



Saturday, March 10
Florence Events Center
Begins at 5
Dinner at 6:30
Live Auction at 7:30

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Let the Games Begin

Rotary celebrates a world filled with possibility, raising funds for scholarships for Florence area youth and other community projects.

Fire from 1A

“There were seven pieces of equipment from SVFR on site, along with two from Gardiner and one from Reedsport,” said Chief Director Jim Langborg, who explained that firefighters from Mapleton and the Lane Fire Authority assisted with back-up at the scene.

“Due to safety concerns related to the large HVAC unit on the roof and concern for safeguarding the surrounding structures that might have been at risk, we decided a strategy of containment was best,” Langborg said. “We set up a perimeter and made sure the blaze was brought under control.”

As of Friday afternoon, the specifics regarding the cause of the blaze of the blaze are still

undetermined, with the state fire marshal on scene as part of the active and ongoing investigation into this fire.

“We have not released the property to the owner at this time and we are probably going to remain on scene and keep the site under control for the next couple of days to monitor while the incident is being investigated,” Langborg said Friday morning.

The structure was gutted by the fire, while parts of the exterior walls remain standing. Langborg warns passers-by that the scene is unsafe at this time and no one should be approaching the site.

“We will have the location cordoned off and ask everyone to stay away from the area due to the potential danger still posed by the fire - and the fact



The March 1 blaze at the former La Bu La Restaurant left only a shell of the building which has housed multiple businesses over time.

that the scene is still under investigation,” said Langborg.

He also mentioned the State Fire Marshal has requested the assistance of the Oregon State Police’s fire investigation team

in the effort to determine the cause of the blaze.

Any person with information related to the fire is asked to contact SVFR at 541-997-3212.

Ada Grange from 1A

“I think back to 1918, there wasn’t a bridge into Florence,” Pugh said. “There wasn’t a good road to the ferry, so it was a way for families to get together and socialize and discuss issues of the day. Most of it was farming and dairy.”

Discussing issues of the day eventually led to improvements to Ada, including getting power, phone and rural mail delivery to

the area.

“The national Grange pushed a lot for that kind of stuff, and they’re still fighting,” Pugh said. “They’re fighting now to get broadband in the rural areas and pushing legislation for that.”

Members of local Granges discuss issues within the community that need to be addressed and draft resolutions to be sent to the state Grange, which then lobbies for changes to state and national governmental agencies.

But Ada Grange was also a community hub, allowing for multiple activities like theater productions and fundraising. A memoir of Ada Grange by Ethel (Edie) Rieken described what it was like in the early days of Ada Grange.

“Various fundraising events that lured people from miles around took place at the Grange Hall,” she wrote. “For a time, the women gathered for quilting bees to make quilts that were raffled off at the various events.”

One of the most enjoyable times for Rieken were the dances.

“I learned to dance the waltz, polka, schottische, Paul Jones and even square dances,” Rieken wrote. “At midnight everyone stopped for cake, pie and coffee, then dancing resumed. In earlier years, those dances sometimes continued until 4 o’clock in the morning. My brothers came home and dragged themselves to the barn in a sleepless daze to milk the cows.”

One of the most well-attended events were the pie socials, where women brought pies to be auctioned off.

“The man who paid the most for a pie ate it with the lady who baked it,” Rieken wrote. “For young single girls, that sometimes meant disappointment and not getting to eat with the person she’d hoped would buy her pie.”

Times have changed since the early days. The majority of Ada Grange members are not farmers, nor do they live out in the Ada area, according to Pugh. But the Grange has found relevance in the Siuslaw region as a whole.

“We’re focusing not only connecting with our own members and other Granges in our area and throughout the state, but connecting with our communities,” she said. “That’s what the Grange wants to do. Connect with the communities and find out what the needs are, or projects that they can be involved in. Community service is a big part of our organization.”

One of Ada Grange’s largest projects is collecting and donating supplies to Siuslaw Outreach Services (SOS), including food and non-food items.

“Right now, we’re focusing on laundry soap,” Pugh said. “Stuff that people are in need of that they can’t buy with food stamps, like soap and toothpaste. We do a quarterly collection and donate to SOS. Plus, we get a lot of stuff donated to the Grange. Most of that we re-donate to SOS or other places.”

Before SOS, Ada Grange helped sponsor a foster family when the father of the family became ill. The mother, who had to quit her job to take care of her husband, needed financial support to help raise the children and take care of expenses.

“We supported them for two years until the dad passed away,” Pugh said. “The mom got back on her feet and the kids were doing really good.”

Family is a driving force for the Grange.

“I think families are losing their connection with all the technology and people being so busy,” Pugh said. “The Grange is a place where you can take your whole family and be involved.”

