



**SIUSLAW NEWS:
A LOOK BACK AT
130 YEARS**

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Quarterly

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'Shaping the future of communities'

Local Census response rate higher than expected

BY MARK BRENNAN
SIUSLAW NEWS

Under previously normal circumstances, the U.S. Census would be a much higher profile undertaking than it has become in the post-COVID world. However, the 2020 Census is fully underway and changes in the manner in which the Census is being conducted have led to unexpected response results so far in the process.

"The Census Bureau would like to extend our congratulations to the people of Oregon for their high response rate," said Julie Lam, regional director of the Los Angeles Regional Census Office of the U.S. Census Bureau. "Your response matters and will help your community get the accurate count it needs to secure federal funding for critical public services and political representation."

The reasons for the high-

er-than-anticipated household responses are in some part due to the pandemic's restrictions, in addition to the emphasis of multiple online platforms for respondents to utilize when answering Census questionnaires.

Misty Slater, Census Media Specialist for Oregon, Nevada and Idaho, wants all residents that have not responded to this point to know that there is still plenty of time to fill in the questionnaire

online — preempting an onsite visit by Census workers later this summer.

"We are thrilled that we have surpassed our initial goal of 60.5 percent of households that have self-responded to the census. Currently, our national response rate is at 62.0 percent, which is 91,600,000 households that self-responded to the 2020 Census. However, our job is not yet complete.

See CENSUS page 6A

Nonprofit DevNW begins building 12 new affordable homes in Florence



PHOTOS BY LENA FELT/SIUSLAW NEWS

(Above) DevNW has begun its initial phase of construction on its community land trust development in Florence off 15th Street. Tucker Hines, left, and Drew Strout, EITs with Branch Engineering's design team, use a GPS to set surveying pins on the site.

BY LENA FELT
SIUSLAW NEWS

It is no secret that America has a housing crisis on its hands, and Oregon is no exception. In fact, Oregon has the third least-affordable housing of all 50 states, according to Moody's Analytics 2018 report. That is why nonprofits like DevNW have dedicated a lot of time and resources to creating more affordable housing options.

DevNW, a nonprofit organization that offers financial well-being counseling and assistance to Northwest communities, partnered with the City of Florence in 2018 to create 12 new 1- to 3-bedroom homes in the community that are

affordable for low- to medium-income families. Initial construction is underway at 1424 Airport Road, at the corner of 15th and Nopal streets, where the dozen homes will be located.

"The project is exciting for a couple of reasons," said Emily Reiman, CEO of DevNW. "One is that we actually have not been able to do single-family home ownership development for probably 15 years because there haven't been sources of funding available from either the federal government or the state government. And the cost of development was just so high that we couldn't build anything that was affordable for the moderate-income families that we serve."



Reiman and her team worked for several years with partners around Oregon to get the state to create a funding source that supports affordable housing developments. Their efforts paid off in 2018, when the Oregon Legislature began allocating money from general obligation Article XI-Q bonds towards what's called the Local Innovation and Fast Track (LIFT) Housing Program.

See DEVNW page 8A

Oregon minimum wage increases

BY CHANTELE MEYER
SIUSLAW NEWS

On July 1, Oregon's minimum wage increased by .50 cents as part of Oregon Gov. Kate Brown's three-tiered system established in March 2016.

In "standard" counties, including Lane, minimum wage is now \$12. Portland metro areas have reached \$13.25 per hour, and "non-urban" counties are now \$11.50 per hour.

In January 2016, Brown stated, "The costs of essentials such as food, childcare and rent are rising so fast that wages can't keep up. Many Oregonians working full-time can't make ends meet — and that's not right."

The system was devised after the governor met with businesses, working families and the legislature about the rising cost of living. This led to the passage of SB 1532.

Under this bill, the counties of Benton, Clatsop, Columbia, Deschutes, Hood River, Jackson, Josephine, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Polk, Tillamook, Wasco, Yamhill and parts of Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington County are considered "standard" counties. Non-urban counties are Baker, Coos, Crook, Curry, Douglas, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Jefferson, Klamath, Lake, Malheur, Morrow, Sherman, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa and Wheeler.

Between 2016 and 2022, standard counties will see an increase from \$9.75 to \$13.50; non-urban counties will see an increase from \$9.50 to \$12.50 and Portland metro areas will see an increase from \$9.75 to \$14.75.

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Planning Commission to hold hearing on housing development project

Letters protest increase of 126 homes without adequate traffic, groundwater studies

BY MARK BRENNAN
SIUSLAW NEWS

The Florence Planning Commission public meeting and hearing scheduled to take place Tuesday, July 14, beginning at 5:30 p.m. at Florence City Hall, has drawn an unusual amount of attention as commissioners consider a resolution which would approve preliminary development of a major housing complex

on a 9.3-acre plot located on the corner of 35th Avenue and Rhododendron Drive.

The meeting will be held via teleconference and in compliance with Gov. Kate Brown's executive orders mandating physical distancing and restricted public attendance at meetings.

In the past weeks, Siuslaw News has received copies of letters sent to city officials for inclusion in the

hearing by owners of property in close proximity to the proposed development. Many state they have concerns regarding the proposal.

The development proposal has been submitted by 3J Consulting Services, located in Beaverton, Ore., on behalf of the property owner, APIC Florence Holdings of San Francisco, Calif.

The proposed Planned Unit Development (PUD) would include 31

single-family detached homes, 49 single-family attached homes and 46 multi-family homes. The development will also include a "central green," a pavilion, picnic areas, a children's play area and walking trails.

If approved, the project would develop in two phases with an estimated start date of Oct. 1 and completion date of Feb. 1, 2022, for

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Siuslaw News
NEWS &
VIEWS THAT
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COMMUNITY
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FLORENCE, OREGON

WEATHER



Partly sunny with a high of 65 and a low tonight of 54.

Full forecast on A3

COMMUNITY



Boys & Girls prepare for Air Academy
INSIDE — A3

LIFESTYLE



The silver screen returns to City Lights
INSIDE — B

RECORDS

Obituaries & emergency response logs
Inside — A2

SIDE SHOW

Activities and comics every Saturday
Inside — B4

CLASSIFIEDS

Listings and public notices
Inside — B5

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