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FLORENCE, OREGON



'Super blue blood moon' rising

PHOTOS BY NANCY PRUITT

Florence photographer and Siuslaw Viewfinders member Nancy Pruitt went out in the "darn cold" early Wednesday from 3:30 to 5 a.m. to capture images of the "Super Blue Blood Moon," a rare astronomical event that hasn't taken place in 152 years. Oregon's next event is expected on Jan. 31, 2037.

By JARED ANDERSON
Siuslaw News

The Siuslaw region was dazzled early Wednesday morning by a "super blue blood moon" an astronomical event that hasn't been viewed in North America since 1866.

The spectacle was a convergence of three phenomena, only two of which have an effect on the look of the moon.

The "super" part occurs when a full moon's orbit is closest to the Earth. Supermoons are big and bright — they can appear 14 percent larger and 30 percent brighter than usual. January had the rare instance of two supermoons in one month, the first occurring on Jan. 2. The next super full

moon will occur on Jan. 21, 2019.

The "blue" happens when two full moons occur in the same month. A full moon, where the Earth and the sun are perfectly aligned, and the moon is 100 percent visible, happens 12 times per calendar year, or three per season. But, due to a quirk of the Gregorian calendar, about every two years an extra full moon happens in a single month.

The term has nothing to do with its color — "blue" is an old English term meaning "betrayed." The phrase "once in a blue moon" dates back to medieval England, but modern audiences also recall it as the 1934 song "Blue Moon," written by Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart and made popular by a number of artists from Billie Holiday to Frank Sinatra.

While rare, 2018 is a special year

where Wednesday's blue moon won't be standing alone. Another "blue" will occur on March 31.

The "blood" reference comes from a total lunar eclipse that is occurring. In this case, the moon passes through the Earth's umbra, blocking all direct sunlight from illuminating the moon.

See **MOON 7A**

House fire highlights fireplace safety

Siuslaw Valley describes the ins and outs of fireplace fires

By JARED ANDERSON
Siuslaw News

Siuslaw Fire and Rescue (SVFR) responded quickly to a chimney fire on Tuesday, which had spread into an attic fire.

"The fire crew on scene made a very quick stop and held the fire so it didn't do too much more damage than the fire had already done," SVFR Division Chief of Operations Jim Dickerson said. "We had a great response from our volunteer staffing and a quick knock down that probably saved the house."

The exact causes of the blaze have not been released — but the risk for chimney and flue fires is common this time of year, according to SVFR Fire Prevention Officer Tony Miller.

"When a fire does occur in the flue itself or the fireplace, it will start backing up and causing smoke to come down inside," Miller said. "The flames can actually roll out of the fireplace. It will start burning fire out the top of the flue on the roof, as well. So, you'll see some warning signs when it happens."

Miller said chimney flues are designed to draw air and heat up.

"So if that flue catches on fire, then it's not drawing the air like it should be," he said. "It impedes that air flow, and then the flames will start rolling out and the smoke won't go up the flue like it's supposed to."

See **FIREPLACE 8A**



PHOTOS BY CHANTELE MEYER/SIUSLAW NEWS

Community members join current Florence city staff for the beginning of the City Hall Remodel and Expansion Project on Feb. 1



Four members of Florence City Council dig into the ground in front of City Hall, 250 Highway 101.

BREAKING GROUND ON FLORENCE CITY HALL

Current and former city representatives 'move some dirt' Thursday

By CHANTELE MEYER
Siuslaw News

Construction on Florence City Hall officially began Feb. 1 as current and former city staff, counselors, mayors and city managers ceremonially broke ground. Representatives from the contractor, Par-Tech Construction, and architect, HGE Inc., were also present.

In addition, new City Councilor Woody Woodbury also attended. He is set to take his oath of office next Monday, Feb. 5, at the

Florence City Councilor meeting at the Florence Events Center at 5:30 p.m.

"We're really excited to kick off our City Hall Remodel and Expansion Project," City Manager Erin Reynolds said. "We're joined today by people we look up to and look back to for guidance and mentorship in our roles at the city, as well as current city staff and our Florence City Council."

Community members who had a big impact on the city during their times of service were invited to attend the groundbreaking. These included former mayor

Roger McCorkle, who also served as interim city manager; former city manager Craig McMicken; former city councilor and Port of Siuslaw commissioner Lynnette Wikstrom; former city councilor Dave Braley and former city manager Rodger Bennett.

Current Mayor Joe Henry said, "Many of you have been here a lot longer than I have, and you know that this building was built some 60 years ago. It has served us well as our library and as our City Hall."

See **CITY HALL 8A**

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY APPOINTS NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Interim Director Janell Morgan steps into lead position of nonprofit

By DAMIEN SHERWOOD
Siuslaw News Intern

Florence Habitat for Humanity has appointed its new executive director, Janell Morgan, to lead the local chapter following six months of interim management.

An Oregon native, Morgan moved to California after high school, working in the banking and mortgage industry for over two decades. A lasting affection for her northwestern coastal roots drew her to Florence last year and, after buying a house, she moved to the area to live "full time."

Her appointment to the nonprofit organization comes with a fresh perspective on Habitat for Humanity's role in the community. "I want to focus on youth involvement," said Morgan.

Citing an abundance of skill sets to be honed or taught at the nonprofit, Morgan sees part of the organization's role as a conduit for young adults' career development.

"Construction, landscaping, home repairs, retail, helping to perform repairs in our ReStore, general office skills, fundraising, grant writing, data entry ..." she listed as areas open for volunteers. "And graphic design. I could use someone to help create flyers."

Florence's Habitat for Humanity chapter was founded in 1991 with a mission to provide affordable housing to those in need, as well as offer citizens opportunity for involvement in their community

See **HABITAT 7A**