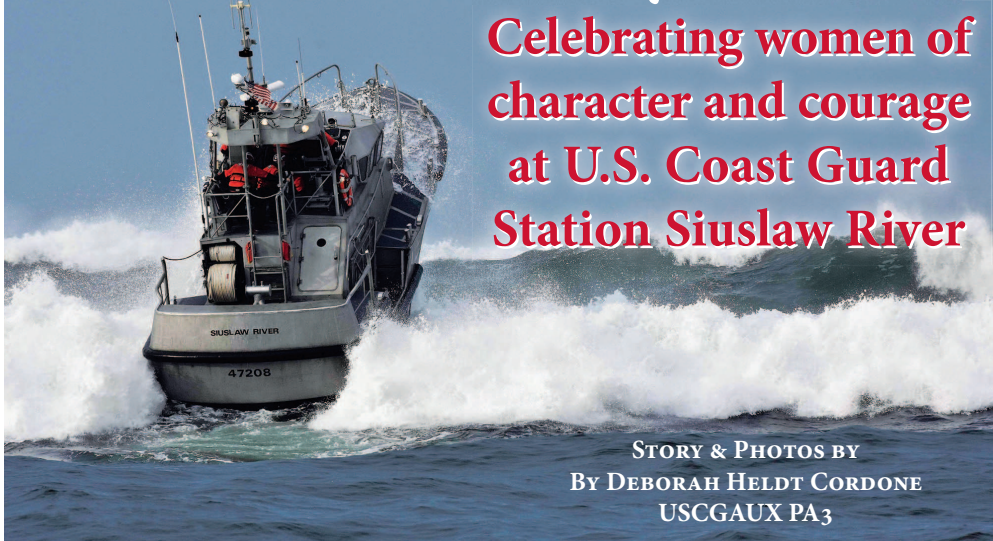


Women's History Month

Celebrating women of character and courage at U.S. Coast Guard Station Siuslaw River



STORY & PHOTOS BY
BY DEBORAH HELDT CORDONE
USCGAUX PA3

March is National Women's History Month and an opportunity to celebrate women who serve in our active-duty military at U.S. Coast Guard Station Siuslaw River. During this month of tribute, observed annually in the U.S. since 1987, we embrace and highlight women's contributions to society, culture, and history.

History of Women in the Coast Guard

Women have played a major role in the U.S. Coast Guard and its predecessor services for a nearly 228-year history. The organization has been cutting edge in empowering and embracing women as equals in a normally male-dominated field, allowing for many "firsts" in military history.

Women began performing lighthouse duties as early as 1776 in Massachusetts during the Revolutionary War. By 1830, women were officially appointed as lighthouse keepers, after assisting their husbands as keepers for generations, in the predecessor U.S. Lighthouse Service.

One of the most famous lighthouse keepers, the courageous Ida Lewis, began helping her parents tend a Rhode Island light when she was only 15 years old. She was appointed as a lighthouse keeper in 1879 and is credited with saving at least 18 lives during her tenure. She was awarded the Gold Lifesaving Medal, named a Carnegie Hero beneficiary, and had a 175 ft. USCG buoy tender named after her. For her heroics, she was visited by many dignitaries including presidents and even Elizabeth Stanton of the women's suffrage movement. In 1879, Ida Lewis became the first woman to have a road named after her at Arlington National Cemetery.

In World War I, women served in a uniformed capacity for the Coast Guard as Yeomen, or office clerks. In World War II, women were recruited for the female SPARS corps as enlisted personnel and officers. After the war, all women's military reserve branches were disbanded and the SPARS ended their duties, although a few SPARs remained in the Coast Guard Reserve. During the Korean conflict, about 200 women volunteered for active-duty.

In the early 1970s, the Coast Guard emerged as a policy leader for women in the military. Congressional legislation allowed women to serve alongside men in both the regular Coast Guard and Coast Guard Reserves.

