

**Siuslaw News**  
 P.O. Box 10  
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# Opinion

## DISASTER PREP

BY DAVE ROBINSON  
 Special to the Siuslaw News

## Winter Travel

“Over the river and through the wood, to Grandmother’s house we go. The horse knows the way to carry the sleigh through the white and drifted snow.” And so goes the old song about holiday travel to visit the relatives. Now I’ll admit I have never actually traveled by sleigh to visit relatives, but plenty of us hit the road during winter months to spend the holidays with loved ones. Winter travel requires some extra planning to make your trip a safe one.

First, factor in a little extra time for your journey. Safe driving in nasty weather requires slowing down. In fact, snowy and icy roads require a whole different skill set. If your route takes you over any mountain passes, the possibility of snow and icy roads may affect your trip. Making sure your car is ready for the trip is just smart planning.

Are your tires up for the trip? Do you have a set of tire chains that actually fit your car? Do you know how to install your chains? Studded tires are always an option, although here on the south coast of Oregon few motorists make that investment as we rarely have a need for them.

More than one motorist has been stranded

along the interstate for several hours because of nasty weather. Running out of gas is unacceptable, likewise being without a couple of blankets in the trunk or some snacks for the kids.

So when you get ready to head out, go to your state’s highway department website and check their webcams. For those of us in Oregon, it’s [www.tripcheck.com](http://www.tripcheck.com). Most areas of the state have a webcam set up monitoring the road conditions. Accompanying the video display is a list of up-to-the-minute weather conditions listing the temperature, wind information and precipitation. The wise traveler will adjust his or her travel plans according to what they learn about the weather conditions enroute.

Then, let someone know when you’re leaving, the route you plan to take and notify them when you arrive. Most airplane travelers have had to either cancel a trip or change their flight plan because of weather. There is an old saying, “There are old pilots and bold pilots, but there are no old, bold pilots!” The same may be true for the winter traveler. Making changes in your road trip shows wisdom and maturity of thought for the safe consideration of your loved ones.

Before you head out, grab your “go” bag, top off your gas tank and your coffee thermos. A few food items can’t hurt, along with your tire chains, tow strap, jumper cables and maybe one of those folding shovels.

Be sure to get an early start, because those slick roads demand slower speeds, and a willingness to abort the mission if it gets a little too risky out there. This trip isn’t worth anyone getting injured. Be a real hero to your family and make the hard decision if you need to. Ultimately being prepared will bring a whole element of safety to your journey.

“Over the river and through the wood, now Grandmother’s cap I spy. Hurrah for the fun. Is the pudding done? Hurrah for the pumpkin pie!”

*Dave Robinson is the postmaster in Bandon, Ore., and author of “Disaster Prep for the Rest of Us.” He may be contacted at [disasterprep.dave@gmail.com](mailto:disasterprep.dave@gmail.com). Visit his website for more disaster preparedness tips, [www.disasterprepdave.blogspot.com](http://www.disasterprepdave.blogspot.com).*

## YESTERDAY’S NEWS

### MOMENTS IN TIME The History Channel

- On Nov. 10, 1775, during the American Revolution, the Continental Congress passes a resolution that “two Battalions of Marines be raised” for service as landing forces for the Continental Navy. The date is now observed as the birthdate of the United States Marine Corps.

- On Nov. 13, 1850, Robert Louis Stevenson, author of “Treasure Island” and “Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,” is born in Scotland. He pursued a career as a writer, but his decision alienated his parents, who expected him to follow the family trade of lighthouse keeping.

- On Nov. 15, 1867, the first stock ticker is unveiled in New York City, making up-to-the-minute prices available to investors around the country. Since the New York Stock Exchange’s founding in 1792, information had traveled by mail or messenger.

- On Nov. 14, 1900, composer Aaron Copland is born in Brooklyn, New York. Copland was responsible for the creation of some of the 20th century’s most beloved and enduring works of classical music, such the Pulitzer Prize-winning “Appalachian Spring” (1944).

- On Nov. 12, 1954, Ellis Island, the gateway to America, shuts its doors after processing more than 12 million immigrants since opening in 1892. Today, an estimated 40 percent of all Americans can trace their roots through Ellis Island, located in New York Harbor.

