

KETTLE from page 1A

determined where the 'most need' was and distributed the funds accordingly. Unfortunately, not much came 'west of the tunnel' (on Highway 126).
Now, the questions surrounding the distribution of donations has been addressed and the decision on which organizations receive support is now made in a more regionally focused manner.

According to Spayd, "Your money raised here is distributed quietly to those in need in our community."

This is done through The Salvation Army Service Extension Coordinator Debi Leighton, from Klamath Falls, who coordinates with several local pastors to interview and select recipients for distribution of the local fund's money.

"Two years ago, an advisory group was created to identify local areas of need to The Salvation Army," Spayd continued. "They meet occasionally with the Service Extension Coordinator. It is gratifying to know and trust that The Salvation Army will use these collected funds to the maximum benefit of our community."

The first Red Kettle was set up in 1891. Since then, The Salvation Army's donations are used year-

round to provide food for the hungry, disaster relief, assistance for disabled people, outreach to elderly and ill people, shelter and necessities for the homeless and opportunities for underprivileged children.

The Salvation Army raised more than \$142 million through its "Red Kettle" campaign last year and a total of \$433 million through all forms of donations.

"The country faced many hardships during the last few months of 2018, with multiple natural disasters and an unsettled economy at year end," said Lt. Col. Ward Matthews, community relations and development secretary for The Salvation Army's National Headquarters. "We are so very grateful for the generosity of those who recognize the importance of helping our neighbors in need."

Anyone interested in serving as a volunteer Red Kettle Bell Ringer should call Colinda Harris at 541-707-0920. Service organizations and churches can also contact Harris about special opportunities to contribute to the kettles or supplying volunteers.

Kettles are located at both entrances to Fred Meyer, Bi-Mart, Grocery Outlet and Safeway. There is also an additional "floater kettle" that is placed at various locations during special events.

Red Kettle checks can be mailed to The Salvation Army, P.O. Box 1041, Florence, OR 97439 and will be credited to the local campaign. All such donations received on or before Dec. 25 will be credited to this year's campaign.

PREVENTION from page 1A

is a Florence-area organization that often deals with individuals in crisis. Executive Director Bob Teter's advice is simple and straightforward as regards the potential downside to the season.

"I want to encourage community members to have their neighbor's back. If you learn a neighbor is home alone for the holidays, invite them over for dinner or bring them food and offer conversation," he said.

According to Teter, despite the overall drop in suicides this time of year, "The holidays can be a breaking point for many. For some it is a painful reminder of loved ones lost. For others it can be a stressful time because they feel the pressure to provide gifts when they are struggling financially. At SOS, we see a huge spike in domestic violence around the holidays. Please remember, although the holidays are a joyous time for many, it is frightening for others. We need to have each other's back."

The idea that other people can help someone in danger by talking to them is a theme throughout the information provided by many support organizations, including the small number of local services tasked with intervening in situations where a potential suicide is of concern. Most of these organizations include local law enforcement in the initial response to a potential suicide call-out. If

someone presents a clear danger to themselves or others, people are to always call 911 first.

Suicide Awareness Voices of Education (SAVE) and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) suggest that one important way to stop a potential suicide is to simply talk to the person perceived as being in danger.

AFSP suggests a direct approach and to assume that you may be the only one aware of the situations. In other words, don't count on others to become involved, do it yourself.

SAVE and AFSP advocate following these suggestions when interacting with a person who may be at risk of self-harm:

- Talk privately with them.
- Listen to what they have to say.
- Tell them you care about them.
- Ask them directly if they are thinking about committing suicide or killing themselves.
- Encourage them to seek medical treatment.
- Avoid minimizing their problems or giving advice.
- Follow through. Escort them to a therapist or to the emergency room.

The police are called in dire situations to insure there is no danger to other members of the public and to determine if firearms are involved as firearms are used in 50 percent of the approximate 45,000 suicides in the United States each year. That means that one person commits suicide approximately

every 12 minutes, averaging 123 self-inflicted deaths a day.

