list of counties that could go bankrupt to the highest financial stability rating from Moody's in the history of Lane County. We went from scandals and secret meetings to earning enough trust with citizens in May 2013 to pass the first public safety levy in a generation — after 14 unsuccessful attempts — and renewed that levy in May 2017

by an almost 3-1 vote."

Bozievich will have served three complete four-year terms as a commissioner and previously served one four-year term on the Lane Community College Board of Education. Prior to being elected as a commissioner, he practiced civil engineering for 29 years. He will turn 65 before the end of his current term.

"I look forward to continuing to represent the citizens of West Lane to the best of my ability through the end of my term and I want to thank the citizens for the trust they placed in me for the last 11 years," Bozievich said.

For more information, visit lanecounty.org/government/county_departments/board_of_county_commissioners.

Districts work on their strategic plans, operations

Siuslaw Valley, Western Lane meet in December

BY MARK BRENNAN
SIUSLAW NEWS

The monthly meeting of the boards of Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue (SVFR) and Western Lane Ambulance District (WLAD) took place on Dec. 16. The administrative branch of both districts is the Western Lane Fire and EMS Authority (WLFEA).

The joint session was facilitated by Operations Chief Matt House, as Fire/EMS Chief Michael Schick was an excused absence.

It began with a recognition of Lori Severance's tenure as the coordinator of the district's Mobile Crisis Response program. House recapped the evolution of the current model, and the role Severance has played in elevating the quality of care provided to community members in crisis.

"Tonight, we'd like to recognize someone who, personally, I have nothing but great respect for.

And going back 4.5 years, not only did she create a program, but it is fully funded by the county through its Crisis Response Unit," House said. "It's gone from a little program to a much bigger program that is actually providing a huge asset to both our districts and the community members involved."

He then presented Severance with a bouquet and a certificate of appreciation from SVFR and WLAD, and she was roundly applauded by attendees from both organizations.

According to the chief's report to the directors, there were 50 visits recorded for the group during the month of November.

The next presentation to WLFEA directors was presented by Jacob Callister, a representative of the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG). He updated the directors on the creation and development of a long-range strategic plan for both taxing districts.

Callister has been working with WLFEA to structure two separate strategic plans, aligned in mission and purpose, which will provide the districts with opportunities to more closely merge if that decision is made in the future.

After reviewing the process LCOG has undertaken thus far, Callister turned his attention to the future.

"We are at an important point right now, where we are ready to take the information we have gathered and start drafting the first draft, which is an exciting step in the process," he said. "That's be-

cause you can put something to paper which can then be scrutinized further, but it's an important step in that you have enough information to draft something."

He also provided a more concrete timeframe for the next steps in the process.

"We will be working over the holidays to complete some drafting of the strategic plan, as soon as we can. In January, we will release a draft plan that will be something the steering committee can put their eyes on. Hopefully in February we will be able to present the plan to the board," her said.

Callister finished his presentation by saying the adoption of the new strategic plans may be possible by early spring.

Directors, who have been involved with the strategic plan throughout the process, had few comments or questions for Callister, and next moved to approve the consent agenda and a cursory discussion of two pending resolutions.

The reports from leaders in both SVFR and WLAD reviewed the training undertaken to maintain annual certifications, including CPR Training required by the American Heart Association, repairs to department apparatus and facilities and the monthly financial information.

Fire Marshall Tony Miller took the opportunity to remind the community of the fire dangers associated with the holiday season. Miller said the season always brings with it an increase in the amount of time people spend in the kitchen cooking.

In addition, home heating systems and smaller, portable heating device use also increases.

Holiday decorations are also a concern, as 20 percent of Christmas tree fires are caused by placing a heating source too close to the tree.

According to Miller, half of all home heating fires occur in December, January and February. Fireplaces, wood burning stoves, space heater, furnaces and fuel (kerosene, propane) burning heaters should be cleaned and serviced annually to safeguard against issues. Space heaters are convenient for localized heating if plugged directly into an outlet and should never be plugged into an extension cord.

Following this, the Chief's Report updated directors on the suspension of a mandated vaccine deadline which is caught up in legal challenges, and also on labor negotiations which are in the pre-discussion phases.

Two resolutions, Resolutions 2021-05 and 2021-06, were then passed, which approved the trans-

fer of all operation employees from both SVFR and WLAD to WLFEA starting July 1, 2022.

Resolution 2021-05 stated, "WHEREAS, Siuslaw Valley Fire & Rescue ("SVFR") and Western Lane Ambulance District ("WLAD") (Contracting Parties) are parties to an intergovernmental agreement establishing the Western Lane Fire and EMS Authority ("Authority"); and

"WHEREAS, the Contracting Parties have delegated to the Authority the power, duty, and responsibility to maintain, operate, manage, and control all fire and rescue and EMS activities, equipment, resources, and all property of the

Contracting Parties, including without limitation, the operation and management of all fire and ambulance stations, land, buildings, and firefighting equipment, to employ or manage the necessary personnel; and

"WHEREAS, the Contracting Parties have delegated to the Authority the power duty, and responsibility to do any and all other things necessary or desirable to provide continued efficient and economical Services to all persons and property within the combined territories of the Contracting Parties; and

"WHEREAS, the Contracting Parties have previously moved all Administrative personnel into the Authority;

"NOW, THEREFORE, it is resolved as follows:

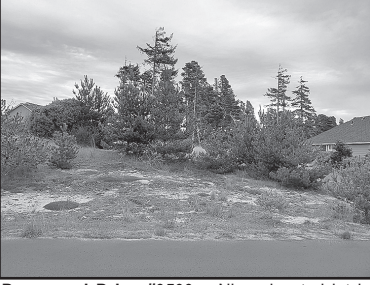
"The SVFR Board of Directors hereby approves and adopts Exhibit 1 Amended 12/16/2021 which lists all current Authority employees and all WLAD and SVFR Operations Personnel to be moved into Western Lane Fire and EMS Authority effective July 1, 2022."

Following this, A major expenditure request for equipment was then presented by House and approved by Directors. The amount requested was for the purchase of seven cardiac defibrillators, six by WLAD and one by SVFR. The need for these devices was discussed briefly and then the requested \$353,939 was approved.

Director comments were limited, although Western Lane Director Russell suggested both districts ramp up public education efforts. She talked about new video capabilities at the recently re-opened Florence Senior Center as a potential venue for these educational workshops.

The next WLFEA meeting is scheduled for Jan. 27. Learn more at svfr.org, westernlaneambulance.com and www.wlfea.org.

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ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

OPAL BURRUSS
SENIOR
MAPLETON BASKETBALL

HIGHLIGHT:

The Sports Club, the Siuslaw News and Coast Radio Sports congratulate senior Mapleton basketball player Opal Burruss as this week's Athlete of the Week. Opal has been a leading scorer for the Sailors this season and capped it off in last week's 41-17 win against Alsea scoring 17 points and Opal also led the team in steals. She was selected to the All-Tournament team.

Honorable Mention: Joe Shepard - Mapleton Basketball

Highlight: Honorable mention goes to senior Mapleton boys basketball player Joe Shepard who led the Sailors in scoring with 17 points in their loss last week to Alsea.



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The Siuslaw News &

FEATURED PROPERTY OF THE WEEK



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