- On Nov. 11, 1978, on the Georgia set of “The Dukes of Hazzard,” a stuntman launches the iconic 1969 Dodge Charger named the General Lee off a makeshift dirt ramp and over a police car. More than 300 different General Lees were used in the CBS TV series.

- On Nov. 9, 1989, East German officials open the Berlin Wall, allowing travel from East to West Berlin. The following day, celebrating Germans began to tear down the wall, the defining symbol of the Cold War.

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## LETTERS

### New meaning to holiday season

As the season of holiday celebrations begin, there are many who would appreciate experiencing this same festive hope and joy.

We at Helping Hands Coalition for the homeless are currently serving an unprecedented 60 guests each day.

We are asking the community for donations of tents, sleeping bags, tarps and warm clothing. You can drop these items off at 1339 Rhododendron Drive, near the Real Food Co-op, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday each week from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Put a smile on the face of one of our homeless citizens, and bring new meaning to the holiday celebrations.

Sue Thornton  
 Florence

### Sad loss for Florence

I had the privilege of marrying officer Shawn Morgan on June 13, 2012. He came into my life as a loving and caring person. I have never met someone as dedicated to his job and community as he is.

Shawn loves this town and the people in it. He would go out of his way to help the less fortunate more than anyone I know.

I did not always understand the breaks he would give to people, and he would say, “Everyone deserves a chance.”

Once, he came home from Safeway barefoot with his socks in his hand. He had met someone he went to school with who was now

homeless. The man could not be served without shoes on, so Shawn gave him his.

This town lost not only a good cop but also a wonderful person.

I am a very lucky lady to still have him for my family, and that can’t be taken away.

Carol Morgan  
 Florence

### Walk in their shoes

When a boy is around your house enough that he knows where the dishes go in the cupboard, I think you know if he is going to grow up to be an honest person.

I have worried about Shawn Morgan being a policeman. This day and age, when a policeman stops a car, he has a good chance of ending up dead.

I don’t know who made the decision to terminate Shawn, but I think they made a poor call. Maybe they should “walk the walk” and think about putting their lives on the line for years.

I am grateful for our policemen and for the job they do with very little appreciation. When was the last time you spoke to a policeman and told him thank you?

Virgle Bechtold  
 Florence

### Park threatened again

In Lane County Park’s latest 2015 Draft Master Plan, there is one 40-acre park that stands out from all the rest. Lane County proposes to sell the property known as Ocean Woods Park.

This land in the unincorporated area north of Florence was deeded to the county by the State of Oregon in 1963 as a gift that Lane County could have “only so long as used for public park and recreation purposes.”

For 52 years, people like us moved to the area thinking this was a forever park that would never be sold.

The county was entrusted to protect this land, but now they think that the greater good would be served by selling this 40 acres of valuable real estate and using “the proceeds for parks capital improvements” elsewhere.

When Lane County attempted this same tactic 11 years ago, they were stopped when Florence-area residents convinced Lane County Commissioners to defy the Parks Department’s recommendation to sell the land; however, the Parks Department neglected to change the status of the land as “surplus,” so here we are once again doing what we can to protect this unique park.

This land of old growth rhododendron and wind sculpted forest is a precious natural resource that belongs to all of us, not just Lane County or the developers that have long coveted this land.

Please help us to retain this valuable natural resource and wildlife habitat by contacting Lane County Parks as we have and urge them to protect, respect and plan for this park’s future in the spirit of the original 1963 deed, for Florence residents, Lane County residents and everyone who values parks and the natural beauty that money could never buy back if it’s sold.

Jerry Mounts  
 Florence

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The Siuslaw News welcomes letters to the editor concerning issues affecting the Florence area and Lane County.

Emailed letters are preferred. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed. All letters should be limited to about 300 words and must include the writer’s full name, address and phone number for verification.

Letters are subject to editing for length, grammar and clarity. Publication of any letter is not guaranteed and depends on space available and the volume of letters received.

Libelous and anonymous letters as well as poetry will not be published.

All submissions become the property of Siuslaw News and will not be returned.

Write to:  
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