In 1973, the first small group of female officer candidates attended Officer Candidate School, being the first military agency to allow such. Those five female officer candidates trained aboard a cutter — the first time in U.S. history that women trained aboard a U.S. military vessel beside male counterparts.

All five of those officer candidates graduated.

By the end 1973, the Coast Guard was also integrating women into its enlisted ranks, with the first group of women sworn in, and then attending Cape May for training in 1974, resulting in 30 female graduates. In 1975, continuing to assure equal opportunities for women, the Coast Guard allowed women to apply and eventually attend the Coast Guard Academy. Another first, as the Coast Guard made military history by offering appointments to female applicants.



The women who serve at U.S. Coast Guard Station Siuslaw River (from left): BM2 Sierra Schlager (who can be seen above at the helm of a 47-foot motor lifeboat, crossing the bar of the Siuslaw River), CS3 Savannah Leffler, BM3 Brooke Crosley and SN Sarah San Pedro.

The first female to lead a U.S. military academy, now retired Vice Admiral Sandra Stosz, was in the Coast Guard. The first female to command a U.S. military vessel, now Captain Beverly Kelley, also occurred in the Coast Guard in 1979. Two women, now retired Vice Admiral Vivian Crea and retired Vice Admiral Sally Brice-O'Hara, served as Vice-Commandants of the Coast Guard, second-in-command officers of the entire service. No other military branch has seen so many females promote to this extent.

Just last year, after 141 years, U.S. Coast Guard Station Cape Disappointment on the southern Washington coast welcomed its first female commander, Lt. Jessica Shafer. In Oregon, the Officer-in-Charge at Station Coos Bay, Chief Warrant Officer Beth Slade, was the fourth female Surfman in the Coast Guard, the highest qualification a coxswain can receive.

Women at U.S. Coast Guard Station Siuslaw River

Although the Coast Guard is the smallest military branch, it has large responsibilities for the safety and security of our coastline and waterways under the umbrella of Homeland Security. Coast Guard women routinely face the front line nationally and internationally, and that is represented locally at Station Siuslaw River.

Women Coast Guard members often have a female mentor to guide them. They undeniably have many female role models, shown throughout the history of the Coast Guard, to which they aspire. There are currently five active-duty women assigned to Station Siuslaw River in various roles, with additional female members active in the local Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Boatswain Mate (BM2) Sierra Schlager, from Jamestown, N.D., has been with the Coast Guard since 2008. She is a heavy weather coxswain for the rugged 47 ft. Motor Lifeboat. She is training to be a Surfman. The local rough bar and surf conditions allow her to continuously practice her skills to achieve her goal, and satisfy her deeply imbued sense of mission. She enjoys the "dynamic decisions" her boat handling experiences create.

Of the nearly 200 boat stations in the Coast Guard, only 21 stations are located in areas with surf conditions that require Surfmen. Of the 547 pinned Surfmen in the Coast Guard, there are less than a dozen women who hold that prestigious title. BM2 Schlager is well on her way to such a distinction with amazing boat driving skills. Surfman mentors at the station, and a strong belief in the long-standing Coast Guard adage, "service before self." She has already graduated from the advanced Surfman course at the National Motor Lifeboat School in Il-

waco, Wash. She is also a role model for other women at the station due to her experience and leadership skills.

Storekeeper (SK2) Victoria Johnson, a native of Biloxi, Miss., is a nine-year veteran of the Coast Guard and "plans to stay another 20." While many of the Coast Guard stories feature high visibility rescues and training, those activities are only possible because of the support staff who labor behind the scenes to make sure the station is ready for the mission. SK2 Johnson is one of those crew members.

She procures safety equipment, supplies and other provisions. She also keeps inventories, prepares requisitions, and handles logistical functions, including preparation of financial reports. During her career, SK2 Johnson has received several awards, including a Letter of Commendation for outstanding performance of duty while serving in response to the devastation caused by Hurricane Harvey in 2017. She is married to another Coast Guardsman, MK2 Adam Johnson, and they have two children.

