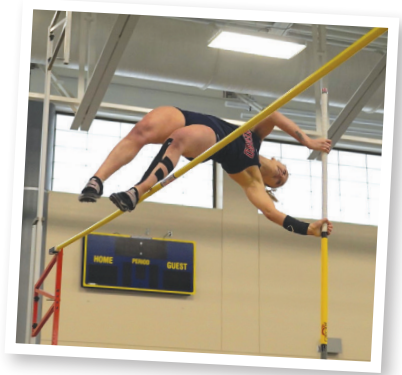




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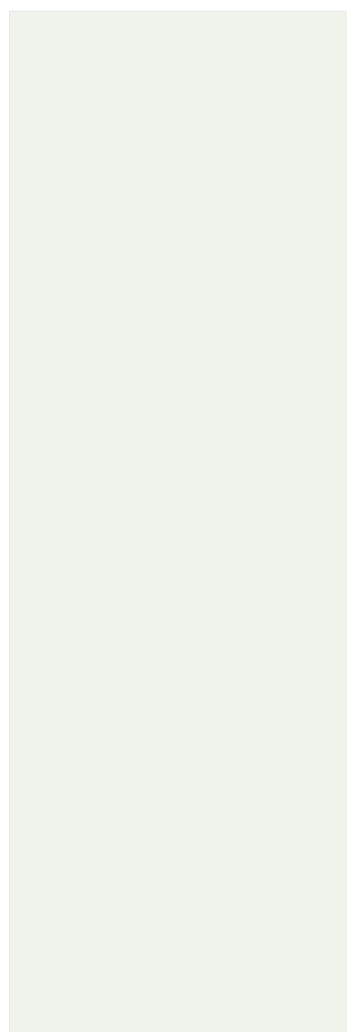


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District considers selling Bayfield Rec Center



Bayfield Recreation Center Executive Director Jacob Kaiser stands before the Center, which the Bayfield School District may sell after years of financial difficulties. The board is scheduled to vote on the sale April 25. (Rick Olivo/Staff Photo)

BY **RICK OLIVO**
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Lisa Luttinen of Washburn visits the Bayfield Recreation Center at least three times a week to swim laps in its 25-meter indoor pool — the only indoor pool in the Bay Area.

"My coach wants me here five days a week," she said, as she concluded her usual mile-and-a-half swim. "I'm training for a one-mile race in June, 1.2 mile-race on Lake Erie in July and the Point to La Pointe, which is just over two miles, in August, and then I am doing the Big Shoulders race in Chicago on Lake Michigan, which is a mile-and-a-half. This is the year I am kicking it in the fanny."

Luttinen has been swimming at the Bayfield Recreation Center for the past four years. In that time, she has lost 90 pounds — something she never could have accomplished without access to the center.

But as she finished her Monday swim, Luttinen was worrying about the future of the facility that she and so many other



Lisa Luttinen of Washburn lost 90 pounds swimming in the Bayfield Rec Center pool, and now she's afraid she and others will lose access to the facility if the school district moves ahead with a plan to sell it. (Rick Olivo/Staff Photo)

Bay-Area residents depend upon. The Bayfield School District, which owns the Rec Center will debate selling the facility at its April 25 board meeting.

District officials did not return multiple calls seeking comment for this story over the past two weeks.

Luttinen said when she first heard the news, her first thought was to try and

figure out how the community could save what she said is an irreplaceable resource.

"It's not just Bayfield, it is Washburn, it's Red Cliff, it's Ashland and it's Bad River," she said. "This is the only pool for 80 miles. It is of huge value to the community."

SEE CENTER PAGE A5

Running toward the flames



Bayfield Police Officer Josh Novak was the first emergency responder at the scene of Saturday's apartment building fire that destroyed an apartment building in Bayfield. As residents were fleeing the flames, he rushed inside to make sure everyone escaped safely. (Contributed photo)

Officer recounts rescue efforts at apartment fire

BY **PETER J. WASSON**
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Bayfield Police Officer Josh Novak figures he arrived at the scene of Saturday's apartment building fire within a couple of minutes of it being reported.

He was the first emergency responder at the scene, and he found flames shooting from some windows of the structure known as the Schultz building, with many of its 15 residents already evacuating.

"I was shouting to them real quick to see who was where," Novak said. "But it was kind of chaotic and no one was really sure if everyone was out."

So Novak, a 35-year-old husband and father of a 7-month-old boy, did what he was trained to do.

He rushed into the burning building that everyone else was fleeing.

"I went into the main entry area, the hallway, and told some guys in an apartment there that they had to leave," he said. "I tried to make it up the stairway to the second floor but it was pretty dark, with this black, billowing smoke. So I made it as far as I could and shouted and there was no response."

The fire was reported at about 1:10 p.m. Saturday, and it eventually destroyed the apartment building and badly damaged an adjacent building. Its cause has not been determined.

SEE FIRE PAGE A5

Save the bees: Ashland joins no-mow May

BY **TOM STANKARD**,
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Ashland residents are being encouraged not to mow their yards in May to help feed early-arriving bugs and birds.

City council members voted Tuesday to suspend enforcement of mowing ordinances until June 3 in support of the cause spearheaded by the Sustainability Committee and supported by the Parks and Recreation Department

Allowing grass to grow in spring creates habitat and forage such as dandelion and clover blooms for early-season pollinators, said Kate Ullman, chairwoman of the city's Sustainability Committee.

"Research has shown that that reducing mowing has an immediate impact on the number and diversity of bees species in the yard," Ullman said.

That might seem like no big deal, but fellow committee member Lisa Radke said scientists at the United Nations have determined that the world's plunging bee populations are the biggest threat to global food supplies.

The primary threat to bees is habitat loss — in urban areas that includes mowed lawns — but climate change, pesticides, herbicides and disease are contributing to reductions in numbers, she said.

Ullman said pollinators contribute to the health of local eco and agricultural systems by pollinating gardens, fruit trees and native plants.

Residents can pick up signs at City Hall, demonstrating their participation for a suggested \$10 donation to cover the costs of making them.

SEE MOWING PAGE A5



Ashland Parks and Rec Director Sara Hudson with one of the signs the city is offering those who participate in No May May. (Tom Stankard/Staff photo)

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