Hanging and poisoning are the second and third most common ways that individuals end their lives.

The fact that there is a misperception about the potential for suicide during the winter months is significant in a number of ways. The most important is the fact that holidays present an opportunity to talk with a family member that may be experiencing depression and even suicidal thoughts.

The need for family and friends to take a more proactive approach to the problem of a potential suicide is mentioned not only by AFSP but also by SAVE, which suggests beginning what may be a difficult dialogue by asking a few simple questions. These might be as direct as "Are you thinking about killing yourself?" to a more subtle approach like, "You seem sad today. Is everything OK?"

The main point is to connect with the person you are concerned about and let them tell you what they are thinking. According to SAVE, if the individual is in immediate danger, do not leave them. If they threaten violence to themselves or others and are weaponized, call 911.

Lori Severance leads Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue's Community Support Team (CST), which has taken over responsibilities that previously were handled by SVFR's chaplains.

Severance is also an advocate for those that

are in crisis. She wants the community to know that there are local avenues available to address difficult situations in life before those situations precipitate a crisis.

"Despite being a small community, Florence does have resources available for people suffering from severe depression, anxiety and/or suicidal thoughts," Severance said. "There are several excellent therapists in town who work with people to overcome their current difficulties. There are counseling agencies such as Options Counseling and PeaceHealth Behavioral Health clinic. There are also agencies that work with addiction issues such as Reconnections and Emergence. NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) has a free drop-in peer-led support group for adults with chronic mental illness. They accept a variety of insurances, including OHP, and many have funds available for those in need who do not have insurance."

To help in determining if someone you know is at risk, AFSP and SAVE have provided a series of actions or behaviors that may indicate a growing danger. If an individual starts giving all of their belongings away or starts to settle business and family uncertainties, this may be a warning. If someone that is depressed continues to lose interest in hobbies or family, this may also be a sign.

One of the most important points made by all professionals who deal with suicide prevention and its tragic

aftermath is clear: Don't discount or dismiss actual threats of suicide or violence. If someone you know or love says they are going to kill themselves, take it seriously and act in some way to help.

"If someone is in acute crisis, Florence has a new Mobile Crisis Response team that can respond 24/7," Severance said. "They are dispatched through Florence Police Department, by either calling 911 or the non-emergency line at 541-997-3515. The MCR team is trained to assess, counsel and provide resources to people in crisis."

For Teter, the important way to assist someone who may be in crisis is to talk to them and then help them.

"The best thing to do for someone considering suicide is to encourage them to seek help, tell them that they can get through it and give them a shoulder to cry on and let them know someone cares," he said. "When they get up the courage to seek help, go with them and continue to check in with them. Seeking help can be a struggle in of itself."

If you or someone you love is experiencing suicidal thoughts, call one of the following hotlines:

- White Bird Crisis Line: 541-687-4000
- Veterans Suicide Crisis Line: 800-273-8255
- The Friendship Line (people 60+): 800-971-0016
- Youth Crisis Line (under 18): 541-689-3111
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255

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What's happening in the Siuslaw region

