

# JANUARY EVENTS CALENDAR

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# Siuslaw News

SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON

**WATER SHORTAGE**

## Heceta Water PUD declares emergency

*Water curtailment issued for Collard Lake area north of Florence after landslide*

BY CHANTELE MEYER  
Siuslaw News

On Dec. 23, Heceta Water People's Utility District (HWPUD) called an emergency board meeting to notify board members and inform residents in the Collard Lake area that a water curtailment was necessary to ensure public safety.

The board declared an emergency water shortage and a Level 4 emergency water curtailment.

HWPUD is asking homes on View Road, View Cul-de-sac, Ocean Way, Collard Lake Road, Collard Lake Loop and Collard Lake Way to reduce water usage by 30 percent until March 1.

According to HWPUD, the devastating landslide on Mercer Lake Road on Dec. 18 reduced the PUD's capacity to fill the Mercer Lake tank.

"The slide originated on Chapman Road above Santa Road," said HWPUD District Manager Carl Neville.

A large section of the PUD's main fill line for the Mercer Lake tank runs along Chapman Road, and is approximately 8 feet from the slide's originating point. As of Monday, the ground around Chapman Road continues to flow water down the hillside.

On Dec. 18, the PUD decided to shut off the water line to make sure that the line was not part of future damage.

Neville said that engineers began working on an alternate option to bring water to the neighborhood.

Engineer Aaron Speakman from Dyer Partnership in Coos Bay addressed the board and explained some of the reasoning.

"We agreed it's a good decision not to pursue that pipeline anymore," Neville said.

At the board meeting, Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue (SVFR) Fire Chief Jim Langborg and Fire Marshal Sean Barrett indicated the fire department's willingness to help public safety.

"Jim and his crew were just asking how they can help. They're great like that," Neville said.

SVFR responded to the Mercer Lake Road landslide, which killed a 70-year-old woman and her dog. Since then, the department has made sure residents in at-risk areas know what to do in case of further slides.

See **WATER 7A**

# CHRISTMAS DINNER SETS NEW RECORD



PHOTOS BY CATHERINE ROURKE

Elks Lodge volunteer Bonnie MacDuffee pours some holiday cheer while serving free meals Christmas Day with 75 other volunteers.

## Estimated 950 dinners served at Florence Elks' 8th annual event



Event co-chair and head cook Julie Brown (above, far right) arrived with other kitchen volunteers at 4 a.m. to prepare 320 pounds of turkey at the Elks Lodge.

Exceeding last year's record-breaking numbers by almost 100 dinners, the eighth annual Elks Community Appreciation Dinner on Dec. 25 served approximately 950 dinners.

Elks Lodge kitchen liaison Bill Brown said, "We went through 320 pounds of turkey, eight hams and 84 pies, plus stuffing, potatoes and green beans."

More than 70 volunteers cooked, served and cleaned dishes. The dinners, which were free to guests, were served from 12 to 3 p.m. Christmas Day.

"Kitchen help started cooking hams and turkeys at about 4 a.m. Christmas Day," Brown said.

Each diner also received a free raffle ticket and a chance to win one of five gift baskets.

According to Brown, the cost of the dinner is approximately \$5,000.

By JACK DAVIS  
Siuslaw News

"We received about \$1,305 in donations," Brown said. "The Elks kick in the rest all year long."

Elks spokesman Howard Ziebell said, "The dinner is our way of thanking the community for supporting the lodge."

The Elks also see the dinner as a way to offer the community a time to gather together and enjoy a good meal amid a festive holiday atmosphere.

"Florence has an aging population and there are a lot of people who are alone," Ziebell said. "This is a nice way for them to get out and interact with others."

River Cities Taxi provided free rides to and from the lodge for diners needing transportation.

See **PORT 7A**

# Port's property acquisition may hinge on environmental testing

By JACK DAVIS  
Siuslaw News

Port of Siuslaw commissioners held a special meeting Dec. 18 to discuss several topics, including if and how to move forward on the purchase of a 50-acre parcel located just north of the North Fork

Siuslaw River Bridge along Highway 126.

The board has agreed to place an earnest money offer on the property, owned by Don Wilbur LTD, but has concerns about environmental testing that might be required by state and federal agencies.

Interim Port Manager Dina

McClure said, "It would behoove the port to have some time to contact the (Oregon State) Marine Board and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to see what they would require in the event we want to pave the property and turn it into additional parking and a boat ramp."

McClure said the port would need more than the 60 days requested in the initial earnest money draft agreement to do any testing that might be required. She said the contract was still being negotiated and there was room for discussion, suggesting to extend the closing date to May or June. She also pointed

out the potential downside of not doing appropriate research.

"I contacted our insurance agent who contacted Special Districts of Oregon and there were some comments about making sure we take the time to do our due diligence," McClure said. "They said the Port of St. Helens has to spend \$7 million

to deal with a piece of property that they found contamination on, and they are recommending that the port look into what kind of environmental testing we think would be required for what we want to do and have the time available to do that."

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