

Honeyman to learn about Hug-a-Tree

Oregon State Parks will present the Hug-a-Tree and Survive Program at Jessie M. Honeyman Memorial State Park on Saturday, June 15, at 7 p.m. in the amphitheater. An additional presentation will be held on Saturday, June 29. The events are free, but a parking pass is required.

Originally, Hug-a-Tree was meant to save children lost in the woods, but the information is good for all who enjoy exploring the outdoors.

For survival tips, visit www.nasar.org/education/hug-a-tree.

FLAG from page 1A

Congress adopted its design more than 200 years ago, the Stars and Stripes has been a powerful symbol of freedom, hope and opportunity," Trump stated in a proclamation on June 7. "We fly Old Glory from government buildings, schools, city halls, police and fire stations, stores, offices and our front porches. Wherever Americans are gathered — sporting events, places of worship, parades and rallies — our flag waves proudly, representing the enduring spirit of our country."

The importance of the flag as a symbol of America's commitment to freedom and liberty is long established.

The significance of the flag to the military is also long standing as flags have accompanied soldiers into battle since the Revolutionary War. One example

of this strong connection is the fact that the U.S. Army has chosen to also celebrate its birthday on Flag Day.

Perhaps the most recognized ongoing tribute to the flag is a song written by Francis Scott Key, which has since become our national anthem, "The Star-Spangled Banner." The singing of the anthem has become ingrained in the culture as it now directly precedes most major American sporting events and many cultural events, such as this past weekend's graduation ceremonies.

There are two Flag Day related ceremonies taking place in Florence on Flag Day. The first will be held at Florence Elks Lodge #1858, 1686 12th St., at 10 a.m. and will include the presentation of a number of different American flags and the stories behind them.

For example, the flag that inspired the "Star-Spangled

Banner" was first loaned to the Smithsonian Institute in 1907, became part of the permanent collection in 1912, and has remained on continual exhibit at the National Museum of American History since 1964. Millions of visitors have viewed this important artifact from America's past since that time.

The fraternal order of Elks has been holding flag ceremonies since 1907 and included the recognition of the day as a requirement of all lodges beginning in 1911.

Harry S. Truman, himself a member of the Elks, signed the Flag Day bill into law on Aug. 3, 1949.

There will also be an official Flag Day retirement ceremony coordinated by local veterans that will retire old and worn flags beginning at 4 p.m. at Veteran's Memorial Park on Bay Street in Historic Old Town Florence.

EXCHANGE from page 9A

"There's so many different opportunities between hiking, the lakes, the beach and the ocean," Helvey continued. "And then the people here are so nice and welcoming and friendly. It's just a nice, positive community."

As to what type of families would work to host a student, "Any family could be a good fit," Helvey said. "Anywhere from your typical family of a mom and dad, and maybe some kids. We have also placed students with a single parent before that has kids. Kids of different ages work, they don't have to be teenagers. They could be little kids up to preteen, up to teen. We've even had families host that are single and have no kids."

Of particular interest would be empty nesters of any age who have experience with teenagers and the resources to help. "We have had so much success with them," Helvey said.

According to Helvey, there are various reasons why families sign up to host. Some do it to learn more about family history, requesting students from countries that their families had once lived. But for most, it's about growing their current family.

"You get another family member," Helvey said, adding that one host family she spoke with was in tears when their student left. "She's been a part of the family. They woke up

this morning to find the host student filled their house with thank-you notes on balloons and gave them nice gifts, saying their hearts will always be connected. So I guess you get to learn a different culture, and gain a new family member and friend that you can stay in touch with forever."

Host families can choose students for either one semester or two.

"The student would live with them as part of their family," Helvey said. "Whatever the family dynamic was, they would kind of embrace the exchange student as a member of the family and integrate them into their daily routine."

The hosts would not be left to their own devices, as Helvey and the cultural exchange stay in touch with the families and students at least once a month.

"I would be in touch with them to navigate through language and personal struggles, though many of our students have really good English skills," she said.

Helvey also plans to host group activities with all the exchange students and their families throughout the year to prevent isolation.

Students come with their own medical insurance and spending money to cover all personal expenses, while host families provide room and board.

For more information on the program, contact Helvey at 775-671-7992.

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