<p>Weekly</p> <p>Florence Pickle-Ball Association Monday, Wednesday and Friday — weather permitting 8:30 to 11 a.m.; Open to all ages and skill levels Rolling Dunes Park, 35th St, Florence</p> <p>Mondays</p> <p>Band of Brothers Meeting 10 a.m., local veterans meet for donuts, coffee and talking Florence Elks Lodge #1858, 1686 12th St.</p> <p>Sit-n-Knit or Crochet Drop-in Noon to 6 p.m.; \$10 The Mustard Seed, 509 Kingwood St. www.themustardseed1720.com</p> <p>Suicide Survivors Support Group Facilitated by SVFR/WLAD Community Support Team 5:30 to 7 p.m.; open to those who have lost a loved one to suicide Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue, 2625 Highway 101</p> <p>Fridays</p> <p>Florence Testing for HIV & HepC Every second and fourth Friday Hosted by Alliance for Men's Wellness and HIV</p>	<p>Alliance 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Free to public PeaceHealth Oregon Cardiology, 310 Ninth St.</p> <p>Live Music at Three Rivers 7 to 11 p.m.; 21+ Blue Bills Sports Bar at Three Rivers Casino Resort</p> <p>Saturdays</p> <p>Live Music at Three Rivers 7 to 11 p.m.; 21+ Blue Bills Sports Bar at Three Rivers Casino Resort</p> <p>Dec. 21</p> <p>Learn the 10-year legacy of the New Year's Day Peace Hike Sponsored by the Yachats Trails Committee 11 a.m. to noon; open to public Parking pass required Cape Perpetua Visitor Center, 2400 Highway 101 541-547-3289</p> <p>Winter Solstice Lantern Walk Hosted by Serene Abundance Studio 4:30 to 6 p.m.; open to public; bring own light-source Starting at Bridgeport Market</p>	<p>Third Saturday Dinner & Dance 6:30 to 8 p.m. — dinner available for purchase 7:30 p.m. — Gen X Jug Champions music begins Open to public; donations accepted Deadwood Community Center, 91792 Deadwood Creek Road</p> <p>Dec. 22</p> <p>First Day of Hanukkah Begins at sunset</p> <p>4 Spirits Distillery Tasting Noon to 3 p.m.; open to 21+ only Twin Lakes Store, 88940 Highway 101</p> <p>Deadwood Holiday Market noon to 4 p.m.; open to public Deadwood Community Center, 91792 Deadwood Creek Road</p> <p>Dec. 24</p> <p>Christmas Eve</p> <p>Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at Florence Nazarene 5 p.m.; open to public Florence Church of the Nazarene, 1536 12th St.</p> <p>Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at New Life Lutheran 6 p.m.; open to public</p>	<p>New Life Lutheran Church, 2100 Spruce St.</p> <p>Dec. 25</p> <p>Christmas Day</p> <p>Elks Christmas Dinner Noon to 3 p.m.; open to public Florence Elks Lodge #1858, 1686 12th St.</p> <p>Dec. 27 to 31</p> <p>Winter Whale Watch Week whalespoken.wordpress.com</p> <p>Dec. 28</p> <p>Christmas Tree Pickup A fundraiser for Siuslaw Valley Fire & Rescue Firefighters Association All day; \$5 donation Call SVFR at 541-997-3212</p> <p>Intro to Truffle Hunting with Your Dog Hosted by Premier Truffles: Native Oregon Truffles & Mushrooms Noon to 3 p.m.; reservations required Call 651-303-1887</p> <p>Dec. 29</p> <p>Florence Ukulele Club "The Flukes"</p>	<p>1:30 to 2:15 p.m. — Beginners 2:15 to 2:45 p.m. — Advanced Beginners and Intermediates 3 to 4 p.m. — Song Circle for all levels Loaner ukuleles available; open to public Siuslaw Public Library janetwellington@gmail.com</p> <p>Dec. 30</p> <p>Last Day of Hanukkah</p> <p>Dec. 31</p> <p>New Year's Eve</p> <p>NYE 2019 Celebration Hosted by Three Rivers Casino Resort 8:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.; open to 21+ Three Rivers Casino Resort, 5647 Highway 126</p> <p>A New Year's Eve to Remember Hosted by Yachats Underground Pub & Grub and Parish Gap 9 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.; open to 21+ The Yachats Underground Pub & Grub, 125 Ocean View Dr., Yachats</p> <p>Jan. 1</p> <p>New Year's Day 2020</p>
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A Weekly Listing of Community Events in the Florence Area

Submit all events information to PressReleases@TheSiuslawNews.com

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- Tuesday Evening Group (2nd Tuesday) 5-7 p.m. - Ichiban Chinese/Japanese Restaurant • Urologist Dr. Bryan Mehlfahf attends.
- Tuesday Lunch Group (3rd Tuesday) 12 noon - 1:00 p.m. - Ichiban Chinese/Japanese Restaurant • Urologist Dr. Roger McKimmy attends.

Contact Bob for more information:
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