

Elk's collect, distribute gifts for veterans

Florence Elks Lodge #1858 continued its tradition of giving and supporting Florence Veterans with the delivery of Christmas gifts to senior residences in the community. Funded by a Freedom Grant from the Elks National Foundation, Lodge members Bruce Smith and Ron Tate met with Spruce Point, Hubbard Retreat, Northwest Reflections, Elderberry Square, Shorewood, and Regency to identify the number of veterans in residence and what needs the Elks could help meet during the Holiday Season.

With over 55 veterans identified, the number one item on their wish lists was warm sweats to keep them comfortable during the upcoming winter.

Working with Bi-Mart, the Freedom Grant Committee put together gift packages that included a pair of sweat pants and two shirts for the recipients.

Committee members along with Bruce and Ron included Joyce Middleton, Karen Smales and Donna Cherryholmes. The team estimates nearly 60 volunteer hours went into the effort.

"The support from Bi-Mart really helped," said Bruce,



COURTESY PHOTO

Gifts for local veterans were recently collected and distributed by Elk's Lodge members with the support of Bi-Mart and a grant from the Elk's National Foundation.

Chair of the project and Leading Knight of the Lodge. "Bi-Mart made it possible for us to stretch our grant dollars and put together great gift packages for a lot of very deserving veterans. It's great to see how the Florence community comes together to help those less fortunate, especially our veterans."

In addition to the providing the majority of recipients with the requested sweats, there were a few very specific requests that the Lodge was also able to meet — cardigan sweaters for one veteran and a special ball cap for another.

After all the shopping and assembling of the packages, the Freedom Grant Project

team returned to each of the facilities and delivered the gifts giving the recipients an early Christmas surprise!

The Freedom Grant Project was one of four Elks National Foundation Grants received by the Florence Lodge over the last twelve months.

Grant funds have totaled approximately \$10,000 and have funded the Living Voices Project in the Siuslaw Middle and Elementary Schools, supporting Habitat for Humanity families as they move into their new homes, honoring Central Coast Veterans at a luncheon and concert, and then ending the year with the Christmas packages for veterans.

CROW looking for masquerade mask artists

The Children's Repertory of Oregon Workshops (CROW) will host a fundraiser on Saturday, Feb. 17, and is seeking help from the Florence arts community to decorate one-of-a-kind masquerade masks.

This do-not-miss event is entitled "Black and White Ball," and will include live music from the "Pop Rocks" of Eugene, a silent auction, wine pull and much more.

The masquerade mask base will be provided, and artists may use any materials to cre-

ate their design, with one caveat: They may only use Black and White with silver/gold accents.

Artists will donate time, materials and masks that will then be sold at the event. All masks are due Jan. 30.

CROW hopes to raise funds to provide scholarships and educational materials for 2018's youth summer theatre camps, as well as production and technical theatre supplies for its upcoming show, "Disney's Tarzan," to be held

at the Florence Events Center April 13 to 15.

"Thank you to our wonderful local artists for supporting CROW kids," CROW Artistic Director Melanie Heard said. "The arts really do matter."

For a mask base, email Heard at crowtheatrekids@yahoo.com.

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