Culinary Specialist (CS3) Savannah Leffler has been with the Coast Guard since 2016 and is originally from Enosburg Falls, Vt. After completing 'A' school in Petaluma, CS3 Leffler was assigned to STA Siuslaw River. She performs all facets of food preparation including advanced skills in baking and other cooking methods. CS3 Leffler's duties also include serving, accounting and purchasing, inventory management, nutrition, time management, and generally keeping the crew fueled and mission ready.

CS3 Leffler hopes to advance her career in the Coast Guard and possibly become a Special Command Aide.

Boatswain Mate (BM3) Brooke Crosley, originally from Fort Lauderdale, Fla., has been an integral part of the station, boat crew and community during her time in Florence. She generously volunteered for several community projects and events. She previously earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice with a minor in psychology.

At the end of this month, she is leaving the Coast Guard, on a high note, to pursue her master's degree in counseling, at the University of Colorado.

Seaman (SN) Sarah San Pedro, from Rancho Cucamonga, Calif., entered the Coast Guard in 2016 and arrived at STA Siuslaw River the same year. She is an important part of the boat crew and trains for towing, search and rescue, basic first aid and firefighting. She is currently in charge of medical supplies for the boats and keeps inventory. She is hoping to attend Coast Guard classes in the near future to become a Health Services Technician.

the spotlight

A weekly roundup of shopping, savings and doings around town.

Your Organizing Answer

Residential Organizing & Senior Downsizing Assistance

DEBORAH MOYER - CRTS, CPC
Owner/President

Our Services Include:

- Certified Senior Downsizing Assistance
- Home & Office Organizing
- 3D Space Planning
- Certified Life Transitions Coach

Phone: 541-999-7972
FREE Initial Consultation!
yourorganizinganswer@earthlink.net
www.YourOrganizingAnswer.com

THE OLD SCHOOL FURNITURE STORE

1550 HWY 101 & 6TH 541-997-9424

Monday - Saturday 10-6 FREE FLORENCE DELIVERY
NEW FURNITURE ARRIVING WEEKLY FROM GREAT MANUFACTURES
ASHLEY / BEST / COASTER / PERDUE / CORSICANA



DESKS/OFFICE CHAIRS
CURIO CABINETS
BOOKCASES/LAMPS
MATTRESSES/BED SETS
SWIVEL ROCKER RECLINERS
ELECTRIC RECLINERS
SOFAS/COFFEE TABLES
DINETTE SETS
LIFT CHAIRS
WE LOVE SPECIAL ORDERS

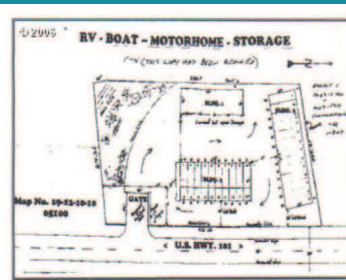


FLORENCE SAW SHOP & RENTAL CENTER

Pressure Washers • Paint Sprayers
Scaffolding • Floor Sander
Linoleum Roller • Air Nailer
Reservations taken for all equipment

MONDAY-FRIDAY 8AM-5PM
1550 HWY. 101 & 6TH STREET
541-997-2653

84880 HWY 101



82460 SQFT
Commercial Use
\$230,000

- GREAT HWY 101 LOCATION
- COMMERCIAL LOT
- Existing Well
- Will consider Trade
- Possible Terms
- BROKER OWNED



KEY Realty

541-997-4842
NATALIE NAGRONE, Broker
Cell # 541-991-0531
natalienagrone@gmail.com

Alta Taylor,
Principal Broker/ Owner
Office# 541-997-4842
florencekeyrealty@msn.com



The Old School Furniture Store

6th Street & HWY 101 541-997-9424



Dining Room Sets

Our Showrooms are full!
New furniture weekly!
Free Delivery!



Couches & Sectionals
Special Orders
Accepted



Bedroom Sets & Mattresses



Recliners

Quality Furniture

Affordable Prices