

Win a gourmet dinner for 10 at Senior Center

The Florence Senior Center once again is offering the chance to win a gourmet prime rib dinner for 10. Tickets are now available for the annual fundraiser for \$10 each. Only 300 tickets will be printed. The raffle is open to the community and all ages are encouraged to participate. Since this is a fundraiser, there are no restrictions on who can

buy tickets or who can attend the winning meal. Tickets are available at the senior center, 1570 Kingwood. The senior center is open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays. Reserve tickets by calling 541-997-8844. Chef Larry Osgood will prepare the five-course feast for the winner and nine guests. The winner of the raffle will be drawn on St. Patrick's Day.

MILITARY HERITAGE CHRONICLES — Helicopter warfare



By CAL APPLEBEE
Special to the Siuslaw News

Not being a veteran, my only rides in helicopters over the years have been in smaller, civilian and recreational choppers. I had watched the M.A.S.H. TV series and observed medevac choppers there, and multiple Vietnam era movies and books demonstrated uses they found in that war. But it wasn't until I was recently reading "The History of the Vietnam War" by Douglas Welsh that I started to realize just how

much in its infancy helicopter warfare actually was at that period of time. I dug into my library to learn more. With aviation itself still in its infancy since the Wright Brothers first powered flight at Kitty Hawk in 1903, almost simultaneously aviation enthusiasts around the world were working on an aircraft capable of hovering. Bi-planes and airships continued to improve in technology and capabilities over the next few decades, particularly during WWI, but the evolution of a true helicopter seemed stalled. It wasn't until the late 1930s and early 1940s that success was finally realized by pioneers such as Igor Sikorsky, who would enjoy great success, as well as by various individuals whose design would end up as Bell Aircraft helicopters — and Frank Piasecki, with his tandem rotor "flying banana." Although the American armed forces didn't fully adopt

the helicopters until the late 1940's, an incident in the closing months of WWII would demonstrate its capabilities and usefulness when a newly operational Sikorsky flew a mission to rescue a downed Tenth Air Force flyer who had crashed in an extremely remote jungle area in northern Burma. The Korean conflict in the early 1950s would further enhance the capabilities of the chopper, particularly in the role of a medevac vehicle and the evolving Mobile Army Surgical Hospital. The Vietnam war starting in the early 1960s would see a phenomenal leap in capabilities and tactics of the helicopter as it grew beyond just a medevac role — although that continued — and expanded its role as a gunship and tool for insertion of troops into battle zones. Not only did the guerrilla-style tactics of the North Vietnamese army challenge and impact the traditional tactical approach to combat, the helicopter itself contributed greatly to responding to that challenge by allowing U.S. forces to be inserted quickly and close to action when needed — and in some cases extracted as well.

I visited with one Vietnam veteran who fought on the ground who stated that he and his fellow soldiers loved getting dropped close into a battle via helicopter, but more often than not had to hike back out on foot because the choppers became attractive targets when they came back in to extract them. As with most subjects we touch on in the Chronicles, there simply isn't space to do such a subject justice; I haven't even touched on the current developments and tactics enjoyed by helicopter warfare. But just as we saw the evolution of both the machine and the tactics employed with it back in the 1940s and 1950s, today we're witnessing a similar evolution with the advent of UAV's and drones and their usefulness in warfare. It will be interesting to look back 50 years from now and see what impact they have on what we think of as conventional warfare today. To learn more about military heritage in general, visit the Oregon Coast Military Museum website at www.ocomhm.com

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Find a treasure at FEC's Indoor Yard Sale

Jewelry, household items, fishing gear, antiques and more will be available during the indoor yard sale at the Florence Events Center, Saturday, Feb. 21.

The Friends of the FEC are sponsoring this walk through indoor bazaar, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Nonprofit groups and individuals are invited to rent a booth space to display their goods. Space will be available up until Thursday, Feb. 20, at 5 p.m. for any group or individual to purchase a booth, come in to the Florence Events Center office at 715 Quince St., or contact Jennifer Connor at the FEC at 541-997-1994.

Florence Grab Crack

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