

2015 YEAR IN REVIEW *continued*

Review from 9A

MAY

Oregon Pacific Bank to close Safeway branch

Florence-area customers of Oregon Pacific Bank (OPB) recently received letters announcing the pending closure of the OPB Safeway branch on July 31.

On Saturday, Aug. 1, the main branch, located at 1355 Highway 101, will begin Saturday banking and will extend weekday business hours to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The Safeway branch, at 700 Highway 101, has operated since June 1, 1995.

According to OPB President Ron Green, online banking, mobile banking and ATM machines are how many people now get their account information and services from banks. He said this has driven the number of transactions down at the Safeway branch.

Rhody rocks!

After a weekend with more than 25,000 people in attendance, the 108th annual Rhododendron Festival in Florence has come to a close. People flocked to Old Town and the Port of Siuslaw to attend the festival's events.

The Grand Floral Parade had 80 entries, many featuring rhododendron flowers and the festival's theme, "Let's Rock 'n' Rhody." Parade Grand Marshal was Amy Clawson, local country singer.

Results are tallied

Many new faces will occupy local boards and commissions after Lane County announced Tuesday evening the results of the May 19 Special Election.

Lane County has 206,370 registered voters, but only about 35 percent cast ballots, with 71,717 received by the 8 p.m. deadline on Tuesday.

The big news is that the Lane County Vehicle Registration Fee did not pass. Despite support from Lane County Commissioner Jay Bozievich, Florence City Council and other county cities, Measure 20-231 failed with 46,925 votes against, or 66 percent. Only 23,855 voters were for the fee, or 34 percent.

The mandatory fee would have put money into county and city roads now that revenue sources to maintain and build roadways have dried up.

JUNE

Recreational marijuana use legal next month

Wednesday, July 1, marks the first day for the legal use of recreational marijuana in Oregon.

Florence Police Department Lt. John Pitcher said, "Now

the possession of marijuana will no longer be a crime, as long as people abide by the new law. ... I'm not expecting any trouble."

He also reminded the public that driving under the influence of marijuana is illegal. An important part of the law is that people can use marijuana recreationally, but only in private.

Fire strikes local storage facility

Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue (SVFR) received its first call about a fire at 4044 Highway 101 at 6:30 a.m. on Tuesday. The first responders were on the scene at Pacific Pines RV Park and Storage, owned by Brian and Linda Stent, within five minutes.

"The call came in as a pick-up fire in a storage unit," said Fire Marshal Sean Barrett.

Three units were involved in the fire at first.

"Fire was coming out and doors were missing on all three units with heavy fire, heavy heat," Barrett said.

Acknowledging the size of the fire and the nature of the row of attached units, SVFR called outside emergency groups for assistance. Barrett estimates that 25 to 30 people responded. No one was hurt, but damages to the structure and content were later estimated to be more than \$5 million.

Emergency department expansion breaks ground

PeaceHealth Peace Harbor Medical Center officially began a new 4,700-square-foot addition to its Emergency Department (ED) on Friday as Dr. A.J. Brauer turned over the first shovel-ful.

Kay King, volunteer director for Leave a Legacy, Save a Life Emergency Department Fundraising Drive, and other community members also participated in the ceremony.

The new ED will include nine private rooms, two dedicated triage rooms, two large trauma rooms, a private consultation room and a separate waiting area. The expanded ED is projected to meet the needs of the community through 2030.

PeaceHealth's \$5 million campaign was the largest fundraising effort in the history of Florence.

JULY

Family takes over ABC Preschool

The Alice Brauer Christian (ABC) Preschool, located in the New Life Lutheran Church at 2100 Spruce St., will reopen

Aug. 3.

Stacie Navarro and her daughter Meggan Haflett will operate the preschool, which will have an initial capacity of 20 children from 3 to 6 years old. Haflett and one aid will be in charge of the classroom and Navarro will act as a consultant.

Navarro was the director when Boys and Girls Club of Western Lane County operated the facility, which closed earlier this year due to budget cuts.

Teen Center to reopen this fall

The newly painted and remodeled Boys and Girls Club of Western Lane County Teen Center, at 1601 15th St., will reopen in September. The opening is set to coincide with the start of the 2015-16 school year.

The center will be open to all members in grades seven through 12.

The remodel is not the only improvement afoot. Three specific programs adopted from the Boys and Girls Club of America curriculum specifically designed to help increase student graduation rates have been added to the club's after-school agenda.

Return of the Chief

Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue (SVFR) Chief Jim Langborg returned to his position Wednesday after the five members of the board of directors rescinded its ruling to relieve him of his duties last week.

"I am ready to get back to work and serve our firefighters and citizens,"



Langborg said in a statement released after Tuesday's ruling. "SVFR has gone through a tough week but I take great comfort in knowing that the men and women of this Fire District are highly dedicated professionals who share my passion for serving this community."

The SVFR board held a special meeting Tuesday night in response to the ruling to dismiss Langborg that was made at their regular meeting on July 15. Director Lori Gates made a motion to rescind her former motion that terminated the contract with Langborg.

"I had conversations with community members and fire district members contrary to what I had previously been told," Gates said.

