

Rendezvous on the parade route Sunday

The Rhododendron Grand Floral parade, one of the longest running events of its kind in the west, begins at noon on May 20 at 27th Street and Highway 101 and follows the highway to and through Historic Old Town.



There are lots of places along the 2.5-mile route to cheer for your favorite marching band, commercial or nonprofit organization float, car club or equestrian group.

But plan early. People sometimes put out their Siuslaw lawn chairs along the route the night before to save their favorite viewing locations.

Local police and fire per-

sonnel will convert the five-lane Highway 101 into a two-lane road with one lane in each direction on the east side of the thoroughfare, allowing for some parade-goers to watch from the center turn lane.

The procession zigs west one block before the Siuslaw River bridge, then zags down to Bay Street to where it disbands just past the carnival on Nopal Street.

Rhody buttons get you \$1 off chowder

By this weekend, Rhododendron Festival organizers hope everyone in Florence will be wearing one of the 2018 Rhododendron Festival buttons.

This year there is a delicious, old-fashioned benefit that comes with pin ownership — \$1 off a bowl of clam chowder at participating restaurants.

This year's pin follows the festival's theme, "Rhody Rendezvous" — intended to evoke memories of Rhody Days past with fun, friends, family and the fair.

The festival button features images relating to the theme, including the Siuslaw River Bridge and the traditional rhododendron bloom.

The committee is offering the "old-fashioned" coated metal pin for \$3 this year. Proceeds go toward scholarships for Queen Rhododendra, the King of the Coast and members of the Rhody Court.

As an incentive to purchase buttons, local restaurants are offering \$1 off a bowl of clam chowder to each person wearing a 2018 Rhody button through the month of May.

Participating restaurants — such as Bay Street Grille, Beachcomber Pub, Firehouse Restaurant, Homegrown Public House, ICM Restaurant and Le Bouchon Café — will have a sign posted at their entrance and a participant list will be posted at www.FlorenceChamber.com.

The idea for the clam chowder discount hearkens back to the days when clam chowder booths were located along the Rhododendron Festival's parade route.

The new Rhody buttons can be purchased from any of the Rhododendron Court members, from their button boxes found at businesses in Florence, and at the Chamber of Commerce Visitor's Center, 290 Highway 101.



Enjoy the fun of Rhody Days!



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