



VIKS LEAD BATTLE

SPORTS — B

Winter Music Festival

INSIDE — A8



Siuslaw News

127TH YEAR | ISSUE NO. 5

SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON

2016 FLORENCE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SIUSLAW AWARDS

Nominees announced for First Citizen, Future First Citizen Awards

The upcoming Florence Area Chamber of Commerce Siuslaw Awards on Wednesday, Feb. 8, will be a night to celebrate members of the Florence community. In addition to the Business Awards, the chamber will also recognize the Future First Citizen and First Citizen Award recipients. For the 2016 year, there are five nominees for the Future First Citizen — Benjamin Cahoon, Celie Mans, Elyssa Rose, Destinie Tatum and Claire Waggoner — and four nominees for the First Citizen Award — Ron Caputo, Bou Kilgore, Sam Spayd and Gary Vawter. For nominee bios, see SIUSLAW AWARDS 11A.

FUTURE FIRST CITIZEN NOMINEES



Future First Citizen nominees are (from left): Benjamin Cahoon, Celie Mans, Elyssa Rose, Destinie Tatum and Claire Waggoner

FIRST CITIZEN NOMINEES



Florence First Citizen nominees are (from left): Ron Caputo, Bou Kilgore, Sam Spayd and Gary Vawter

ReVision Florence moves forward

FURA finalizing \$6 million project

By JACK DAVIS
Siuslaw News

Florence Urban Renewal Agency (FURA) is moving forward with its ReVision Florence initiative, a \$6 million multi-year beautification project for the Old Town district.

ReVision Florence is a streetscape improvement and repaving project that runs along Highway 101 from the Siuslaw River Bridge, north to the intersection of highways 101 and 126 and east along Highway 126 to Spruce Street.

Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) is responsible for repaving Highway 101.

FURA Chairman Joshua Greene said the basic goal of ReVision Florence is to turn Highway 101 into a bike and pedestrian friendly boulevard.

"We want cars to slow down and people to say, 'Hey, look at this wonderful little town.' We also want to re-angle some of the streets that have been cut by Highway 101 to make them safer," Greene said.

The project is scheduled to be finished in 2018.

FURA was created when voters approved the Florence Downtown Preservation and Renewal Plan in 2007.

According to the City of Florence, FURA uses property taxes to finance projects within the district, which extends from the Siuslaw Bridge north along Highway 101 to 12th Street, east to Highway 126 and Vine Street and west to Kingwood.

City Project Manager Megan Messmer said, "We turned our design acceptance package (DAP) in to ODOT on Nov. 30. DAP requires that 30 percent of the project be designed and submitted to ODOT before the next phase."

See FURA 11A

HIGH TECH in OLD TOWN

New Florence Tech Solutions 'Cyber Lounge' offers wide variety of tech support services

According to Florence Area Chamber of Commerce, tourism-related businesses in town have seen a welcome increase in customers at their shops, restaurants and hotels in the last six months. There has also been a noticeable increase in new businesses opening their doors during that time.

By MARK BRENNAN
Siuslaw News

One of these new enterprises is Florence Tech Solutions (FTS). Located in Historic Old Town Florence, FTS is offering a unique menu of technology related services.

Owner Jolene Mederios believes these services will appeal to residents of Florence and its many visitors. Mederios has recently opened what might best be referred to as a cyber lounge.

She said she hopes that the merging of an inviting place to hang out, a tech-savvy service menu and workstations for both PC and Mac will fill what she perceived as a gap

in the tech support options available to the community.

Mederios received her initial tech training while serving in the Air Force from 2008 to 2016. During that time, she attained two associate degrees and a bachelor's degree in computer science.

After leaving the service, Mederios was visiting her parents who had recently retired here. The area's beauty and the friendly people of Florence captivated her.

"I fell in love with Florence and I moved here in April of last year," Mederios said.

She was looking for work in her field at the time, but was looking in larger populations centers.

"I was looking for IT support jobs in Portland and Eugene, but I really loved Florence and I wanted to be close to my family," Mederios said. "So my mom had the idea of opening a business here and that was the spark that got us going."

"My mom always tells everybody what I do for a living, which is IT support, and I was getting a lot of



MARK BRENNAN/SIUSLAW NEWS

Jolene Mederios of Florence Tech Solutions will host classes and trouble-shooting workshops at her Old Town Florence location.

questions. So I started helping people and I was getting pretty busy. And the feedback from my clients was very positive. That was when I decided to start a business and it just took off from there."

FTS provides repair service and instruction at its Old Town location.

See TECH 8A

'When we march together we show that we stand together'

Women's Solidarity March Saturday to meet at Class Act Theatre

On Jan. 21, a Women's Solidarity March will be held in Florence in support of the Women's March in Washington.

By MARK BRENNAN
Siuslaw News

Participants will gather at 10:30 a.m. at Class Act Theatre, 509 Kingwood St., in preparation for the march along Highway 101. Nin Bebeau, the local organizer

for the march, says that the event is an important opportunity for women to stand together to make their voices heard.

"Women often think, 'What can I do to make a difference?'" Bebeau said. "When we march together we show that we stand together, and we show that we stand up for what we believe in, which is the education and empowerment of women."

Bebeau is quick to point out that this is not an anti-Trump march,

"He is there to give us a wake up call, but this is not about Trump. This is about women. This is the time for us to make our voices heard and for us to be responsible for our own ideas and goals," Bebeau said, "And what we think is best for the country. We are not against Donald Trump, we are for women's empowerment."

The march will begin at 11 a.m. and there will be a rally and social justice discussion at noon, following the march, at Class Act Theatre.

Featured speakers at the rally will be Interim Director of Siuslaw Outreach Services Bob Teeter and activist April Dumas.

All ages and genders are invited to participate in the event.

Planners estimate the event will end around 2 p.m.