One way that the Grange supports families in the organization is by letting individuals join young. While the Junior Grange program at Ada ended in the 1980s (it still goes on nationally), children are regularly encouraged to join the local organization. In fact, full membership begins at 14 years old.

“You can join at that age and you can hold an office,” Pugh said. “You can even be president. You have the same rights as a 60-

year-old.”

Having younger members take part in the Grange has multiple advantages. First and foremost, it allows children to learn about civic engagement, government, independence and leadership, Pugh said. But it also allows younger generations to feel more involved in the Grange, creating lifelong members.

“My mom’s a member, both my daughters are members, and also my grandkids,” Pugh said. “I have two brothers who also still belong to Ada Grange. It’s been a big part of my life, and my daughter’s life, and now my grandkids’ lives.”

Getting younger members involved is vital to the continuation of the organization.

“We only have 38 members now,” Pugh said. “At our largest we had 170, but for a time there was an insurance program through the Grange and a lot of members signed up just to get the insurance. The numbers have dwindled down.”

Keeping membership steady is not a problem specific to the Grange, as other fraternal organizations such as the Elks or the Oddfellows are struggling to keep membership.

“Unfortunately, the membership is getting so old, the focus is on getting younger families in, so you have them coming up and taking over responsibilities,” Pugh said. “But it’s hard. We’re lucky to have very active members, but we have some older members that won’t be around forever. The kids are our future, so we try and focus on them a lot.”

It’s that focus on children, and the community as a whole, that Ada Grange #570 continues to foster. It also purchases school supplies to donate to local schools.

“We have a scholarship program that’s actually in memory of my stepdad,” Pugh said. “After he passed away, my mom established it, and that’s been going on since 1993. This past year, we gave out three \$500 scholarships to local schools. And home school students can apply too.”

The Grange works closely with veterans and has a Relay for Life team. It’s also known for its food fundraisers, such as an annual breakfast fundraiser and appearances at the Florence Wings and Wheels, where members have served hamburgers since the event’s inception.

“Our hamburgers are ‘almost’ famous,” Pugh said.


The gala will be held from 1 to 3 p.m. today at the Ada Grange Hall, located at 82457 S. Canary Road in Westlake.

Grange member Joy McCourt, whose grandfather was a founding member of the Ada chapter, will give a local history of the grange, followed by poems of the grange by Darlene Jorgenson.

Cake and ice cream will be served, and there will be a small speech by Florence Mayor Joe Henry.

Pugh believes community work makes Ada Grange just as relevant now as it used to be.

“I think the Grange still plays a vital role in communities,” she said. “It’s doing something right to be around for 150 years. It has changed a lot. It had to change with the times. If I didn’t have the Grange, I don’t know what I’d do. It’s a second family.”



FRAA ART CENTER
 120 Maple Street
 Phone: 541-997-4435
 Hours Open: Wed-Fri noon-5pm,
 Sat 10am-5pm, Sun. noon-5pm

Classes, Workshops & Events

Henry Evans Print Sale
 Saturday, March 10, 1-5 pm during the 2nd Saturday Gallery Tour. FRAA is hosting a special event to sell about 25 Henry Evans’ prints (most signed and numbered). The proceeds will be donated to local non-profit organizations.

Need Help with your Florence Fest Submittal?
 Come to FRAA on Thursday, March 8th, 12 noon - 2 pm and we will help you with your submittal.

Next Art Change-Out Day
 Monday, March 12th, 9-11 am
 Please pick up your artwork and bring something new to help keep the art at FRAA fresh to our visitors.

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.

Oil Painting with Michael Wood
 On hiatus but will be back in April.
fmwood@msn.com for more information.


Beginning Felting with Ginny Kliever - Take 2 Due to Popular Demand
 Saturday, April 7th, 1:30-4:30 pm
 Learn the art of felting making a coin purse. Bring a shank button; other material provided. Pre-registration req’d at FRAA. Questions: 541-521-3513

Big Wave Poetry 1st Tuesday Open Mic
 March 6th at 6:30 pm. Admission is free and refreshments will be available.


Writers on the River - Creative Writing Workshop with Catherine Rourke
 Sat., March 24, 10 am - 12 noon
Memoir Writing: From Real Life to Real Story. Turn life experiences and family memories into captivating stories. All writing levels and genres. Contact: CJReditor@gmail.com, 541-708-2120

Painting with John Leasure
 Saturdays 9 am - 12 pm
 Contact: jleasure@hotmail.com or 541-991-2754 for details and fees.

For more information about classes, visit fraaoregon.org. To register for these classes, please call or visit FRAA at our art center on Maple Street.



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