

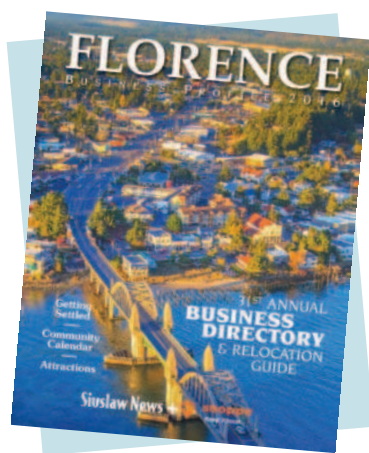
VIKINGS UP TO BAT

SPORTS — B



BUSINESS PROFILE

SPECIAL PUBLICATION INSIDE



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SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON

'FACE OF CASINO' RETIRES

Mike Bones, casino greeter since 2004, to be honored at retirement party

BY JACK DAVIS
Siuslaw News

Florence native Mike Bones, the gregarious, shorts-wearing persona of Three Rivers Casino Resort since its first day of operation, retired Friday at age 69.

The casino is planning a by-invitation-only gala retirement party for Bones tomorrow.

According to Rich Colton,

the casino's director of consumer marketing, the party is expected to have up to 500 attendees and will include a comedy roast.

Bones' bigger-than-life, smiling, open-armed figure in a suit coat and trademark shorts has adorned billboards around the area for years.

"We are very happy for him," Three Rivers Casino Resort General Manager Mike

Rose said. "He has been with us since we opened the tent in 2004. He has been almost a day-one team member. We interviewed him and wanted to hire him the first day we opened the tent, and he has been with us ever since."

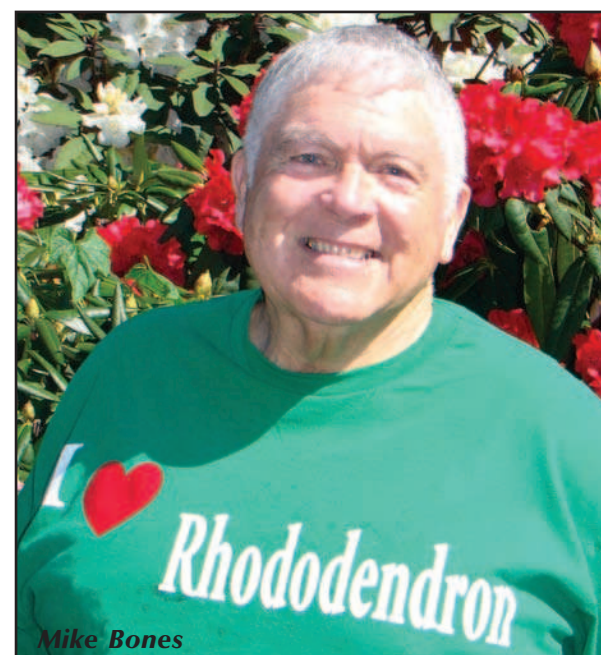
Bones' first contact with the casino was as a Florence Area Chamber of Commerce ambassador, when the ambassadors offered to escort people through the new tent facility.

"We went to the casino, in 2004, before they opened," Bones said. "They asked us to

direct people around. Of course I knew everybody and I was busy talking with everyone. Mike Rose came up to me and asked if I wanted a job. I asked him if I could wear short pants. He said yes.

"I've been at the casino for 12 years now. I didn't really have an official title to begin with. I was just the face of the casino. They put me up on all the billboards and advertisements. It worked out well," he added.

See **BONES 11A**



Mike Bones

JACK DAVIS/SIUSLAW NEWS

BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION

Recycling the rails

Siuslaw River Bridge rails to be donated to Florence, BRING for repurposing



CHANTELLE MEYER/SIUSLAW NEWS

ODOT and Hamilton Construction are replacing the Siuslaw River Bridge's original historic railings with new, safer railings. BRING Recycling in Eugene will sell some of the old rails for decorative use. Below, BRING uses segments from the Isaac Lee Patterson Bridge in Gold Beach in its "Garden of Earthly Delights."

BY CHANTELLE MEYER
Siuslaw News

As part of the Siuslaw River Bridge Restoration Project, Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and its contractor Hamilton Construction are donating the bridge's old rails, which are being replaced with new rails of a similar design.

"Hamilton Construction put together this recycling project with BRING," said Angela Beers Seydel, ODOT information officer. "We all wondered how we can best preserve the historic bridge and its pieces."

The goal is for the rails to be

enjoyed and re-used for decorative purposes, and for none of them to be crushed or destroyed.

Seydel said that about half of the total 2,720 feet of bridge rails will go to regional governments. The City of Florence is receiving 800 lineal feet of the railing. Coos Bay and North Bend will also receive some to use for beautification purposes.

The rest of the rails will be sold through Eugene-based nonprofit BRING Recycling, which will use the money for its operational costs and goal of reducing waste and promoting sustainability.

See **BRIDGE 11A**



COURTESY PHOTO

Mapleton seeks \$4M school bond

Community meetings scheduled in April

BY JACK DAVIS
Siuslaw News

Mapleton School District will seek voter approval of a \$4 million bond measure for building improvements to the high school and elementary school buildings on the May 17 primary ballot.

The district has received a \$4 million matching state grant for improvements, but it will only receive the money if the bond measure passes. The district may also be eligible for a seismic improvement grant of up to \$1.5 million per building.

Of the total \$8 million in improvement money, \$7.5 million would be spent on facility upgrades and \$500,000 would be set aside for items that need to be purchased, like new school buses to meet 2017 emission standards.

See **SCHOOL 11A**

Western Lane Ambulance approves strategic plan

BY CHANTELLE MEYER
Siuslaw News

Western Lane Ambulance District approved its strategic plan for the next three to five years at its board meeting on March 24.

The document was created after Emergency Services Consulting International held meetings with internal and external stakeholders to create a plan to keep the district moving forward and thriving.

"I feel confident this will give us a roadmap for the next three to five years," said district Interim Director Brian Burright.

He presented the completed strategic plan to the board for approval. The final plan will be available online for the public at www.westernlaneambulance.com.

See **PLAN 11A**