

CELEBRATING  
SCOUTING WEEK

INSIDE — 4B

# Siuslaw News Coast Life

SENIOR NEWS  
CALENDAR

INSIDE — 6B

## Chef kicks it up a notch



PHOTOS BY MARK BRENNAN/SIUSLAW NEWS

Chef Richard Boultinghouse does it all at Florence Senior Center Singing Pine's Cafe. From using fresh ingredients and seasonings, teaching volunteers how to make pastries and serving up gourmet meals, his experience and training brings something a little new to the community center's diners on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

### *Chef Richard Boultinghouse's Cordon Bleu training makes for a tasty experience for Singing Pines Café diners*

BY MARK BRENNAN  
Siuslaw News

**F**lorence runs on volunteers. It's a common refrain at nonprofit 501(c)3s in town from Florence Foodshare to the Friends of the Florence Events Center to the Florence Community PTA. Nearly all of the clubs and public service organizations in the area count on the talents and experience of residents that are not paid for the work they do.

In many cases these volunteers are not only the backbone of the organization, they are often the face the public sees as well. In addition, there are a small number of volunteers that have a very specific skillset that they share for the benefit of the other members of the community.

One of these individuals is now sharing his talents in a very tasty way at the Florence Senior Center, 1570 Kingwood St. Chef Richard Boultinghouse and his wife Teresa are working together to prepare meals at the center.

Richard is classically trained and has an extensive background cooking in large venues for high profile individuals.

"I am a certified Chef with Le Cordon Bleu in



Senior Center visitors dine on Chef Boultinghouse's fine cuisine at Singing Pines Cafe twice weekly. Lunches are \$7, and reservations are encouraged.

Paris, and I have cooked professionally for many years," he said. "I've cooked on the concert circuit for Ray Charles, Pink Martini, Los Lobos and Joan Baez. And I have done a lot of corporate cooking, serving hundreds of meals in a very short time."

Health issues have constrained his ability to work the often-grueling schedule of a professional chef, but his talents are not going to waste. His desire to contribute to the community and his love of food has turned out to be a win-win situation for all.

Richard and Teresa have taken over the management of the kitchen and meal programs at the Senior Center to rave reviews.

The first thing one notices when talking with the couple is the affection they have for one another. The two began their relationship when

they were youngsters and continue to both work and live together.

"We are high school sweethearts," Teresa said with a big smile. "We went to high school in Santa Cruz and we've been together for 34 years and counting."

The two had a couple of food-related establishments in Portland, but an unanticipated health emergency caused them to make a change to their life plan.

Richard said, "I contracted a virus in my heart and it was diagnosed as Viral Cardio Myopathy. My heart was operating at 10 percent efficiency, so I had no choice, I had to stop working. I am now at 30 percent and I still can't work full time. So I work two days a week here and I take a nap when I get home to recharge my heart, but the two days is all I can do at this point."

Although Richard only spends a

couple of days in the kitchen, his time there is divided between overseeing the preparation of the Senior Center meal program and instructing his team of volunteers.

"What I really like is the teaching end of it. It really is the volunteers that make this happen. And while we try to make this close to a restaurant experience, it's not — this is all done with volunteers, some of whom have health issues of their own, that they are dealing with," Richard said.

Teresa recently became a part-time employee at the Senior Center. Her positive attitude and seemingly eternal smile have added a sense of fun to the work in the kitchen.

Both she and Richard think that the work they do is not only enjoyable but also meaningful.

"For some of our seniors, this is the only sit-down meal they will have. And for some of our seniors, this is the only meal they have for that day," Teresa said.

The Boultinghouses encourage all members of the community to join them for lunch on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Senior Center Singing Pines Café, where lunch is \$7.

Florence Senior Center is always looking for volunteers.

For more information about meals or volunteering or to place lunch reservations, call 541-997-8844.



Senior Center volunteers work with Chef Boultinghouse to create meals, serve guests, clean the kitchens and make the commercial kitchen run smoothly and efficiently.



## New memory care facility celebrates grand opening

**F**lorence Area Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors, led by Mike Bones, attended the Grand Opening Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at Northwest Reflections Memory Care facility Jan. 28.

Northwest Reflections is locally owned and operated by Melinda Gitnes, Adult Nurse Practitioner (ANP).

For the last several years, Gitnes has been providing in-home Medicare Health assessments for members in the community. As an ANP, she worked at the Riverstone Clinic and Corvallis Manor and Hillside Heights skilled nursing facilities.

Also, as a registered nurse, Gitnes had the opportunity to work as the health services coordinator at Elder Health and Living in Springfield, Ore., and at the Oregon State Hospital in Salem.

Northwest Reflections is a person-centered residential care facility for men and women with dementia. The brand new five-bedroom, two-bath home is situated on 1.75 acres of both forested and landscaped grounds, including an enclosed back yard with paths, fountain and sitting areas for eating outdoors or just enjoying the scenery.



COURTESY PHOTO

Chamber Ambassadors help Melinda Gitnes cut the ribbon at the grand opening of Northwest Reflections Memory Care.

Residents are able to enjoy living in a safe and

individualized care.

Northwest Reflections offers onsite fulltime health care and ongoing medical treatment to residents. The inside of the home is decorated with comfortable furnishings, artwork chosen to soothe and create an uplifting environment and personal touches, such as memory boxes for the residents that are meaningful and helpful to them.

Gitnes said her personal experience, along with her passion for helping people with dementia, has motivated her to create a warm family environment that

will help foster independence, individual interests, mobility and health through coordinated activities and experiences.

"Family members are encouraged to schedule regular visits with loved ones and to join them for special activities, holiday celebrations and specially designed meals," said Gitnes. "Our mission for the facility is that all residents should have a normal home life experience."

Northwest Reflections Memory Care is located at 5292 Harvard Ave. in Florence.

For more information, call 541-997-5002.