

Oregon Coast Military Museum offering gift ideas

The Oregon Coast Military Museum (OCMM) is offering a selection of special gift options for holiday shopping, including challenge coins for both the museum as well as the recent USCG commemorative coin; new dog-tags patterned after the museum's flag-tag logo; children's toys; apparel with branch logos and

insignias; books on military heritage, including one about a Florence family; and more. For the season, Christmas wreaths are available at Bay Street Family Tyes in Old Town, with the proceeds going to the museum. The OCMM museum is open Thursday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

DISASTER PREP

By Dave Robinson
Special to the Siuslaw News

Seasoned peppers

One of the most vulnerable groups is that of our "seasoned citizens." Whether it's mobility issues, health concerns or just simply the "alone factor," our seniors often have different needs than the younger crowd.

This week's column is provided especially for our seniors, although the information is just as relevant for the post-boomer generation as well. As I have mentioned before, when disaster occurs, the first responders are overwhelmed.

YOYO (You're On Your Own) then becomes a reality. The American Red Cross recommends seniors create a Personal Support Network made up of several folks who will check in on you, ensure your wellness and give assistance if needed.

This network can consist of friends, roommates, family members, relatives, personal attendants, co-workers and neighbors. Ideally, a minimum of three people can be identified at each location where you regularly spend time, for example at church, home or volunteer site.

There are seven important items to discuss and implement with a personal support network:

1. Make arrangements, prior to an emergency, for your support network to immediately check on you after a disaster and, if needed, offer assistance.

2. Exchange important keys.

3. Show them where you keep emergency supplies.

4. Share copies of your relevant emergency documents, evacuation plans and emergency health information card.

5. Agree on and practice methods of contacting each other in the event of an emergency. Do not count on the telephones working. (Dave's note: Check out FRS radios or consider sharing the cost of a goTenna, or similar device with someone. www.gotenna.com.)

6. You and your network should always notify each other when you're going to be out of town and when you will return.

7. The relationship should be mutual. You have a lot to contribute! Learn about each other's needs and how to help each other in an emergency. You can even collaborate on making preparations to be ready for a disaster.

The single most important thing anyone can do to prepare for a disaster is to organize their neighborhood — and it doesn't cost a cent. Contacting your neighbors, especially fellow seniors, can build a sense of community and camaraderie along with an assurance that no one need to face adversity alone. Introduce the topic at your local senior center, church group or the quilt-

ing club. Collaborating on projects can not only bring some peace of mind, but just may bring some new friends into your life.

Keep in mind you may want to stock up on certain medications. Most doctors are sympathetic to your needs regarding planning for disaster and are willing to cooperate by prescribing most maintenance medications in advance. The difficult thing here is to get your insurance to get on board with that concept.

So any advance preparations you make in that regard may have to come out of your own pocket. Then be sure to take special care to mind the expiration dates on your meds. Also try to see your way clear to pick up an extra pair of eyeglasses.

Some of us have enough trouble keeping track of our glasses even without a disaster, so adding a pair of drug-store "cheaters" to your kit just might not be a bad idea.

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. Visit his website for more disaster preparedness tips, www.disasterprepdave.blogspot.com.

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Red Cross offers winter weather safety tips

A winter storm with snow and ice recently blanketed much of Oregon and Southwest Washington, stranding many motorists and leaving some residents without power.

The Red Cross has issued the following cold weather and heating safety tips:

Driving in winter weather

While the Red Cross encourages motorists to stay off the road if possible, for those who must drive in snow or freezing rain, follow these tips about

how to drive safely in winter weather:

- Fill the vehicle's gas tank and clean the lights and windows to help you see.

- Pay attention to the weather forecast. Before you leave, let someone know where you are going, the route you plan to take and when you expect to get there. If your car gets stuck, help can be sent along your predetermined route.

- If you have to drive, make sure everyone has their seat belts on and give your full attention to the road. Avoid dis-

tractions such as cell phones.

- Make sure your vehicle is ready for winter with a window scraper, shovel, kitty litter or sand in case you get stuck, extra clothes and a disaster supply kit in your trunk. Pack high-protein snacks, water, a first aid kit, flashlight, small battery-operated radio, an emergency contact card with names and phone numbers, extra prescription medications and blankets.

- Don't follow other vehicles too closely; sudden stops are difficult on snowy roadways.

- Don't use cruise control when driving in winter weather.

- Don't pass snow plows.
- Know that ramps, bridges and overpasses will freeze before roadways.

If you become stuck in the snow or icy conditions:

- Stay with the car and call for assistance. Do not try to walk to safety.

- If you can, move your vehicle off the roadway. Stay with it — don't abandon it. If you have to get out of your vehicle, use the side away from traffic.

Cold weather safety:

- Assemble disaster preparedness kits to keep at home, in your vehicle and at work. For a full list of recommended kit items, visit www.redcross.org/PrepareGuide

- In case of a power outage, make sure you have enough non-perishable food and water stored to last everyone in the household until power has been restored. A three-day supply of food and water for each person is recommended.

- Use battery-operated flashlights or lanterns instead of candles (because it could be a fire hazard) during a power outage. Do not leave burning candles unattended.

- Have plenty of blankets and warm clothing available should you be without heat for an extended period of time due to a power outage.

- Make sure you have batteries in your radio (to receive information updates) and keep a spare battery for your cell phone handy (also keep your phone charged).

- Protect your pipes: Run water, even at a trickle, to help prevent pipes from freezing.

- Wear waterproof, insulated boots to keep your feet warm and dry and to maintain your footing in ice and snow.

- Bring pets indoors. If they can't come inside, make sure they have enough shelter to keep them warm and that they can get to water that is not frozen.

For more cold weather pet safety tips, view our blog at www.redcrossblog.org.

For information on road conditions from the Oregon Department of Transportation, visit www.tripcheck.com.

For more information, visit redcross.org/Cascades.

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