

Youth Authority seeks coastal foster parents

GUEST VIEWPOINT

By KELLY OKILI
OREGON YOUTH AUTHORITY

Charlene Hall gets so many calls on Mother's Day that she has to turn off her ringer to enjoy the holiday with her family.

No matter how many messages the Junction City resident receives, she returns them all. She only has three biological children, but about 500 young people can call her mom — the youth she took in over the past 33 years as an Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) foster parent.

Hall was their second-chance family; their second chance at having a supportive, safe home, and their second chance at changing their lives.

Many OYA youth could benefit from foster parents like Hall, but there aren't enough homes to send them to.

Lane County has zero OYA foster homes on the coast.

Statewide, OYA only has 36. OYA is the state's juvenile justice agency. It provides safe

environments and opportunities for rehabilitation of youth, ages 12 through 24, whom the courts commit to OYA custody.

While some youth go to juvenile correctional facilities, the majority live in community settings where OYA tries to get them the treatment and support they need to be crime-free, productive members of their communities.

OYA's foster care program doesn't do adoptions. It only serves teens working their way toward returning home and older youth who need help learning independent-living skills.

It often tries to place youth in foster homes near their regular homes so they can be close to family and local support networks. But with no coastal foster homes in Lane County, local youth who are good candidates

for foster care have to live elsewhere in Oregon — or it may not have any available homes at all.

So who can qualify to be an OYA foster parent? Parents must:

- Be at least 21 years old, or 25 if you are working with youth 18 and older.
- A U.S. citizen or permanent resident.
- Able to pass a background check.
- Able to provide basic housing, food, clothing, transportation and other incidentals for youth.

OYA youth have a state medical card to pay for medical, mental health and other treatment costs. Foster families receive a monthly payment to reimburse them for services they provide.

You don't need previous fos-

ter care experience. OYA provides a wide range of training specific to the needs of its youth.

OYA foster parents also have a strong support network. OYA calls and visits regularly, and it provides continual support via phone or email.

Youth in the OYA foster care program reap countless benefits from supportive homes, but its foster parents also see rewards.

Just ask Hall.

When those youth call her year after year, they often share news of jobs, college, spouses and children.

She gave them a second chance. — And it made all the difference.

And so can you.

Kelly Okili is Oregon Youth Authority's Lane County foster care certifier. To learn more about OYA foster parenting, contact Kelly at Kelly.Okili@oya.state.or.us or 971-803-8154, or visitbit.ly/oyafoster-care.

Join us for our Holiday Open House Saturday, December 2nd 9:30am-5:30pm

Treats and Treasures
Grab a deal with \$5 or \$10 grab bags
Stocking stuffers and gifts for all ages
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We are so much more than a kitchen store!
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Kitchen Klutter Bath by the Bay/Baby corner & gifts

1258 Bay St. Old Town Florence
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FREE MEMORY SCREENING

Wednesday, November 29th at 6pm

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Spruce Point

ASSISTED LIVING & MEMORY CARE

Hatfield Visitor Center to close for maintenance

NEWPORT — The Visitor Center at Oregon State University's Hatfield Marine Science Center, which annually draws some 150,000 visitors, will close on Dec. 5 for maintenance and renovation.

The Visitor Center's front exhibits and auditorium are tentatively scheduled to reopen on Feb. 1, though there will be no public access to the

back exhibits.

The rest of the Visitor Center is scheduled to reopen on March 25.

"A couple of the larger tanks in the back exhibits need to be re-secured to the foundation, and we'll take the opportunity to do some additional plumbing and renovation," said Bob Cowen, director of the Hatfield Marine Science

Center.

Some of the Visitor Center's exhibits include a large octopus tank, tanks with near- and offshore sea life, touch pools, coral tanks, displays featuring marine studies and current research, three wave tanks, an augmented sand table and a variety of other hands-on educational exhibits.

HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE AT FRED MEYER ON SATURDAY

The Florence Christian Church, in partnership with Fred Meyer, will be holding a holiday food drive on Saturday, Dec. 2, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

All food and cash donations will benefit Florence Food Share.

Most needed items for the local food pantry are: Flour, coffee, baby and adult diapers,

Hamburger Helper, mac and cheese, canned meat (tuna, chili, Spam, etc.), canned tomato products (diced, stewed, etc), milk and eggs.

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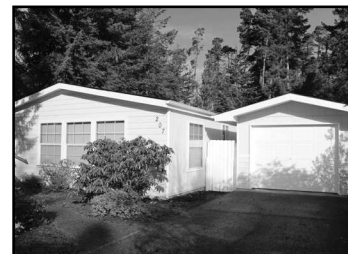
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NEW LISTING
Fleetwood on Cul-de-Sac. Double glass doors in permitted sunroom with wall of windows. Skylight & ceiling fan. Private backyard.
3 Bdrm, 2 Ba 2153 sq ft
\$289,000 BH7606 ML#17212815



NEW LISTING
Bright open & spacious floor plan. 1/2 block from the entrance & clubhouse. Ramp to front porch. Small fenced yard for pets. Oversized finished single garage.
\$185,000 BH7602 ML#17063339



NEW LISTING
South lakes area .67 acre, foundation in. Build when ready. RV garage 31' bay, two 12' doors, permitted residence, double carport too!
2 Bdrm, 1 1/2 Ba 1300 sq ft
\$239,000 BH7603 ML#17024222



NEW LISTING
Panoramic views of Florence & the Siuslaw Bridge, distant Ocean views & amazing sunsets. Elevator to make this home accessible on every level
3 Bdrm, 3 full, 3 partial Ba 4041 sq ft
\$439,900 BH7592 ML#17343764



PRICE REDUCED
Florence Estates Goldenwest with private backyard. Vaulted open living area with built-in bookshelves & custom draperies
2 Bdrm + den, 2 Ba 1512 sq ft
\$204,900 BH7593 ML#17192860



NEW LISTING
Craftsman custom home with attention to detail for the discriminating buyer in upscale Fawn Ridge. 2 covered decks, propane firepit, double garage.
3 Bdrm, 2 1/2 Ba 2023 sq ft
\$432,000 BH7607 ML#17443224



NEW LISTING
Looking for that "Great home"...you will find this one special with beautiful views, electric fireplace & slider off dining area to patio. Located at The Cottages at Ocean Dunes
3 Bdrm, 2 Ba 1534 sq ft
\$319,000 BH7611 ML#17168292



PRICE REDUCED
MUST SEE this completely high-end remodeled (2016) beauty on a corner lot. 60' RV carport plus 2 car garage. In addition 430 sqft solarium w/infrared sauna & office
2 Bdrm + solarium, 2 Ba 1809 sqft
\$228,500 BH7546 ML#17493827



NEW LISTING
Super Good Cents home in Summerset Estates. Open kitchen/familyroom area slider out to private backyard
3 Bdrm, 3 Ba 1444 sq ft
\$275,500 BH7581 ML#17384212