

REMINISCE from page 1A

"It was a logger town," Brauer said. "Fishing was on its way down, that was moving further north. The population sign said 1,620. There were only two paved streets in town at the time, down Old Town and the highway and the street up to the highway. There were terrible pot holes. In the heavy rain, you couldn't see them. You would sink six inches down."

He remained busy during that time, servicing the thousands of lumber workers throughout the area.

"There were more accidents back then," he noted. "Back in those days, we did lots of surgery. I'd see as many as 50 patients a day."

Brauer also helped deliver a good portion of Florence's residents into the world.

"In the old days, with all the loggers around, they didn't waste their time," he said. "We delivered about 90 babies a year. Now we deliver 1 or two a week."

The medical profession ran in Brauer's family, as his father was a doctor as well.

"My father told me that medicine is the most noble profession. You're helping people that are suffering. And I loved practicing medicine," he said.

Brauer helped nurture his practice and the hospital for decades until it was decided to give the hospital over to PeaceHealth Peace Harbor, which opened its doors in 1989.

But the hospital was only a small portion of the things Brauer helped build over the years.

"I was carrying a heavy load in my practice, but also in all the responsibilities I took on,"

he said. "I look back and I don't know why I did that. I thought it was the right thing for the community."

One of the organizations was OPP.

"The bank deal was bizarre," Brauer said. "Some guy who was working at one of the banks in town came into my office feigning a need to see a doctor, but that isn't why he was there. He thought I was a guy to help start a new bank. I have no idea why he thought that."

But the partnership proved fruitful, as Brauer helped bring partners into the fold. He served on the bank's board for 28 years.

A devout Lutheran, Brauer also helped bring about the New Life Lutheran Church in Florence. It was that endeavor that led him to develop Summerset Estates, located directly behind it.

"I started it so nobody would come behind the church and do something with the property that would be very negative," he said matter-of-factly.

Brauer also served on the local school board for six years and was instrumental in bringing the Florence campus of Lane Community College to town.

All of these experiences led Brauer to being named Florence's first First Citizen in 1967, which was then sponsored by the Florence Rotary Club. Now, Florence Area Chamber of Commerce includes the Florence First Citizen Award, as well as the Future First Citizen, in the Siuslaw Awards each winter.

Beyond his work in Florence, Brauer has also carried his medical expertise throughout the world.

"I felt that it was proper for me

to give my service away to people who had nothing," he said. "I always felt that someday I would like to do that."

But in Kenya, his life changed from a terrible automobile accident.

"The goats and the sheep pop up on the road," he said. "And here's these lads coming up. And if I didn't avoid them, I'd wipe them out. There was a car I didn't see. And we just hit head on."

Alice passed away in the crash. Brauer's foot was caught in the pedals, and he ended up losing his leg.

"I've had terrible tragedies, but I always eventually got through them," Brauer said. "And that's only possible because of what God has done."

It was in Kenya where he met a nun named Catherine who worked at the local hospital. When he arrived back in Florence, Catherine would write to Brauer, checking up on her old patient.

"In the correspondence, there was something I cannot explain rationally at all," he said. "One day I was laying there in bed, and I said to myself, 'If she was here right now, everything would be okay.' I wrote and told her, 'I think I'm falling in love with you.' She writes back and says to me, 'I am in love with you.' Can you believe it?"

Brauer said that marrying a nun was the weirdest thing he had ever encountered, but their marriage lasted for decades. They would continue to go back to Kenya, along with other countries throughout the world, doing medical work.

Almost two years ago, Catherine passed away.

"We were married 43 and a

half years," Brauer said. "My first wife, we were married 21 years. Two very wonderful women, quite different. But wonderful."

As Brauer's life has changed, so has the life of Florence, which has grown from a small two-road town to the "City in Motion" it is today.

"Watching the changes over time have been interesting," he said. "I believe, on the whole, that people who have entered this area to live have added to making this a better place. The town is in far better shape, by far, as the town has progressed. There's a lot of wise people who have come to this area over the years."

As for the future of the city? He believes it looks bright.

"With all the retired people around here, seniors, these are the kind of people that I think will contribute a lot with new ideas," he said. "I know there's a lot of effort to build up, for the younger people in their 40s and 50s as well. Those people are more ambitious than they were 30, 40 years earlier. It's absolutely a good thing."

As parade grand marshal, Brauer will be at several events throughout next week's Rhododendron Festival. As this year's theme is "Rhody Rendezvous," people will get the chance to meet Brauer to remember his legacy and continuing impact.

For more information on the festival or to purchase discounted tickets to the Davis Shows NW Amusement Carnival, which will be at the Port of Siuslaw parking lot beginning on Wednesday, stop in to the Florence Visitor's Center, 290 Highway 101, or visit florencechamber.com.

Backstreet brings 'Bots and Beguiling Beings'

Backstreet Gallery is accepting applications for the public to submit artwork for The Bots and Beguiling Beings Show.

The art pieces may be of any medium. You can pick up applications at the gallery, which will have all the rules and specifics. The due date for applications is Tuesday, May 15.

