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## HOMECOMING

Photos by Jeff TerHar

Homecoming was truly special as the Gulls took the field last Friday night. They moved their record to 3-1 as they decisively shut out Valley Catholic.

See Homecoming, Page A8



TOP: Jarred White on the run. MIDDLE: Lily Taylor, Nicole Blankenhorn, Tara Lair, Gracie Klemp and Emma Arden. ABOVE: Gulls raise their helmets at homecoming.

## Park district mulls rec center's future

By R.J. MARX  
Seaside Signal

The Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District is still "getting its feet wet" in programming at the Sunset Recreation Center, board member Michael Hinton said last Tuesday.

The park district purchased the former Broadway Middle School for \$2.15 million in January. The school, along with Gearhart Elementary and Seaside High School, was among Seaside School District properties relocated to the new Spruce Drive location outside of the tsunami inundation zone.

The team that will help set the Sunset Recreation Center's course convened over the sum-

mer with the goal to establish a clear vision and key objectives for the project. Sports Facilities Advisory and Scott Edwards Architecture, a Portland-based architectural firm, were chosen based on firm size and structure, project understanding, firm experience, work plan, proposed staff and fee proposal. That report is expected in three to four weeks, park district executive director Skyler Archibald said.

At the board meeting, board member Celeste Bodner suggested a study to determine which programs at the center best align with the district's goals. "I would propose that staff actually develop some sort of proposal matrix of what straight rental space would run versus a hosted or spon-

sored program space."

Since the purchase, the park district has hosted the Pacific Basketball League, child care programs and leased a portion of the space to the Northwest Regional Education Service District, which moved in early August.

The district rents space to Seaside Rotary for their weekly meetings, although they haven't been meeting in person, Archibald said. "We are also leasing the locker rooms to the Seaside School District for their fall sports team usage."

Clatsop County 4-H, which seeks rental space in the center, is one among several organizations seeking classroom, gym and office space, Archibald said.

Drop-in basketball will return in the mornings

from 6 to 7 a.m., he said, and the center will host four hours of pickleball activity in one gym. Pickleball play is expected to expand to a second gym, he said.

The district has received grants from the state and the Oregon Community Foundation for child care programs and summer camp improvements, including replacement of the refrigerator-freezer, equipment for the youth programs, technology improvements and paint for a small portion of the interior. "We still have some funds to spend and we have till the end of the year," he said.

About 200 people came out to the center for surplus items, including desks and school supplies left behind

See Future, Page A6

## Judge denies Gearhart firehouse ballot challenge

By R.J. MARX  
Seaside Signal

A Circuit Court judge has denied a challenge by Gearhart residents to the ballot title for a \$13 million firehouse bond.

Jack Zimmerman and Harold Gable had claimed the ballot title and text were insufficient and vague and did not reflect the final costs for a new firehouse off Highlands Lane.

"I cannot find that the ballot title as written is insufficient, not concise or unfair," Judge Beau Peterson ruled last Thursday. "The petitioner's request to have the court edit the ballot title is denied."

The city had questioned the validity of the complaint when it was filed in late August. But since the court was unable to hold a hearing and issue a ruling before the deadline to have ballot measures ready for the November election, the bond measure was pulled from the ballot.

The city hopes to put the bond measure before voters in the spring.

"I appreciate Judge Peterson's ruling," City Attorney Peter Watts said. "The opponents realized that they couldn't make the false claims in a court of law, and that is why their arguments

seemed so thin."

Gearhart is working with planners to bring the 30-acre Cottages at Gearhart subdivision off Highlands Lane into the city's urban growth boundary in a land swap for acreage in the city's "no-build" zone near the ocean. The land would be used for a firehouse and police station to replace an aging facility on Pacific Way.

Given the 175-word limit, Peterson said the proposed ballot summary sufficiently identified the purpose of the bond.

"Any voter interested in more details will be able to find them," the judge wrote. "The same is true for the tsunami rating, the preliminary nature of the cost estimates and the other complaints the petitioners have with the ballot title."

Watts described the legal challenge and other obstacles as "kind of a perfect storm" that kept the bond measure off the November ballot.

"It is frustrating that voters will not be able to vote on the question in November," he said. "I hope that bond interest rates don't go up."

Gearhart Mayor Paulina Cockrum said she was

See Firehouse, Page A6

## Park district presents employee vaccination policy

By R.J. MARX  
Seaside Signal

The Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District presented its vaccination policy last Tuesday.

The policy aims to combat the risks associated with COVID-19 and is in compliance with all federal, state and local laws, the district's executive director Skyler Archibald said.

"You did an excellent job writing it," board president Katharine Parker said. "Why it's important, hopes for the board, and then the expectations and the exemptions are all included. I personally thought it was very thorough and well written."

In August, the district board voted to require all district employees to be fully vaccinated. The policy was guided by Special Districts of Oregon legal coun-

sel Eileen Eakins, he said, and applies to all employees and volunteers, who will be expected to be vaccinated by Oct. 18. It does not apply to patrons or visitors.

An employee is considered fully vaccinated two weeks after receiving the second dose of a two-dose vaccine — Pfizer or Moderna — or one single-dose vaccination. Employees who do not fulfill one of these two requirements will be placed on unpaid leave and their employment will be subject to termination.

The district also reserves the right to require booster vaccinations that come available as time progresses.

Those who are not seeking a religious or medical exemption can submit a weekly negative test to the district, an option available until Dec. 1. After that

See Vaccines, Page A6

## Seaside postmaster Sims retires

By R.J. MARX  
Seaside Signal

After 36 years with the United States Postal Service and five as postmaster at the Seaside Post Office, Seaside postmaster Anthony "Tony" Sims announced his retirement this week.

"It was one of those things," he said in an interview at the Seaside Library. "I have enough time and I could do it."

The Southern California-raised Sims, 56, began his career in Escondido, before moving with his family to Washington state in 1993. Sims was in Spokane, Colfax, Colville, Othello and Pullman among Pacific Northwest stops big and small.

He started in Seaside in October 2016.

"When I first got there, there were only two clerks," he said. "It took me over a year to get two more clerks hired and start getting them trained. I've had 100% turnover on the clerks in five years."

There are nine carriers, two more than when he arrived, with only Janel Higgins and Chris Plampin left of that original group.

He's clerked, delivered, delivered packages, changed tires and fan belts, among countless tasks.

He counts as an accomplishment working with and training new people, some who went on to be promoted. "I worked to be more and more than others to lead by example," Sims said. "I was always hopeful this would rub off."

See Sims, Page A6



R.J. Marx

Tony Sims retired this month from the U.S. Postal Service.



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