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Photo courtesy of Mid-Valley Suicide Prevention Coalition

Falute Maitland holds her brother's football jersey. Maitland told her the story about her brother, Seniu Maitland.

Efforts to prevent suicide underway

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

POLK COUNTY — Mid-Valley Suicide Prevention Coalition produced two videos of the stories of local people who lost a family member to suicide.

Those videos have been viewed nearly 60,000 times.

"These days there's a lot of talk just out there online about suicide, so we are trying to get a message out there to reach as many people as possible," said Doug Gouge, the coalition program supervisor.

The message is that it's OK to talk about suicide if it's affected you, and it's OK to seek help if you are contemplating suicide. The hope is that talking will save lives.

"For many of us, suicide is an uncomfortable topic. There is often a fear that talking about suicide might cause someone to take his (or) her life. This simply is not true," said Rosanna Larson, whose father, Charles Chambers Jr., took his own

You can help

Mid-Valley Suicide Prevention offers suicide prevention training in two classes:

- "Question Persuade and Refer," or QPR, a free one- to two-hour workshop. The next dates are Thursday and June 27.

- Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training, or ASIST, is a two-day training, which costs \$100. The next dates are Sept. 28-29.

For more information or to learn more about Roseanna Larson and Falute Maitland, go to: mvsuicideprevention.com/resources/display/Home.

life in 1990.

He was 45.

In the video, released on Facebook on April 17, Larson describes how her father battled depression for years.

Shortly before taking his life, Larson, of Monmouth, said her father asked her and her husband to take him for a drive. He spent the time giving them life advice, and Larson said it felt like he was saying goodbye.

"I think of all the things he's missed and the things that we've missed," she said.

The coalition produced a second video released on May 8, which featured Falute Maitland, whose brother,

Seniu Maitland, killed himself in 2016.

He was 18.

Seniu played football — and was the 250-pound giant that would help up every guy he tackled. People called him "a big teddy bear," Falute said in the video.

She said her brother struggled to feel loved or that he had potential for anything.

"Knowing how much he was struggling to find hope made me want to care for him even more," she said.

Falute, of Corvallis, believes training people to recognize the signs and what to

say to someone could prevent suicides.

"If we all pitch in and learn a few things here and there about suicide prevention, we could save many people," Falute said.

Both videos include the hashtag #OK2ASK, which the coalition has been using for 10 months. To see the videos, go to www.facebook.com/midvalleysuicidepreventioncoalition/.

This August or September, the coalition will release a third video, this one from the perspective of high school students with the message that people fighting depression or thinking about suicide are not alone.

"It's a project we worked on with Central High School, specifically with the Power Peers class, which is a non-traditional leadership class," Gouge said. "One of the reasons that we are a little extra proud of this video is that this video actually started with student ideas, so students were involved in this process from the beginning all the way to the end."

Wines of the Valley

Polk County Edition

Eola Hills Winery and Vineyards offers more than a dozen varietals, from Oregon's famous pinot noir to chardonnay, sangiovese to two sparkling varieties.

The winery has two locations for visitors to sit and sip, a tasting room on Highway 99W and one at its Legacy Estate Vineyard at 1600 Oak Grove Road NW. The Legacy Estate offers stunning views of meadows, vineyards and forests, making it a must-see destination for Polk County residents and visitors alike.

One of the great things about Eola Hills is its variety, not just in types of wines, but in price and palate.

While you can pick up a good bottle of wine for a good price at a local grocer, head to the tasting room to

fully experience the depth of talent offered by Eola's head winemaker, Steve Anderson. There you will discover a whole new realm of sophisticated wines and explore a variety of vintages.

The tasting room staff are friendly and eager to share their knowledge of Eola Hills and its award-winning wines.

Eola Hills is so much more than wine, offering weekly Wine Country Sunday Brunches in its renovated commercial kitchen, Sunday bike rides through Oregon's wine country, summer concerts on the lawn at its estate vineyard, and the biggest, most fun-filled weekend to celebrate the Great American Eclipse Aug. 17 - 21.

The eclipse viewing party still has some space, held Aug. 21, but that's not the only thing on offer for the weekend. A Total Eclipse Winemakers Dinner on Aug. 19 will treat diners to a six- to seven-course gourmet meal, perfectly paired with Eola Hills wines while serenaded by Patrick Lamb. Sunday's bike ride through wine country will be the "Tour d'Eclipse." People may choose to participate in one of the weekend events, or sign up for many of them.



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