

Eugene, Cascades & Coast celebrates visitor industry organizations

Travel Lane County highlights Bartlett, Sand Dunes Frontier for years of service

By CHANTELLE MEYER
Siuslaw News

EUGENE—InnSight Hotel Management Group and Summit Bank presented the Eugene, Cascades and Coast 2018 Visitor Industry Celebration on May 3 at The Shedd Institute for the Arts. During the event, Travel Lane County honored Jenna Bartlett, past president of the Florence Area Chamber of Commerce, and Sand Dunes Frontier for their work in the visitor industry.

Travel Lane County called the event “a celebration of the past year as we recognize outstanding contributions by individuals and groups within the industry.”

The events included several county-wide awards in leadership, community service and ambassadorship. One, the 2018 Destination Award, went to Sand Dunes Frontier, located south of the Siuslaw River Bridge on Highway 101, for “excelling in promoting the community and the Eugene, Cascades and Coast as a visitor destination.”

During the video presentation, Travel Lane County high-

lighted the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area and the industries who make a living on the sand.

“For nearly 60 years, visitors have viewed the sand dunes from the sand rails and buggies operated by Sand Dunes Frontier. Owner Chuck Chapman and his professional staff have thrilled and awed locals and visitors with high-speed action and interpretive tours that leave everyone with a new respect for this national treasure,” the video said.

Camp host and maintenance man David Smith said people “get an experience like they’ll never get anywhere else,” especially international travelers.

Cody Wallace, sand rail driver, added that people love exploring the three ecosystems in the dunes: forest, sand and ocean.

According to Sand Dunes Frontier’s website www.sanddunesfrontier.com, the business is the longest-running dune tour operator on the coast. Services include tours, ATV rentals and camping on the dunes.

“What separates Sand Dunes

Frontier is their strong partnership with the tourism industry,” Travel Lane County said. “A professional and knowledgeable staff ensures that all visitors leave their dunes experience with a newfound respect for this beauty of this special place. And when people have a good time, they come back again and again.”

Getting visitors to return to the Florence area is a big appeal to the Florence Area Chamber of Commerce. As the primary marketing and business resource for the area, the chamber partners with Travel Lane County to promote western Lane County to the outside world.

People are drawn to “Oregon’s Coastal Playground,” the Florence Area Chamber of Commerce’s motto for the area, to explore a bounty of outdoor adventures, admire the beauty of the coastal landscape, visit Historic Old Town Florence, eat at unique local restaurants and attend events and meetings at several venues.

“Tourism is doing nothing but growing here,” said Chamber Executive Director Bettina Hannigan.

She said that tourism is thriving because of the chamber’s board of directors, numerous volunteers, the paid staff of two and people like Bartlett, who is active in several community groups, including the Florence Rotary Club, the Rhododendron Court Committee and the chamber board.

Hannigan and the board nominated Chamber Ambassador Mike Bones for the Tourism Ambassador Award in 2017, then in its first year. She said it was a “given” this



COURTESY PHOTOS

The Florence area’s Sand Dunes Frontier and Jenna Bartlett were honored Thursday at the Eugene, Cascades & Coast 2018 Visitor Industry Celebration.

to the coast. Along with other dunes related businesses such as Sandland Adventures and Sand Master Park, Sand Dunes Frontier provides an adventure.

“Each of them offers something unique,” Hannigan said. “Sand Dunes Frontier offers camping right there. All of these sand adventures bring family-oriented recreation, which people are coming here looking for.”

During the ceremony, Travel Lane County presented the following awards:

- Destination Award – Sand Dunes Frontier
- Sports Leadership Award – Willamette Valley Babe Ruth
- Convention Leadership Award – University of Oregon and City of Eugene
- Community Leadership Award – UO Head Track & Field Coach Robert Johnson, the fourth winningest coach in NCAA history
- Special Recognition – Attic Media Inc.

