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# Travelers should plan for a safe holiday trip

*Thanksgiving, shopping and Civil War combine for a busy I-5*

CORVALLIS—Heavy congestion is expected on Interstate 5 this week in the Willamette Valley, as travelers celebrate Thanksgiving, Friday shopping and Friday's Civil War football game between the Oregon State Beavers and the University of Oregon Ducks.

Starting on Wednesday afternoon and continuing through Sunday, travelers should expect busy roads and record numbers of travelers, according to travel experts.

Football fans heading to the

Civil War in Corvallis on Friday — with a 1 p.m. kickoff — are reminded to leave early and allow plenty of travel time. Pack your patience, make sure your vehicle is in good working order and take emergency supplies you might need.

Each year, the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), state and local law enforcement and other incident responders coordinate their efforts to better manage the increased traffic on I-5 and other major corridors in the

Willamette Valley.

Staffing is increased to help deal with the heavy congestion and clear crashes, more variable message signs are posted to warn travelers of congestion and delays, and extra efforts are made to manage the traffic flows around the Civil War and Black Friday shopping.

A few safety reminders:

- Know before you go. Check road and traffic conditions on ODOT's travel site, [www.Trip-Check.com](http://www.Trip-Check.com), or call 5-1-1.
- Stay alert and focused

while driving at all times.

- Keep a safe following distance at all times.
  - Before leaving, plan out a possible alternative route.
  - If you need to check your route, have a passenger look at any devices or pull to a safe place off the roadway.
  - If you see vehicles on the side of the road, slow down and move over to the next lane.
- For the latest information on road conditions, visit [www.tripcheck.com](http://www.tripcheck.com).

## WLCF 2019 grant applications still available

In this time of Thanksgiving, Western Lane Community Foundation (WLCF) is very thankful to offer the 2019 grant cycle to eligible applicants.

Each year, WLCF awards several grants to local non-profit organizations for projects/programs in its target area of Western Lane County. Grants are awarded in the areas of education, medicine and science, the arts and social and civic services.

In 2018, over \$73,000 was awarded to several of these

worthy causes. The annual amount to be awarded is determined by the performance of the invested portfolio of discretionary funds during the current year.

Grant requests for the 2019 grant cycle will be accepted until Jan. 15, 2019. The application may be downloaded at WLCF's website. It is highly recommended that applicants review the Grant Guidelines included there. Please submit applications to Western Lane Community Foundation,

P.O. Box 1589, Florence, OR, 97439, or by email to [wlcfc@wlcfonline.org](mailto:wlcfc@wlcfonline.org) in PDF format.

Completed applications must be postmarked or received no later than close of business on Jan. 15.

Applications will be reviewed by the Board of Directors and each applicant will be contacted by a Board Member for an interview regarding the request for funds. Grants will be selected in February and then awarded in late March.

Selected grant recipients will

be required to submit a grant report by Aug. 31, 2019.

Grant requests and awards will be selected based on merit, need, and benefit to the community at large. Grant requests and award amounts vary greatly, but are usually between \$100 and \$5,000, depending on the nature of the grant project and funds available for distribution.

For more information, contact WLCF at the address above or by calling 541-997-1274.

## Volunteers needed for AARP's tax preparation help

AARP has provided free income tax preparation for the residents of Florence and the surrounding communities for more than 20 years.

The Florence site needs additional volunteers to prepare income tax returns this season.

Training will be provided starting the third week of January and tax preparation begins in early February through April 15.

Anyone interested should contact Dave Riordan at 510-468-1796.

## Submit nominations now for annual Siuslaw Awards

The 12th annual Siuslaw Awards event is fast approaching. The awards banquet, sponsored by the Florence Area Chamber of Commerce, will take place Wednesday, Jan. 23, at the Florence Events Center.

This event recognizes excellence in the local business community by naming recipients for awards in: Excellence in Customer Service, Curb Appeal, Non-Profit Achievement, Community Caring, Innovation in Business and the Stu Johnston Business of the Year Award.

The Chamber will also recognize an individual or business that has selflessly given of their time and efforts in supporting the Chamber and its efforts with the Distinguished Service Award.

Two outstanding individuals in the community will be honored with the Future First Citizen Award and the First Citizen Award. The First Citizen Award recognizes that individual who

has given selflessly to the community based on community involvement, leadership and overall community impact.

The Future First Citizen Award recognizes that student based on his or her academic success as well as civic involvement and contributions to the community.

Anyone can choose to nominate their own or another business for the Siuslaw Awards. Applications are available now either at the Florence Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center or online at [www.florencechamber.com](http://www.florencechamber.com).

Nominations must be submitted to the Florence Area Chamber of Commerce by Nov. 28. First Citizen and Future First Citizen nomination forms are available through area service clubs on Friday, Nov. 30, and are due back to the Chamber by Friday, Dec. 21.

For more information, call Florence Area Chamber of Commerce at 541-997-3128.

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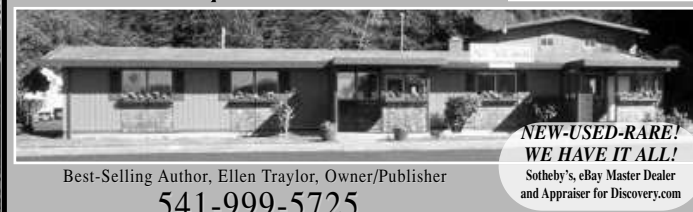
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