

## Mack Holman to speak at next City Club meeting

Tsunami Gallery owner Mack Holman will be the guest speaker at the next City Club meeting, when he'll talk about public art and casting and creating sculptures. The meeting will take place Friday, Nov. 4, at the Ocean Dunes Golf Links at Munsell Lake Road at noon. Lunch will be catered by Marianne, owner of Waterfront Depot, and served from 11:30 to noon. For reservations, call 541-305-9003.

## Auction from 1A

The two development sites are being offered as part of the Realty Marketing/Northwest Fall 2016 Auction, with sealed bids due Tuesday, Nov. 15.

Interested parties can view the Florence properties at [www.rmnw-auctions.com](http://www.rmnw-auctions.com). For additional information, contact Marti Cohn with Realty Marketing/Northwest at [marti@rmnw-auctions.com](mailto:marti@rmnw-auctions.com) or call the auction information office at 800-845-3524.

## Operations from 1A

"We want to give everybody the opportunity to come in on

Friday," said Fire Chief Jim Langborg. "Then, on Saturday we're going to do a formal retirement with a few surprises to honor the traditions of the fire

## Sea squirts from 1A

without fear," he said. The creature is classified as a Tunicate, because of the tunic like outer sheath that individual animals have and which they join together to form long groups or colonies of the creatures. These tunicate colonies float far out to sea to feed and procreate. And while it is a close relative to fish and birds, it doesn't have a backbone. This means it is classified as an invertebrate. "Water currents are difficult to interpret so the exact reason for their appearance is unclear, but it's reasonable to

assume that the recent large storms we have experienced along the coast maybe responsible," he said. Perhaps the most intriguing part of this story has to do with the animal's name. Curtis said, "Pyrosoma means fire body in Latin. The animals were given this name because they are bioluminescent: they glow brightly in the dark."



PHOTO COURTESY SANDY RAMSEY

Sea squirts such as this one have been spotted on nearby beaches. They are not poisonous.

district." Perhaps no one else embodies the "traditions of the fire district" like Tipler. He was born in the old Western Lane Hospital and has lived in Florence his whole life, along with many members of his family. Tipler graduated from Siuslaw High School in 1982. Before he graduated, however, he was already an active member of the rural fire department. "When I joined in 1981, you could join at the age of 16 — I was 17 then — and be a full-fledged firefighter. I joined in my junior year of high school and started out as a firefighter," he said. "When I turned 18, I learned how to engineer all the vehicles, so I became an engineer and then got promoted to lieutenant, then captain. About 22 years ago, I got promoted to assistant chief."

In 1986, he started working at Western Lane Ambulance District as a paramedic. He worked simultaneously at the ambulance and fire districts until 5 years ago. "I was working way too many hours for almost 20 years," Tipler said. "Chief John Buchanan brought me on full-time here. I'd set up myself and my family where I could do that no problem financially."

As someone who had been a volunteer firefighter, the shift to a fulltime position at the fire department was odd. "It was really weird going from shift work to 9 to 5 Monday through Friday. That was kind of a difficult change, but I loved it. It was great," he

said. Most of Tipler's training has been regional and through the emergency services districts. "My training file is very thick. I support training. The more training and the more educated you get, the safer you're going to be. I always felt that being in a lead role I needed to be educated and trained so I could pass that on," he said. "And it's only because I had the opportunity to train that way as a volunteer."

He also used to train two nights a week. "Chief John Carnahan and I worked closely with both rural and city fire through the ambulance service. As that relationship developed with Carnahan, myself and the city department, we started attending their fire drills. We couldn't be members, but we could help them," Tipler said. "Carnahan and I were the first two rural firefighters to ever be voted into the city fire department and allowed to be on both departments. We both served with both departments for 6 years."

Other members followed to join both departments before the departments merged to form Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue. "I don't know if my wife was too excited about me having fire drills two nights a week, but it worked out," Tipler said. His extra training over the years paid off during some of the most difficult calls he had to attend. In one, he had to rappel over the cliffs above Sea Lion Caves to help rescue two women. In another, his partner, a pilot and a patient died in a late-night helicopter accident on the way to Eugene. Tipler and a representative from Bohemia Lumber Company hiked into the woods at daybreak to find the downed helicopter.

"I had to pronounce all three of them dead, which was a pretty tough call. I was going to quit then, quit emergency services. My boss told me, 'No, you don't have to. You never have to fly in a helicopter again, Marvin. It's not part of your

job.' So I stayed on," Tipler said. His fear of flying lasted for another 5 years, before a similar accident a mile away from the helicopter crash necessitated that Tipler take to the skies. "The Coast Guard helicopter lowered down this horse collar (a rescue sling) and I put it on with my backpack full of equipment. I could barely stand on my feet. It was a mile away from where my partner had got killed in an accident. My knees started giving out and I was shaking. But I put that horse collar on. As soon as I left the ground, all those fears went away," Tipler said. "It was probably the coolest experience I've ever had in my life."

"I have video evidence that I did that call. That was one of the coolest rescues that I did, and I no longer have a fear of helicopters." There are so many stories. In his 35 years, he has never crashed a vehicle or had an accident with an emergency vehicle. He has also never witnessed any other major injuries of his crew. "Knock on wood — I've got four days left," he said with a laugh in an interview on Monday. "I want to pass on those good habits."

Tipler continues to pass on those habits to new recruits and current volunteer and career firefighters and staff. Over the years, he estimates that he has encouraged hundreds of people to consider becoming firefighters. "My love for the department and the community obviously shows," he said. "I probably am recruiting 50 percent of the time when I'm out in the community. Whether it's a football game or a basketball game, if I see a potential candidate, I'm recruiting. Pete Warren is a more notable person I can remember recruiting."

Ten years ago, the two men had children on the same sports teams. Tipler convinced Warren — now captain of Siuslaw Valley Station No. 2 in Old Town Florence — to spend his time volunteering at the fire

department. Tipler said, "I told him, 'You need to join the fire department. We're the good guys!'"

Although the nature of a volunteer fire department means that people don't always stay for long, he believes the "longer you can keep them the better it is."

In his many roles, Tipler has helped secure federal grants for the department and coordinated several projects, including the 180-foot radio tower used for police, fire, ambulance and tribal police. He also was the unofficial project manager on building Siuslaw Valley's main station. "With my construction background, Chief Buchanan had me here almost every day making sure we were getting what we wanted," he said.

Tipler used to build houses and cabinets with his father. He also built four homes for his family members in the past 25 years. While he learned some skills on his own, he took drafting and construction classes at Siuslaw High School. Mr. Dave Rankin's class of eight students built an entire house during Tipler's senior year. He looks forward to relaxing and continuing his hobbies.

"I'm going to go ahead and continue to help the community and fire service. Actually, I'm going to run for the board this May. I'm hoping to get elected and continue my service to the community and the fire area for more than these 35 years," he said.

Langborg said, "I've learned a lot from Marvin. He's been here a long time, he's got a wealth of knowledge and a lot of information about the history of the district that's been extremely useful. It's been great."

Tipler also hopes to put his emergency services knowledge to work by volunteering with Florence Police Department with its radio communications. To hear more of Tipler's stories, attend his open house this Friday.

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