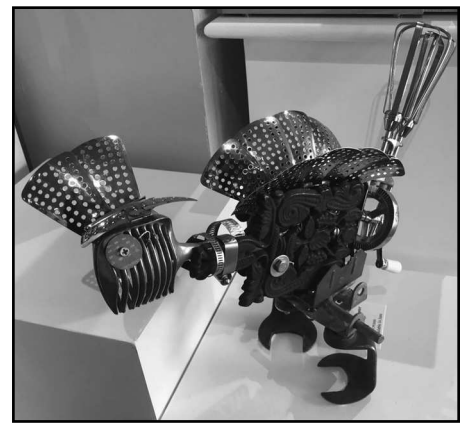
Pamela Vosseller will jury the "Bots and Beguiling Beings" Show that will be displayed at Backstreet Gallery for the month of June.

Vosseller, a nationally known artist, with honors received from the Eugene Mayor's Art Show and Coos Bay Museum, is a published artist in both the Denali Literary Arts Magazine and Cloth Paper Scissors Magazine. Her work has been shown in the Florence Events Center (FEC) and various venues around Florence.

She has also won awards in the Celebrate Arts Show at the FEC.

Much of her work has been in watercolors and acrylics including mixed media. Pamela loves to enhance her art with collage, charcoal, graphite and fibers.

While she has painted many subjects, her concentration is the human form and portraiture. Her signature painting style makes her uniquely qualified to jury this show, as her images are truly magical and



Backstreet has already begun to receive 'bots and beings' before the Tuesday deadline.

beguiling.

"My passion is to learn, and I continue to study acrylics, oils, charcoals and encaustics," Vosseller said.

In her paintings, Pamela offers a visual story. This shouldn't be a surprise since she is the writer of many intriguing short stories, as well.

Because she believes that all of us can create, she is now teaching online e-courses.

Visit her site for class information and to see her inspiring works at pamela-vosseller.squarespace.com. She continues to expand her experimentation and also continues to take on-line classes.

Be sure to pick up an application at Backstreet Gallery or download and print an application off their website at www.backstreetgallery.org

Backstreet Gallery is open daily 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and is located at 1421 Bay St. in Historic Old Town Florence.

THIS WEEK ON THE COAST

A WEEKLY LISTING OF COMMUNITY EVENTS IN THE FLORENCE AREA

SUBMIT ALL EVENTS INFORMATION VIA EMAIL TO PRESSRELEASES@THESIUSLAWNEWS.COM

Thursdays through May 24

New Testament Class on St. Matthew

Taught by Joel Marks, adjunct professor of American History

6:30 to 8 p.m.

Open to public; refreshments served Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Tuesdays

Yoga for Pain Management & Easeful Body

Sponsored by PeaceHealth Peace Harbor

2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Free and drop-ins welcome

Lane Community College Florence Center

Wednesdays

Points of Grace Community Acupuncture

Experience relief from pain and stress

11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Donations appreciated

1845 Highway 126

May 12

Oregon Dunes Triathlon

6 a.m.

Registration fee; volunteers needed Woahink Lake on Canary Road oregondunestriathlon.com

Florence Garden Club Plant Sale & Marketplace + Florence Senior Center Food Fundraiser

9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Open to public with a menu available all day

Florence Senior Center

BioBlitz: Migratory Bird Day

10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Open to public

Cape Perpetua

Florence Area Democratic Club Meeting

11 a.m.

Open to public

Siuslaw Public Library

"Dinner on the Wild Side" Wildlife of the Oregon Dunes

Presented by Vision Quest

5:30 p.m.

Open to public; dinner purchase

from Smokin' Pops BBQ optional Lane Community College Florence

Community Chorus Mother's Day Concert

7 p.m.

Open to public

Presbyterian Church of the Siuslaw 541-997-3469

Roger Clyne & The Peacemakers

8 p.m.

Tickets required

Three Rivers Casino

May 13

Mother's Day Celebration

Noon

Open to public

Florence Elks No. 1858

1686 12th St.

Community Chorus Mother's Day Concert

3 p.m.

Open to public

Presbyterian Church of the Siuslaw 541-997-3469

May 14

Siuslaw Area Partnership to

Prevent Substance Abuse

3:30 p.m.

Open to public Siuslaw Public

Library

sappsa@oregonfast.net

May 15

Us TOO Florence Prostate Cancer Support Group

With Dr. Roger McKimmy

Noon to 1 p.m.

Open to public

Ichiban Restaurant

541-999-4239

Diabetes/Pre-diabetes Support Group

2 p.m.

Open to public

Siuslaw Public Library

Disabled American Veterans Monthly Meeting

Installation of new officers

5 p.m.

Members encouraged to attend

Florence DAV Building

1715 21st St.

May 16 to 20

111th annual Rhododendron

Festival

"Rhody Rendezvous"

Florencechamber.com

May 16

Port of Siuslaw Commissioners Meeting

7 p.m.

Open to public

Port of Siuslaw Office

May 17

Rhododendron Court Coronation

6:30 p.m.

Tickets required

Florence Events Center

May 19

Late Rhododendron Flower Show

1 to 5 p.m.

Open to public

Florence Events Center

May 20

Late Rhododendron Flower Show

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Open to public

Florence Events Center

Visit rivercal.org for more calendar events.

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