

**History** from 1A

mill, where Phelps worked.

"I worked the six-foot band saw in the mill," Phelps said, a job he did for 20 years.

When the facility closed down, Phelps was able to obtain that piece of metal, which ended up in the museum.

Phelps helped put the display together, writing out his family's story to accompany the pictures.

It not only shows the story of his family, but the story of the Siuslaw — an industry of logging that passed through the generations, bringing us to where we are today.

That, Phelps believes, is the power of the museum.

"One of the main reasons (Siuslaw Pioneer Museum) is important is that it allows children to know the history, not just of their own area, but the history of the pioneers," Phelps said. "They can understand where their roots came from, and what their families, several generation back, went through to establish themselves in a new place. If you can figure out what happened then, then you can figure out where you're going."

To Phelps, it's that direct line from the past that informs the decisions we make in the future.

"You study the history closely, and you'll see mistakes that were made," Phelps explained. "They were honest mistakes. You probably wouldn't do things that way today. I'm a true believer that when we go forward, we look back. We look at the good and the bad of the past so we can figure out the future."

Phelps has used those lessons from history as a guiding path in all the accomplishments he's done in the community.

At 82 years old, he's still working. He's a real estate broker for Berkshire Hathaway, his walls adorned with pictures of the Siuslaw region, both past and present.

He helped raise Florence from a rough and tumble town to the thriving retirement and cultural community it has become today, becoming a city councilor and first citizen along the way.

"I started thinking about slowing down a little bit," Phelps said

of why he's retiring from the museum presidency. "I didn't want to slow down unless the time was right."

The right time occurred when he looked at the current makeup of the board of trustees.

"I've been trying to recruit good members for quite some time," he said. "It's really a strong board now. They're all strong thinkers."

Former Siuslaw Public Library Director Steve Skidmore is taking over for Phelps, who had spent the last 13 years building the museum up from its humble beginnings to the immaculate collection it is today.

Phelps' history with the museum goes back to the early days of the museum, before its current home in Historic Old Town, when it was located in the small Lutheran Church just south of Florence's historic Siuslaw River Bridge.

"They made a museum of it, a very nice museum, but it wasn't large enough," he said. "Over time, people recognized it didn't get the visitorship it should. It wouldn't sustain itself. The tourists, especially, once they



SIUSLAW NEWS FILE PHOTO

passed the bridge, they're heading for the next town south."

So, when the old schoolhouse in Historic Old Town became available, Phelps jumped at the chance to get it.

"I called an emergency board meeting to see how long we could tie up the sale of the school to give us time to raise money to buy it," Phelps said. "The school's owners asked for \$910,000. For a small board like us, that was a big chunk. We were actually \$20,000 in debt. I had that meeting with the owners and managed to come

away with a six-month contract. One silver dollar was the down payment.

"They accepted it because of what we wanted to do with it," he continued. "I said we wanted to preserve it. It's the perfect place for the museum, we just need time to figure out how to do it. And they did."

From there, Phelps worked diligently to raise funds for the new museum. He went to the Western Lane Community Foundation and asked for an unheard of \$250,000 for a down

payment on the school. "They've never given anybody more than \$20,000," Phelps said.

The Foundation ended up giving the museum \$200,000 that would be paid out in \$20,000 increments over 20 years. That would go toward the monthly rent.

He then partnered with Siuslaw Bank, Oregon Pacific Bank and Davidson Industries to come up with the rest of the down payment. That, along with the sale of the original building and the multiple fundraisers he did, helped pay for the building as well as the exhibits and technology that would fill the museum.

That kind of partnership and community determination speaks to what Phelps modestly believes is the ultimate job of a board president; It's not the leadership he provides, but the work that an entire community does to bring a place like the museum together.

"I'm proud we all worked together," he said "It's not just one person who made it what it is today. This doesn't happen by yourself, but through a team that works together."

The proof of this, he says, is shown through the volunteer hours that are put into the museum on a weekly basis.

"We're open more than any other museum on the coast," Phelps said. "We're open seven days a week during the summer, and six days during the off season. The time and care people put into this project is extraordinary."

As to the future of the museum, Phelps hopes it continues to be a gathering place for the community to learn, and remember.

"I want it to keep being a place the town can be proud of, where school children can come in and see how things used to be," he said. "When they smile about it, I'm happy."

Old-Fashioned  
**Harvest Festival**  
*Spruce Point Assisted Living and Memory Care*  
Invites you to celebrate fall and help us with our  
**Siuslaw Lunch Program Fundraiser**

Bake Sale                                      Straw Maze  
Chili Feed                                      "Spooky" Haunted House  
Pumpkin Patch                                      Games and More!  
*presented by C.R.O.W*

Help us make sure that no child in Florence goes hungry!