In addition, the 2018 Tourism

Ambassador Awards were chosen by each of Travel Lane County’s chamber of commerce partners:

- Coburg – Terry Dawson
 - Cottage Grove – Don Strahan
 - Eugene – Allan Benavides
 - Florence – Jenna Bartlett
 - McKenzie River – Ken Engelman
 - Oakridge/Westfir – Viki Burns
 - Springfield – Paula Goodbar
 - Veneta/Fern Ridge – Dave D’Avanzo
 - TriCounty – Rick Kissock
- Travel Lane County President/CEO Kari Westlund gave a state of the industry address and Keynote Speaker Oregon Film Executive Director Tim Williams highlighted films made in Lane County.

For more information about Travel Lane County and its efforts in supporting the Eugene, Cascades and Coast region, visit www.eugene.cascadescoast.org.

FRESH CRAB

MINI CRAB MELTS

SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS:

- 16 (3/4-ounce) slices sourdough bread
- 3/4 cup mayonnaise
- 3/4 teaspoon lemon zest
- 3 1/2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 12 ounces fresh dungeness crabmeat, drained and picked
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped red onion
- 32 (1/4-inch-thick) Roma tomato slices
- 4 ounces Gruyère cheese, grated (about 1 cup)
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

How to Make It:

Step 1
Preheat broiler. Arrange bread slices in a single layer on a baking sheet, and broil 1 to 2 minutes on each side or until lightly golden and toasted.

Step 2
Whisk together mayonnaise, lemon zest, 3 tablespoons dill, and 1/4 teaspoon salt in a small mixing bowl. Combine crab, onion, and 1/4 teaspoon salt in a medium mixing bowl. Add 2 tablespoons mayonnaise mixture to bowl; stir to combine.

Step 3
Spread remaining mayonnaise mixture evenly over toasts. Divide crab mixture evenly over toasts; top evenly with tomato slices and cheese. Broil 3 minutes or until cheese melts. Sprinkle with black pepper and remaining 1/2 tablespoon dill. Serve immediately.

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Siuslaw School District requests public input May 9

Board to present a final plan for upgrades, replacement of all 3 school buildings

By MARK BRENNAN
Siuslaw News

The Siuslaw School District (SSD) Board of Directors is encouraging community members to attend the Wednesday,

May 9, meeting of the group, which will be held at the Siuslaw District Office at 211 Oak St.

The board is hoping interested individuals will provide directors input and feedback regarding the final upgrades or replace-

ment plans being considered for all three district facilities.

There has already been nearly a year of research, structural evaluation and future need assessments undertaken to determine what should be done with the district’s aging and outdated school buildings.

District Superintendent Andy Grzeskowiak feels public input is essential to the decisions that the board must make as the deadline for submitting any bond request for the fall election is approaching.

“We have been working to put together the most comprehensive and responsible maintenance package that addresses the needs of all three buildings,” Grzeskowiak said. “The board will be presented with the most efficient plan for a potential high school facility, which would bring the combined projects for the proposed middle and elementary schools together into a range that the board feels that they could act on and possibly present to the public.”

Pivot Architect, an architectural firm from Eugene, Ore., was engaged by the board to guide the district through the process of determining what upgrades or improvements were most needed in each school building.

Pivot has created an array of architectural plans that delineate different levels of improvements to the schools that can be selected once directors have settled on

an overall plan.

These potential designs were shown during a number of open public meetings held to elicit feedback from area residents. The forums included presentations from Pivot’s lead architect on the project, Curt Wilson, and were designed to share the information being gathered by Wilson and SSD staff with the public.

Those meetings were also planned as a way for the directors to receive feedback from the public as the process of assessment was underway.

Additionally, the district has been receiving advice and input from a steering committee created to provide input from those directly involved, either as teachers or staff or vendors in the buildings that will be upgraded.

The May 9 meeting will be an attempt to encapsulate the recommendations from Pivot, the Steering Committee and Florence residents.

During the meeting, directors will attempt to determine a final slate of infrastructure improvements as well as decide if they will ask Florence residents to financially support the project in the form of a bond levy in the November election.

“I hope folks will come to the May 9 board meeting to learn about what the board is considering as they plan for the future of our facilities,” Grzeskowiak said.

2018 Rhododendron Festival Court

Coronation: Thursday, May 17th, 6:30pm

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eventcenter.org

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