

SIUSLAW NEWS

SUNDAY, APRIL 4, 2018

Former mayor, civic leader Ternyik dies



© 2018-Siuslaw News

Long-time Florence resident Wilbur Ternyik passes away
at the age of 92

By: Mark Brennan/Siuslaw News

April 4, 2018 — Well-known and respected by political leaders at both the local and state level for decades, long-time Florence resident Wilbur Ternyik passed away this past Monday at the age of 92.

Ternyik was an iconic civic leader who served multiple terms as mayor of Florence, as well as 16 years on the Florence City Council and 29 years as a commissioner on the Port of Siuslaw.

Ternyik was a veteran of World War II and received the Purple Heart award after being wounded by machine gun fire in a battle on Okinawa in 1945.

Ternyik had a lifelong interest in plants and the unique ecosystem of the Oregon Dunes and was a driving force in establishing the Oregon Coastal Conservation and Development Commission in 1971.

The group was empanelled by former Gov. Tom McCall and was tasked with the responsibility of developing guidelines for the management of coastal resources. The work done by the commission was considered a model for other states when developing protocols for coastal conservation across the nation.

Ternyik testified before Congress on numerous occasions, lobbying for Federal funding to support the dredging of Oregon coastal ports. His efforts played a key role in procuring the extensions of the North and South Jetties and the needed funding for continued dredging on the Siuslaw River.

Ternyik's heritage was mixed, being descended from Solomon Smith, a Bostonian that emigrated to Oregon in 1832, and Celiast Cobaway, a daughter of a chief of the Clatsop Indian tribe.

Ternyik was an avid collector of native artifacts and felt a strong affinity for his Indian heritage.

He represented his community on the Lane Council of Governments and the Oregon Coastal Zone Management Association and continued to his involvement in wetland and marsh restoration for many years.

He and his wife, Joyce, were involved in wildlife preservation and spent many years as wildlife rehabilitators for a variety of ill or injured animals.

Because of his dedication to the community and action on civic issues, he was honored as Florence's First Citizen in 1971.

A special feature recapping Ternyik's life and his colorful history within the Siuslaw region will be in this Saturday's edition of Siuslaw News.