



SAILORS BATTLE BRAVES

SPORTS — B

U.S. Coast Guard Station Siuslaw River Celebrates 100 Years

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Siuslaw News

127TH YEAR | ISSUE NO. 101

SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON

Sustaining the spirit of the season

Soroptimist food and toy distribution Saturday serves hundreds



PHOTOS BY JARED ANDERSON/SIUSLAW NEWS



The 2017 community Christmas Basket Distribution was in full force on Saturday as Soroptimist International of Florence, with help from numerous local organizations and volunteers, helped bring food and toys to hundreds of families throughout the Siuslaw region. The food portion of the event, held at Siuslaw Middle School and coordinated by Soroptimist member Carol Bennett, gave food boxes to approximately 380 families. The boxes, valued at \$50, included a host of items including a whole turkey or chicken, stuffing, fresh potatoes, dinner rolls and various holiday staples and snacks. All of the food was newly purchased, with \$20,000 donated from multiple organizations and individuals in the community. "I want to thank the volunteers that came to help distribute the food, and the suppliers that gave us great prices on the food," Bennett said. Both St. Vincent de Paul and Heceta Self Storage provided trucks to bring in the food and boxes. On the toy end of the event, 201 families were served, giving holiday toys to 526 children in the community. "The day went terrifically," said Michelle Fraley, Soroptimist member and co-chair for the toy program. She shares the responsibility with Shasta McMullen. Hundreds of toys filled the Florence Church of the Nazarene, such as games, puzzles, action figures and dolls. "We could not do this without the generous support of the community and the local businesses and all the volunteers," Fraley said.



IMPLEMENTING THE VISION

Siuslaw Vision Keepers detail current initiatives to support region's people

BY CHANTELE MEYER
Siuslaw News

Two weeks ago, Siuslaw Vision 2025 held a public meeting at the Siuslaw Public Library to update community members on current projects and progress of the Vision Keepers.

Library Director and Vision Co-Chair Meg Spencer opened the Dec. 7 meeting with news that the Vision received a \$280,000 grant from The Ford Family Foundation for the next three years.

"We've started and done this work, and now we've got money to help us in that work to continue to implement the Vision," Spencer said.

The grant will fund a full-time coordinator position, currently filled part-time by Susy Lacer, to organize and work with a multitude of community initiatives under the Vision's umbrella.

Besides the coordinator position, the Vision will also now have funds for two other contracted positions, in information technology and administration.

"This funding helps meet one of the Vision's biggest goals: creating living wage work opportunities in the Siuslaw region," Lacer said.

The Vision works in six categories: Working People — jobs; Happy People — health; Educated People — learning; Connected People — services; Creative People

— arts; and Active People — recreation. It brings together input from a variety of community meetings and surveys conducted in 2015. All this works together to make up the 2025 Vision.

"One of the things we've been trying to do all along is make sure we keep getting new people involved, keep moving forward and keep making sure that nobody gets burned out," Spencer said.

The way the Vision does this is by inviting community members,

called Vision Keepers, to work on projects they are interested in starting or supporting.

Mary Shaw joined the Vision to share her knowledge in local and sustainable foods.

"The mission of the Vision Keepers was to provide services and experiences for the entire

Siuslaw region," she said. "That felt so much bigger to me than just Florence."

Shaw gave a cooking demonstration during the meeting and talked about ways the Vision can bring cooking classes to food shares and school groups. The Local Foods Initiative is also working to network Siuslaw farmers in and outside the region and bring a farmer's market to Bay Street by spring 2018.

Lacer said, "The vision is here

to support all of these different efforts, all of these government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and people like Mary who have an idea. The vision is here to support, to have connections and to help you achieve all the really cool projects you're working on in this area."

Other groups gave updates on programs in the works, including Siuslaw Broadband/Hyak and its plans to "light up" Florence's new fiber network by mid-January; City of Florence, Florence Urban Renewal Agency, Oregon Department of Transportation and Lane County's ReVision Florence Streetscaping Project on Highways 101 and 126; Siuslaw Youth Soccer Association and its efforts to bring club soccer to nearly 200 youth in Florence, Mapleton and Reedsport; and community health projects, career technical training and even a plan to bring state-funded preschool to Mapleton.

See **VISION 9A**

WEATHER WARNING

Emergency shelter plans to open tonight

Cold Weather Shelter could be open through Christmas, depending on weather

BY JARED ANDERSON
Siuslaw News

The Florence Emergency Cold Weather Shelter will be opening Wednesday evening, Dec. 20, with the possibility of additional nights being added throughout the week, including Christmas day.

"Right now, we're just making the commitment for Wednesday night," said Pastor Greg Wood, president of the program. "My guess is we'll probably be open through Christmas day."

Because the shelter is only opened when the temperature reaches 32 degrees or less, predicting a full schedule can be difficult.

The forecast has fluctuated from day to day recently. On Monday, Christmas Day was predicted to be less than 32 degrees, but at the time of this writing the prediction jumped to 37 degrees.

However, the shelter could open at a warmer temperature if rain is predicted, as it is more difficult for clients of the program to dry off in colder temperatures.

See **SHELTER 7A**



COURTESY IMAGE

The flag for the cold weather shelter will be displayed today, and can be seen throughout Florence whenever the shelter is open.

SVFR firefighters demobilize, return home from California fires

The Oregon State Fire Marshal's office has reported that all 15 Oregon strike teams, including firefighters from Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue (SVFR), are demobilizing and will soon be returning to their home stations.

"We are extremely pleased with the performance of our strike teams," said State Fire Marshal Jim Walker. "Our teams have played an important role helping our neighbors to the south and all of Oregon can be proud of the professionalism and effectiveness of our resources while dealing with these difficult fires."

SVFR sent a crew of seven — three full-time firefighters and four volunteer firefighters — to

See **FIREFIGHTERS 7A**

NOTICE

EARLY DEADLINES FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Siuslaw News is joining other area businesses by being closed Christmas Day, Monday, Dec. 25, and New Year's Day, Monday, Jan. 1.

Advertisements, news items and display advertising, as well as line classifieds and legal notices, should all be submitted by 10 a.m. Friday the week before each holiday to accommodate deadlines.

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THIS WEEK'S WEATHER Full Forecast, A3	TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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