

Florence named America's Second Best Small Town for Adventure



SIUSLAW NEWS FILE PHOTOS

Florence, with its majestic dunes, beach access, hikes, trails and more, has been named the nation's Second Best Small Town for Adventure.

Voters in a national poll have selected Florence as the country's second-best small town for adventure.

In April, USA Today's 10Best.com listed Florence as one of their top-20. Florence beat out such tourism heavyweights as Sun Valley, ID; Telluride, CO; Sedona, AZ; Moab, UT; Watkins Glen, NY; Bar Harbor, ME; and Stowe, VT. Florence was beat out by Marquette, WI.

The poll allowed voters to vote once per day on as many devices as they wanted for several weeks. Florence started the poll at number 11 and quickly rose to second. The poll closed Monday, May 14.

Florence was the only Oregon destination on the list. To make the list, each town had to have a population under 25,000. Florence's population is just under 9,000.

In a similar USA Today poll last year, Florence was voted second of the Top 20 Best Small Towns in the Northwest.

"We are super excited by this recognition and expect this poll will bring some very positive national attention and boost tourism in our area. Tourism is the backbone of our economy, providing 1,300 jobs and more than \$127 million of incoming money to the community," says Bettina Hannigan, executive director of the Florence Area Chamber of Commerce. "Thank you to all who voted for Florence. This gives us some serious bragging rights as a travel destination."

Florence has also recently been named The Oregonian/OregonLive.com readers' "Favorite Coastal Getaway," Expedia.com's "Most Beautiful



Town," and one of Flights.com's "8 Coolest Places You Must Experience." Two local destinations, the Oregon Dunes Recreation Area and Sea Lion Caves, made the Oregonian's "Top 20 Oregon Landmarks."

"USA Today's writers pointed out that adrenaline junkies flock to Florence for some of the nation's best sand dunes for buggy rides, sand boarding, hiking, and fat-tire biking. They also listed fishing, crabbing, and clamming as popular pastimes," adds Hannigan. "What they missed is kiteboarding, wind surfing, hiking and camping in pristine ancient forests, a long list of other outdoor pursuits, and the indoor adventures of our growing culinary and arts communities," she adds. "After all, we are Oregon's Coastal Playground and all these attributes and accolades prove it."

The full USA Today story is available at www.10best.com/awards/travel/best-small-town-for-adventure.

For more information on Florence, or to receive a free visitor's guide, contact the Florence Area Chamber of Commerce at FlorenceChamber.com, info@FlorenceChamber.com, or 541-997-3128.

2018

SALUTE IN REMEMBRANCE

MEMORIAL WEEKEND IN REEDSPORT

Parade, War Memorial Service, 'Meet and Greet a Veteran', Veteran's Dinner, Patriotic Concert, and Cemetery Service

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SUNDAY, MAY 27TH

1:30 pm MEMORIAL PARADE

3:00 pm MEMORIAL CEREMONY Hahn Park War Memorial

4:00 pm VETERAN'S MEET & GREET Lobby of Pacific Auditorium

4:00 pm VETERAN'S DINNER Presbyterian Church next door

7:00 pm PATRIOTIC CONCERT Pacific Auditorium

Memorial Day

MONDAY

MAY 28TH

10:00 am

VFW & American Legion

MEMORIAL DAY SERVICE

at the Masonic Cemetery

HONOR OUR VETS

MAY 27TH & 28TH

OUR FORMULA FOR IMPACT



Often you will hear our staff and board of The Boys & Girls Clubs talk about **The Gift of A Great Future**. I'd like to share with you what that means. Throughout the year, we are given the gift of amazing kids who come into our Club every day and share with us their stories of determination, triumph, and perseverance.

This is *our* story:

We are big enough to make a difference because we are small enough to care for each child that walks through our doors.

- Our Club is one of two coastal Clubs in Oregon. Coos Bay is the other. Neither Newport nor Lincoln City have Clubs. We have a Club because of the generous donations from caring individuals like you.
- When School is out, The CLUB is in.
 - ~ We average 22 teens a day. We often times have 28 – 30 teens a day depending on how many of our Teens are participating in school sports.
 - ~ We average 72 Elementary kids a day. Last Friday, we had 100 kiddos attend our After-School Program. The first hour of every day is allocated to homework assistance.
- Last year 48% of the Elementary kids attending our Summer Program were on full or partial scholarships. We are anticipating we will be awarding nearly \$20,000 in Summer Program scholarships this year. The high cost of rent, entry-level wages, and the shortage of full-time jobs has significantly impacted the families in our community. Did I mention before that when school is out, The CLUB is in?
- Did you know that Oregon has the highest Childhood Hunger rate in the country for the last three years? Last year we served **4,245** healthy meals and **1,319** snacks at the Teen Center. Our kids are served a hot, nutritious meal *each weekday* before they go home.

Poverty and homelessness seem to be an ever-expanding endless cycle in today's society. Many excellent organizations and charities work diligently to help those caught up in this maelstrom. The Boys & Girls Club goal is to **break that chain** by *empowering kids with a sense of self-worth, teaching them life-skills and motivating them to graduate and then go on to achieve their vocational dreams.*

If we are to break the cycle of poverty in many of the families in this community, we have to give them the tools to do so. We want every parent, grandparent, future parent, aunts and uncles to know this:

We spend every minute our kids are at the Club preparing them for the future.

- When we look at lessons along the way, our kids learn to celebrate joy and blessings.
- They learn to deal with sorrow in constructive ways.
- They learn how to achieve success.
- They learn how to build resiliency and grit.
- Every Teen at the Teen Center has a job; they get paid on Monday's in Club Bucks. They have a checking and savings account and a 401k like account as well. Using Club Bucks teaches the kids the value of earning. It also levels the economic playing field.
- It doesn't matter what economic background the kids come from. They all have the same opportunity to earn.
 - ~ The beauty of this program is that the kids take home what they learn. In some cases, the kids are teaching the parents financial responsibility and opportunity.

Here's what we believe:

- Every kid deserves a place. A place to feel safe. A place to feel connected. A place to belong. Boys & Girls Clubs provide such places – where kids can go after school and during the summer to grow beyond the classroom.
- Every child, no matter their background, their zip code or circumstances has greatness within them.

Thank you for making the Boys & Girls Club a priority in your life. Thank you for investing in the future of our kids.

We change the world, one kid at a time and you have the opportunity to be a part of that. **Help us Give The Gift Of a Great Future.**

Sincerely,

Chuck Trent

Acting Executive Director

GREAT FUTURES START HERE.



BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
OF WESTERN LANE COUNTY



HONOR OUR VETS

MAY 27TH & 28TH