

Florence Area
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Siuslaw Awards
2017

Business nominations

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Winter Music Festival
brings on the bluegrass
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Siuslaw News

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SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON

16th annual Winter Music Festival



PHOTOS BY MARK BRENNAN/SIUSLAW NEWS

Florence's annual Winter Music Festival at the Florence Events Center this weekend brought hundreds of people to the area, as well as a sold out show to the headliner concert for Al Stewart. Music sets included Jeff Scroggins and Colorado (above left), Laurie Lewis and the Right Hands, Castletown, Calaveras, Cabin Fever NW, Pretty Gritty, Petunia and the Vipers, John Craigie, a gospel choir, Billy Jones and University of Oregon a cappella group On the Rocks. In addition, Florence Regional Arts Alliance held its annual Artisan Fair, featuring local and regional artists and vendors, as well as books and craft demonstrations from Siuslaw Elementary School students.

Florence sets new goals for 2018

Florence City Council launches into work plan to address housing, development

When Florence City Council met for the first meeting of 2018 on Jan. 8, councilors voted to continue Florence's momentum into the new year with decisions on code changes and economic development.

BY CHANTELLE MEYER
Siuslaw News

City Manager Erin Reynolds said, "We are working in real time on a construction project."

The council received updated information on asbestos abatement for the Florence City Hall Remodel project.

"As we move forward on that construction, this is our first step to make that facility safe for contractors to be in," said Florence Project Manager Megan Messmer. "When City Hall was built, they used this material primarily in the tile floor and adhesive for the paneling, as well as some pieces of the dry wall areas. This will be removed during the abatement."

As the meeting began, the city was still in the process of receiving final, refined quotes from three potential contractors.

"The apparent low bidder is W.L. Thomas Environmental, out of Albany, for \$32,700. That is above the city manager's spending authority, so we will need city council approval for that," Messmer said. "It is within the \$57,000 estimate we received from the architect, which was included in the proposed project budget you reviewed last time (Dec. 18, 2017)."

According to the staff report, asbestos abatement and related permits were accounted for in the city's overall budget for the remodel.

Florence Mayor Joe Henry said, "This is a great way to start the new year. We had a little bit of angst when we approved the bids on the City Hall Remodel, since they were higher. Our staff assured us they would work to reduce that amount, and as a good start they have reduced that total by \$25,000 already."

The council voted to award the bid to W.L. Thomas Environmental.

Messmer said construction on City Hall should begin toward the end of the month.

Florence City Council also voted to initiate code amendments in order to address concerns for placement of accessory dwelling units, needed housing, and nonresidential church housing to be put into effect prior to Senate Bill (SB) 1051 going into effect on July 1.

See CITY 6A

Siuslaw School Board ponders options for upgrades

Directors hear program updates and new initiatives during School Board Appreciation

BY MARK BRENNAN
Siuslaw News

January is School Board Appreciation Month. At the Jan. 10 meeting of the Siuslaw School Board, Superintendent Andy Grzeskowiak read a proclamation issued by Oregon Gov. Kate Brown recognizing the contributions of school board members across the state.

"Locally elected boards fulfill leadership roles and serve as a conduit through which teachers, parents, businesses and communi-

ties demonstrate the care, creativity and support that lead to student achievement," the proclamation stated. "Public schools nurture and train diverse student populations to the best of their ability, whatever the resources, to give the students the knowledge, skills and opportunities they need to succeed."

The governor thanked the men and women who serve on 197 school districts, 19 education service districts and 17 community colleges across the state, which all "deserve recognition and

thanks for their dedication to the education needs of the people of Oregon."

Florence Community PTA and district students then presented each board member with a small gift bag and cards.

The board also heard public comments, which were limited to one individual suggesting that district buses might be utilized to transport students attending classes at LCC, in order to offer an alternate means of getting to and from classes.

Directors thanked the speaker.

Next, Lane Education Service District (ESD) Superintendent Tony Scurto made a brief presentation to the board to update the directors on the changing status of the Oregon Promise Program.

The Promise plan is an ongoing venture between districts in the county that looks at how best to find other means to certify teachers for college courses to meet Lane Community College requirements for instructors.

See BOARD 6A

KEEPING ABOVE THE WATER — IS COASTAL LIVING IN JEOPARDY? PART IX — Life in the Siuslaw seeks to find 'its own heartbeat' amidst economic challenges

BY CHANTELLE MEYER
& JARED ANDERSON
Siuslaw News

For Nyra Campbell, life on the Siuslaw has not always been easy. She initially came here to escape expectations placed on her as a high school senior, choosing a relationship and mushroom picking over the option of a four-year college. In her time in Florence, Campbell has found new love, had three children, worked a variety of jobs, owned a business and found ways to "keep above water."

"I'm not a worrier," she said. "I don't worry about things, I guess. I'm more into super positive thinking, which I think has gotten me where I am in this town. With my background, I feel like I am not some major success. But we're above water. And our kids are happy."

Campbell and her husband, Derrick

Vanduch, own West Lane Plumbing, and Campbell also works as a server at Waterfront Depot in Historic Old Town Florence.

"My past experience in life has been that things always work out," she said.

Campbell grew up in Beaverton, a city that she says has a lot of options for youth. After her dad died when she was 16, she finished high school and moved to Florence two weeks after her graduation party.

"I just was over the whole, 'Where are you going to college?' question. I was tired of it. I thought I was going to go to Florence and pick mushrooms, because the person I met picked mushrooms and made lots of money. I thought, 'This will be fun for a year,'" she said.

Twenty years later, she is still here.

In many ways, it has been a struggle. From being a single mom to working 14-hour days as a server,

Campbell has paid her dues. She had to make new friends as a young person in a new town. She had to learn new skills. She had to find time to flirt with Vanduch, when they both worked long hours and her daughter was still a baby. It took two years before the two actually formed a relationship.

"Derrick worked at the auto parts store, and I needed brake fluid for my jalopy of a car. He was flirtatious and talkative. That was that. He was sincere and sweet," she said. "I needed brake fluid all the time because my car was a total piece, so I would go in there. I had devised a plan early on to get the smallest amount of brake fluid I could so I could see him."

Campbell couldn't visit the "cute parts guy" every day, but it seemed like she stopped in once a week.

"I got lucky I guess. My husband is 11 years older than me, had never been married before, and didn't have kids.

So how that worked out is beyond my brain," she laughed. "Most people our age have kids. They've been married. Or they've been through something. I feel like I brought more baggage into our relationship than he did by far. I was young and had a baby."

Once the two got together, they began facing new challenges. They had a son, and then Vanduch switched from the auto parts business to plumbing.

"I would say, at that point, it was a seven-year struggle with on and off jobs with him in the plumbing industry," Campbell said.

She described the apprenticeship process as needing both work hours and schooling. While plumbing can

be a consistent business, Vanduch couldn't get an answer to his applications at existing businesses in the area. At one point, he couldn't continue with classes until he got more work hours.

"They basically said, 'You're two years ahead of school with no work hours to show for it. So we're putting your apprenticeship on hold,'" Campbell said.

See REGION 7A



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	Community	A3	Records	A2
	Kid Scoop	B5	Sports	B
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THIS WEEK'S WEATHER
Full Forecast, A3

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