



RACE IN THE NEW YEAR

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COAST CENTRAL

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# Siuslaw News

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SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON

## EMERGENCY SERVICES ACCIDENTS, GUNFIRE RING IN THE NEW YEAR

*Two serious accidents and a shooting incident in Old Town ushered in 2017*

**W**estern Lane Ambulance District, Florence Police Department and Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue were all kept busy Dec. 31, starting with two serious accidents happening just moments apart at about 1 p.m.

BY JACK DAVIS  
Siuslaw News

A two-vehicle collision at the 87000 block of Highway 101 required firemen to extract one female from a van so she could be transported to the hospital.

Siuslaw Valley Fire Marshall Sean Barrett said, "It took several firefighters to get her out safely. A child passenger and two female passengers in the other vehicle were uninjured."

According to Barrett, at about the same time, the fire department was called out to assist with a serious injury at the Red Buggy Hill area, south of Florence in Oregon Dunes National Recreational Area.

"We had to help the ambulance crew. They couldn't get to the patient, so we assisted with our side-by-side utility vehicle to get to the patient and get the patient out of the dunes," Barrett said.

Western Lane Operations Manager Matt House said, "The rider went off a 10-12 foot drop off, resulting in a spinal fracture."

The patient was transported to PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center at RiverBend in Springfield.

Several other minor accidents occurred over the holiday weekend, mostly due to slippery roads caused by freezing temperatures.

Later that evening, Florence police received several 911 calls reporting gun shots being fired along Bay Street in Old Town.

Police Commander John Pitcher said, "When we arrived, several witnesses had taken cover and were hiding. They pointed to an apartment on Bay Street where the suspect had returned. We made contact and took him into custody."

See **INCIDENTS 6A**

## Town Hall Meeting Saturday brings Roblan, McKeown to Florence

Sen. Arnie Roblan (D-Coos Bay) and Rep. Caddy McKeown (D-Coos Bay) will co-host a Town Hall Meeting on Saturday, Jan. 7, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. The town hall will take place in the Bromley Room of the Siuslaw Public Library, 1460 Ninth St.

"It's always a pleasure to connect with my constituents," said McKeown. "I'm looking forward to this opportunity to talk with them and hear what's on their mind before heading into the 2017 Session."

McKeown and Roblan will discuss legislative issues on the horizon for the upcoming session, particularly transportation, education and coastal economic development opportunities.

If there is time, they will answer questions from those in attendance.

For more information, contact Meliah Masiba at 503-986-1409.

## LOCAL COUPLE RECEIVE STATEWIDE HONOR *Rankins chosen as Oregon Tree Farmer of the Year for 2017 for South Slough Road property*

BY JACK DAVIS  
Siuslaw News

**T**he Oregon Tree Farm System has chosen Dave and Diane Rankin's 194-acre tree farm located south of Florence on South Slough Road as the 2017 Oregon Tree Farm of the Year.

The honor is the result of the Rankins' hard work, education and adherence to a well developed management plan.

Diane said, "There are four goals of the Oregon Tree Farm System: wood, water, wildlife and recreation. They want to know what you are doing about those four things, not only for yourself, but also for the community."

Dave said, "The honor we received is called the Tree Farmer of the Year from the Oregon Tree Farm System. They are associated with the Oregon Small Woodlands Association.

"The Oregon Small Woodlands Association nominates one tree farmer from each participating county. We happen to be this year's nominee from Lane County. Five other tree farms were also nominated this year."

According to Rankin, Lane County has 179 Oregon Small Woodlands Association members. The state has more than 1,000 members.

He said one of the biggest challenges to Small Woodland members is how to transfer property to the next generation.

Diane said, "In order to be considered a 'small woodland,' the total wooded acres must be less than 5,000. The larger companies like Roseburg Lumber support the Small Woodlands Association, but they themselves are not members. Most of the association members are our size or smaller, maybe even as few as 50 acres."

The Rankins have between 160 and 165 acres of woodlands with another 30 acres of wetlands.

The state association award comes with some benefits to the Florence business community.

"The county that has nominated the Tree Farm of the Year then hosts the Oregon Small Woodlands annual meeting somewhere in the



JACK DAVIS/SIUSLAW NEWS



Dave and Diane Rankin were chosen for the 2017 Tree Farmer of the Year award from the Oregon Tree Farm System for their 194-acre tree farm located on South Slough Road, south of Florence. The Rankins have owned the property since 1975.

county. Since we are from the coast, it is going to be over here."

"It will be at Three Rivers Casino Resort. We were going to hold it at the Florence Events Center, but they couldn't accommodate the dates," Dave said.

Dave said the event could draw 150 to 200 people from all over the state.

"People will be arriving on Thursday, June 15. There will be daylong meetings on Friday, June 16, at the casino and then on Saturday, June 17, we will have a tree farm tour here," he said.

The Rankins moved here from Eugene in

1963 to teach in the Siuslaw School district.

They bought the 194-acre South Slough Road parcel in 1975.

At that time, they had no immediate plans to log the property.

"This place was logged in the late '50s, after World War II," Dave said. "The loggers at that time came through and pretty much high-graded the land. They took the Douglas fir and red cedar. Those were the valuable species. They left behind the hemlock and spruce that

See **TREE FARM 6A**

## Dancing for the Stars of Tomorrow

*Rotary Club of Florence premieres theme for upcoming auction on March 11*



Dance show contestants and the skit's two hosts await the judges' final scores.



The three judges watch pop, salsa and disco performances by three "finalist" couples in the "Dancing" skit.

PHOTOS BY CHANTELE MEYER/SIUSLAW NEWS

**"W**e'll have a ball!" the planners of the 2017 Rotary Auction announced as they debuted this year's "Dancing for the Stars of Tomorrow" theme with a dazzling skit based on a TV dance show. "It's not about us," Kevin McMullen said. "It is about the stars of the future. This event is for scholarships, community services and projects." Hoping to surpass 2016's total of \$108,000 raised for scholarships for high school and college students in the Florence and Mapleton area, the fundraising event on March 11 will feature both a silent auction and a live auction. Florence Events Center will hold the dinner and dancing beginning at 5 p.m. For more information, go to [www.theflorencerotary.org/auction-about.php](http://www.theflorencerotary.org/auction-about.php).

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