

TOYS from page 1A

“We received almost five large boxes of toys from our generous public and Bi-Mart also added a couple of boxes to the event,” Warren said.

Volunteers were from SVFR, Florence Police Department, Western Lane Ambulance, the City of

Florence and U.S. Coast Guard Station Siuslaw River.

“Thank you volunteers and anyone else who put the effort in helping with this grand event,” Warren said. “We’d also like to thank all of you who filled our boxes and bags with all the wonderful donations. Happy Holidays!”



In 2019 we will be celebrating the 80th anniversary of our business in Florence. It is time to express the appreciation and gratitude we feel, and have always felt, for the friendship, trust and loyalty of those who live in this community. It is your confidence in us and your continued patronage that has made these 80 years such a pleasurable experience. Thank you.

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TRAVEL from page 1A

“After meetings and presentations at Driftwood Shores, I organized a fun afternoon with the commissioners,” Dolin said.

First stop was a kayak excursion out of Benders Landing on the North Fork of the Siuslaw, highlighting the Siuslaw Water Trail.

Ahead of the paddle, Eli Tome, Director of The Siuslaw Watershed Council, talked with OTC members about the history of the area and the great work he is doing with his organization.

Once OTC members had finished the kayaking portion of their day, they gathered in Historic Old Town Florence to spend some time with Harlen Springer, the chairperson of the Florence Public Arts Committee (PAC), who was recently appointed to the Oregon Arts Commission by Gov. Kate Brown.

Springer has also been the lead voice in advocating for a vibrant local arts program, speaking on many occasions to the Florence City Council on the subject — and his thoughts on the subject often set the standard for local art related discussions.

Springer led the OTC members on a short walk



MARK BRENNAN/SIUSLAW NEWS

Staff members from Travel Oregon visited Florence for a series of meetings this week, which included a tour of the Old Town Historic District and the Public Art installations located along Bay Street.

downtown that included stops at the public art pieces that are currently on display, while describing the recent inroads while adroitly sidestepping some of the more controversial issues that PAC has been involved over the past year.

Springer’s tour highlighted the diversity of art along Bay Street while emphasizing the potential economic advantages he believes accrue as a direct result of the display of public art.

“The city’s Public Art Committee was immensely proud to show the Travel Oregon Commissioners a portion of our overall program — specifically the outdoor art rental program

called ‘Art Exposed,’ said Springer. “Todd Davidson thanked us for giving them a taste of the tremendous work Florence is doing with public art. He said he was impressed by the spirit of innovation, volunteerism and community pride driving the program and congratulated us on PAC’s contributions to Florence’s livability and development efforts.

“Florence has many reasons to feel proud and this program can stand confidently among them.”

The work done by Travel Oregon goes beyond the marketing of the businesses that are located in a particular town or county. It is

also involved on a deeper level with an eye towards improving the financial stability of the underlying cultural and historical elements of these places. Sometimes this goal is met in the form of financial support to rebuild a structure or historic landmark.

According to Dolin and others in the group, the belief that people will travel to Oregon to visit its many inspiring locales, along with the mills, farms and wineries that make up those towns, is more than a good thing to do — it is a good investment.

This is one of the main reasons Travel Oregon offers grants to towns and business owners to revitalize and upgrade important cultural landmarks in their area.

The Travel Oregon website gives a number of examples of the types of tourism-related projects that have qualified for support and has applications available for those interested. More than \$8 million has been awarded through Travel Oregon’s matching grants program in the past 11 years. These awards have provided financial assistance to 190 projects across the state during that time.

A quick search of the Travel Oregon website will turn up easy-to-navigate pages with large and inviting images of the coast, mountains and forests within the state. The site receives thousands of hits a week and the data is clear: People are clicking and booking vacations in Oregon at a greater rate than ever before.

There is, however, a cautionary aspect to the work being done by the group, which looks towards the sustainability of the projects it supports and long-term viability of the natural assets that underpin Oregon’s unique way of life.

“In this high-speed digital world, it is not fashionable to talk about planning beyond a few months or years. But this plan sets out to look well into the future, while keeping our eyes on the choices we are making today,” the website states. “We know that this amazing place exists in a delicate balance of weather, water, geology, trees, wildlife and people. The promise of a long-term vision for Oregon is to learn how to share our treasure with the world — without destroying the treasure in the process.”

For more information, visit Travel Oregon at industry.traveloregon.com, or go to traveloregon.com.

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