

## Student geography bee finalists named

Finalists in the National Geographic Society's Geography Bee at Siuslaw Elementary School and Siuslaw Middle School have been announced.

Elementary school finalists are: Dylan Jensen, Joel Sissel, Ronald Johnston, Kaden Wood, Malacai Lade, Maya Wells, Jack Clinton, Rhianna Lane and Daniel Gorbett.

Middle school finalists are: Andrew Jensen-Norman, Samuel Castle, Jasmine Vazquez, Harrison Hubner, Camp Lacouture, Izayah Degitz, Chad Hughes, Owen Harklerode and Jeffrey Edman.

All of these students scored highly in the preliminary qualifying round: 25 moderately hard multiple-choice questions offered to all fourth- through eighth-grade students.

The top scoring students from the elementary and middle schools were declared finalists.

The finals and championship rounds will be held Thursday, Jan. 18.

The elementary finals will be in the afternoon starting at 1 p.m. in the elementary school library, while the middle school finals will start at 9 a.m. at the middle school library.

This event is not open to the general public. However, parents, siblings, guardians and relatives are encouraged to attend. Sign in at the main office in the building of the event. The winners and runners-up will be announced immediately at the end of each bee.

## FLORENCE LANDMARKS MAKE BEST OF STATE LIST

In a state that measures nearly 100,000 square miles, two of the top-20 landmarks to visit are within about 10 miles of each other in Florence. Oregonian/Oregon Live.com recently published its list of the 20 most iconic landmarks in Oregon.

Author Jamie Hale defined "landmark" as any natural or manmade feature that helps define a place in Oregon, explaining that. "If it's worthy of a postcard, it's a landmark."

Hale ranked Sea Lion Caves at number 16 writing, "It's been built up and turned into a tourist attraction for the last 75 years, but there's no denying the grandeur of the Sea Lion Caves."

The towering sea cave just north of Florence is home to a Stellar sea lion rookery, which generally stays inside the cave in the fall and winter, heading out to the rocky shores come spring and summer.

At number nine on his list are the Oregon Dunes. Hale writes, "Popular among OHV

enthusiasts and hikers alike —and the inspiration for Frank Herbert's classic sci-fi novel "Dune" — the Oregon Dunes are a massive, unmistakable landmark on the coast, running from Florence down to Coos Bay."

The dunes outranked the iconic Vista House in the Columbia Gorge, Portland's Washington Park with its zoo and gardens, and Southern Oregon's Oregon Caves National Monument. Topping the list is Mt. Hood.

Earlier this year, Florence made Flights.com's list of the "Eight Coolest Cities You Must Experience for Yourself" primarily for sandboarding, but also touted Sea Lion Caves and the dunes as top reasons to visit.

In addition, Florence has recently been named the second-best small town in the northwest by USA Today, America's most beautiful town by Expedia.com, and as the best coastal getaway by readers of The Oregonian/OregonLive.com.

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## Presbyterian Church to hold Longest Night service on Thursday


On the Winter Solstice tomorrow, Dec. 21, the Presbyterian Church of the Siuslaw will hold a Longest Night service at 7 p.m. in the church sanctuary. In the long, dark winter nights, memories of past experiences and the pain of present circumstances can become overwhelming.

For some, the Christmas season is a difficult time. Some may be grieving the loss of a loved one, struggling with illness or dealing with other losses. This will be a service of wholeness and healing. Those looking for comfort, hope,

wholeness and renewal are welcomed and invited, as well as anyone wishing to share in an intimate, contemplative service using scriptures, readings, meditations, hymns and Taizé music.

There will be a small worship center surrounded by chairs, with pillows for people to sit on the floor if they wish. There will be candles to be lit for prayers.

The Rev. Greg Wood will lead the service. The church is located at 3996 Highway 101. Call 541-997-7136 for more information.



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### Classes, Workshops & Events

**Winter Artisan Fair**  
Held at the FEC, Friday, January 12th 1-7 pm & Saturday, January 13th 11 am - 5 pm  
Join us, watch artisans at work and support and visit with your local artist friends.

**Next Art Change-Out Day**  
Monday, January 9th, 9-11 am  
Please pick up your artwork and bring something new to help keep the art at FRAA fresh to our visitors.

**Open Studio @ FRAA, Thursdays**  
No registration required. Drop-in, bring your materials, and create. All artistic mediums welcome.  
Every Thursday, 1-4 pm

**Whimsical Hand Building Ceramics w/ Alissa Clark**  
Wednesdays, 3-5 pm & Thursdays, 6-8 pm  
**Open Lab Ceramics on Saturdays**  
Drop in, work at own pace. Sat 12-5 pm  
All ceramics classes held at Alissa's Studio. 180 Laurel Street. Call Alissa with questions: 503-857-5222

**Writers on the River - Creative Writing Workshop with Catherine Rourke**  
**2018 Annual Writers Boot Camp**  
Jump start your writing for the new year! Sat., January 20, 2018 10 am - 12 noon  
All writing levels and genres, \$20/ members, \$25/non-members. Contact: [CJReditor@gmail.com](mailto:CJReditor@gmail.com), 541-708-2120

**Big Wave Poetry 1st Tuesday Open Mic**  
January 2nd at 6:30 pm. Admission is free and refreshments will be available.

**Painting with John Leasure**  
Saturdays 9 am - 12 pm  
Dec 23 & 30, January 6, 12, 20 & 27  
Contact: [jleasure@hotmail.com](mailto:jleasure@hotmail.com) or 541-991-2754 for details and fees.

**Oil Painting with Michael Wood**  
Wednesdays 1:30 pm - 4:30 pm  
Contact: [fmwood@msn.com](mailto:fmwood@msn.com) for fees and more information.

**FRAA Holiday Closures**  
We will be closed on Christmas, New Year's Eve, and New Year's Day. We will shorten our open hours on Christmas Eve.

For more information about classes, visit [fraaoregon.org](http://fraaoregon.org). To register for these classes, please call or visit FRAA at our art center on Maple Street.

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