Archie Knowles saved

The Archie Knowles Campground, located four miles east of Mapleton on Highway 126 and closed by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) in 2012, will reopen under the jurisdiction of Lane County, thanks to an \$84,976

grant from the Oregon Parks and Recreation Local Government Grant Program.

The grant will allow Lane County to rehabilitate and reopen the 4.5-acre campground and day use area located along Knowles Creek. According to Lane County, reopening the campground has been a priority of area residents since the closure, when a group called "Save Archie" was formed to promote reopening the site.

The USFS closed the campground because it was deemed too expensive to renovate and maintain.

Lane County has been in negotiations with the forest service to take over the campground since it closed three years ago.

AUGUST

Rhody breaks ground

Florence Mayor Joe Henry and other city officials began the North Rhododendron Drive Paving Improvement at a ceremony Aug. 5.

Construction will begin Aug. 21, between the entrance to Greentrees Village and Wildwinds, and will include a one-day road closure. Work includes a grind/inlay of a two-inch thick hot mix asphalt cement (HMAC) roadway surface along Rhododendron Drive from Ninth to Wildwinds streets.

Henry said he was excited to start on the project.

"Not only are we breaking ground today, it's groundbreaking," he said.

Club announces new director

Boys and Girls Club of Western Lane County voted retired business executive Chuck Trent, 63, as acting executive director during its July 30 meeting. Trent will serve without pay in order to help the club continue to stabilize financially.

He has made a one-year commitment to serve as director.

"Hopefully, by that time we will be far enough along in bringing the club back to stability that we would then be

able to hire an executive director," Trent said.

Doors open at new full-day kindergarten

For the very first time, the five-room modular full-day kindergarten building and an estimated 100 kindergarten students will share a common experience — the first day of school.

Students, parents, staff, administrators and board members celebrated the upcoming occasion with an Aug. 27 ribbon-cutting, officiated over by Florence Area Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors, and a barbecue held at the new school building, located on the west end of the Siuslaw Elementary School north parking lot.

The ceremony and food were the culmination of a day in which parents and prospective students toured the facilities, met teachers and administrators and determined which classes were best suited for their children.

SEPTEMBER

Defusing the situation

When a cleanup crew working across the parking lot from Dunes City Hall recently discovered two World War II era practice bombs, concerns were

justifiably raised over what else might be lurking beneath the dirt pile.

According to Dunes City Mayor Rebecca Ruede, the two practice bombs were initially mistaken for 60-milimeter mortar rounds, as they were similar in appearance, during the Aug. 19 cleanup.

On Sept. 3, the Eugene Bomb Squad and a bomb disposal unit from the Portland Air National Guard descended on Dunes City to clear the area of any additional munitions. Fortunately, none were found.

"It's not often that we call out the National Guard," Ruede said.



See **REVIEW 11A**

Cindy Wobbe Estate Sales

TWO ESTATE SALES

Friday & Saturday, January 15-16, 9am-3pm

22 Shoreline Dr. (Shelter Cove)

Estate of the Late Jan Bordewick. Spectacular home filled with unique antiques and collectables, jewelry, antique lighting and hardware, furniture, artwork, lifetime accumulation of a serious collector. A rare opportunity.

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Whole house liquidation on behalf of the Heystee Estate. Lovely home, quality furniture and household goods, Storey & Clark baby grand, Maytag W/D, garage full of tools and "manly" stuff.

Both homes located off Rhody Drive. Follow signs from 35th.

View online photos at

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ARE YOU A THREE RIVERS CASINO RESORT COMMUNITY CASH WINNER?

THIS WEEK'S LUCKY WINNERS:

Tuesday 1/5	Cheryl Jordan Dixie Buss	Florence Florence	Bella's Salon Rite Aid
Wednesday 1/6	Lili Hillis Nora Lupton	Florence Florence	Safeway Morgan's Country Kitchen
Thursday 1/7	Christine Warye Raymond Bray	Florence Florence	Safeway Safeway
Friday 1/8	Bobbi Brubaker Lois Warde	Florence Florence	Cheveux Spa Safeway
Saturday 1/9	Donna Graves Sharon Price	Florence Florence	Safeway Abby's Pizza
Sunday 1/10	Diane Erwin Bonnie Kramer	Florence Florence	Three Rivers Casino Resort Safeway
Monday 1/11	Linda McPerdran Raymond Bray	Florence Florence	Safeway Safeway

Each winner receives \$50.00 in Community Cash!

Winners have 7 days from the date drawn to claim their prize.

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Learn how to embrace life changes while managing your health

- **Maintaining a Positive Mental Outlook on Life**
Thursday, January 21st, 2pm
Learn how to maintain a positive outlook on life while you age.
- **Learn How to Keep Your Memory Sharp**
Thursday, February 18th, 2pm
As we age, we start to notice some changes in our ability to remember things. Discover ways to keep your memory sharp and fresh at any age.
- **Diabetes and Diet—Making Food Choices That Work for You**
Thursday, March 17th, 2pm
Learn about diabetes prevention, management, and care. Understand diabetes in a simpler and clearer way than ever before.