**Saturday, October 7th**  
**11am - 3pm**

**Spruce Point**  
an assisted living and memory care community  
375 9th Street  
(541)997-6111

**WALLY'S SEPTIC TANK PUMPING**

Has it been 5 years or more since your tank was pumped? Then it's time!

Call us to today to schedule an appointment.

Check Saturday's paper for a coupon good on your next service.

*Lowest Prices Guaranteed—We will match any competitors price !*

**541-997-8885**

**DENTURE SERVICES INC.**

**LOCALLY OWNED AND OPERATED**  
Open 4 days a week!

Here to serve your denture needs:  
**Dentures**  
**Partial Dentures**  
**Immediate Dentures**  
**Implant Dentures**  
**Relines & Repairs Same Day**

**Monday-Thursday**  
**10am - 2 pm**

**524 Laurel St.**  
**541-997-6054**

**William Foster LD**  
**Sherry, Office Manager**

*"As a denture wearer myself, I can answer your questions and address your denture concerns."*  
~ William Foster, LD

Financing: Citi Health Card  
12 Month no Interest

**Living on Shaky Ground:  
Prepare-Survive-Recover**  
A WLEOG Public Outreach Program

Sponsored by West Lane Emergency Operations Group  
Web address: [www.wleog.org](http://www.wleog.org)

**NOW YOU CAN LEARN HOW TO PREPARE FOR EMERGENCIES AND DISASTERS - ON YOUR COMPUTER, PHONE OR TABLET!**

Go to [WLEOG.ORG](http://WLEOG.ORG) and click on PREPAREDNESS CLASSES for a menu of disaster prep subjects. Each has short videos on different topics that you can watch when it is convenient for you and your family.

- \*\*SAFE WATER, SAFE SANITATION
- \*\*EMERGENCY FOOD PLANNING AND PREPARATION
- \*\*PET CARE PLANNING FOR DISASTERS
- \*\*ARE YOU READY?
- \*\*SENIOR CITIZEN PREPAREDNESS
- \*\*DOCUMENTATION AND INSURANCE

In addition to the classes, the [WLEOG.ORG](http://WLEOG.ORG) website has extremely useful information on NATURAL HAZARDS and EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS. Each of these has videos on various topics that explain the hazards the Pacific Northwest faces, and how to prepare for them.

*For more information, visit these websites:*  
AMERICAN RED CROSS — [WWW.REDCROSS.ORG](http://WWW.REDCROSS.ORG)  
CITY OF FLORENCE — [WWW.CI.FLORENCE.OR.US](http://WWW.CI.FLORENCE.OR.US)  
FEMA — [WWW.READY.GOV](http://WWW.READY.GOV)  
LANE COUNTY — [WWW.LANECOUNTY.ORG](http://WWW.LANECOUNTY.ORG)  
SIUSLAW VALLEY FIRE AND RESCUE — [WWW.SVFR.ORG](http://WWW.SVFR.ORG)  
WLEOG — [WWW.WLEOG.ORG](http://WWW.WLEOG.ORG)

# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

## Business Planning

**Y**our business should not be put on the back-burner when instituting an emergency preparedness plan. If you are responsible for employees it is your job to make sure your staff members are equipped with the knowledge and capabilities to protect themselves in the face of a disaster.

Simply knowing what to do won't cut it. Your employees need regular training and reminders of standard operating procedures related to your company's emergency plan.

**WHY TEST YOUR PLAN?**

Putting your plan to the test will help you find out if it is ready to stand up to a high-stress emergency. Don't think of your test in terms of pass or fail, but focus on improving your plan piece by piece for a more effective comprehensive program. There may be simple fixes you are overlooking that can make your plan a bit more stable, which can make all of the difference in a dangerous situation.

**HOW TO TEST YOUR PLAN**

Testing doesn't have to mean full-blown exercises in which you simulate every possible emergency situation. You have a business to run, and putting that much time into executing "mock" disasters probably isn't an effective use of time. Set brief, regular meetings instead. Elicit feedback from your staff to improve your plans, while continually reinforcing their knowledge of procedures, systems and equipment. Keeping an open dialogue on emergency planning also can make sure everyone is on the same page.

**ARE YOU READY?**

Ready Rating is a free American Red Cross service that helps businesses, schools and organizations become prepared for disasters. Members of the program are privy to extensive resources, tools and expert advice that can help them improve their ability to withstand disaster while maintaining operations and keeping their employees and customer safe. Visit [readyrating.org](http://readyrating.org) for information.

Sponsored by

**CENTRAL LINCOLN PUD**  
966 Highway 101, Florence • 541-997-3414  
Mon - Fri 8am to 5pm

**STREETS INSURANCE**  
1234 Rhododendron Dr. Florence 541-997-8574