

**RESCUE from page 1A**

said Schick who, at the time of the incident, said he didn't know how the operator got from the bottom of the cliff back up to the highway. The rescue was the result of some quick thinking from bystanders who had been driving along the winding stretch of the highway when the collapse occurred. Gabrielle Colton, a Florence-area photographer, was passing the accident and joined in the impromptu res-

cue effort. "I was on the way to Devils Churn Friday to photograph an elopement when we pulled up right after the crane had fallen over the cliff," said Colton. "The car in front of us had witnessed the accident; we had just missed it." According to Colton, the occupants in the car ahead of hers began running to the line of cars that had become backed up in order to get others to help pull the operator to safety from below.

"He miraculously survived and crawled out of the machine that had landed on the rocks just above the ocean," said Colton. "We got out and helped unravel a very tangled rope to let it down so that he could tie it around himself." From there, the rescuers were able to pull him up. "It took about 12 people to pull him up from the side of the cliff. There was no [cell] service, and it took a while for someone to call 911," said Colton who, along with the group, was able to success-

fully bring the operator back up to safety after about 20 minutes. It was shortly after that emergency responders arrived. "When the man finally made it to the road, he was smiling and looked thrilled to be alive and was thankful for our efforts," Colton said. Today's road closure, which will begin at 8 a.m., will be on Highway 101 between Sea Lion Caves and Cooks Chasm, south of Yachats and north of Flor-

ence. Local traffic will have access beyond the closures on either side of the project, but there will be no through traffic at any time. According to Angela Beers Seydel, Public Information Officer for ODOT, "Travelers should expect closures or extended delays in the area for the next few weeks as crews build a new retaining wall to hold the road in place." After work is completed, there will be access through

the project area on a single lane with flaggers controlling traffic — but travelers should expect extended delays for an additional week. Once the repair project is complete, the road will again be closed for several days for the drill rig to be recovered from the rocks below using a 200-ton crane, which will block the entire road. For more information on the status of the impacted area on Highway 101, check TripCheck.com or call 5-1-1 for the current road status.

**TAC from page 1A**

along with and City Economic Development Coordinator Kelli Weese, who gave an overview of the responsibilities of TAC members and the upcoming timeline for meetings this year. As she is doing for other city committees, Weese presented slides covering the "do's and don'ts" that are associated with being a member of TAC, the goal of the group and some of its limitations. The upcoming work for the committee includes an update to its workplan suggestions for the Florence City Council, the creation or continuation of TAC subcommittees, and the development of the Florence Transportation System Plan.

"We try to have a good representation of people that are interested in different sectors of the transpor-

tation for our community," said Weese. She also emphasized the distinction between speaking as a community member — where personal opinions can be shared — and as a member of TAC, where it should not. Besides Tomeny, Steele and Napoles, the current make-up of TAC includes Joseph Cullivan, Vicki Dunaway, Larry Farnsworth, Susan Jones, Gary Plunkett, Stephen Raley and Gary Trevisan. Ex-officio members include City Councilor Woody Woodbury, Josh Haring representing River Cities Taxi, David Hope representing Coos County Area Transit, John Ahlen representing Lane Transit District and Kelly Clarke from the Lane Council of Governments. Trevisan is a new member of TAC who was added during the January vetting process at the suggestion of City Councilor Sally Wantz.


"My goal is to lend the handicapped vision of transportation," Trevisan explained. "I am handicapped. I am still able to walk fairly well but I do use a wheelchair, so I am trying to give an idea of what the transportation system could be like for someone who is handicapped. I know when I was able bodied, I never gave it much thought. Now that I am not, it is right in my face." The portfolio for TAC includes most aspects of transportation in the Florence area. Over the past three years, the committee has overseen the addition

of public transportation options to Yachats, Coos Bay and Eugene from Florence. In addition to public transportation, TAC deals with parking issues, including the looming debate over parking in Historic Old Town Florence, bicycle paths and regulations, and other traffic-related issues. The group has also been central to the reinvigoration of the Florence Municipal Airport, working with Florence Public Works to obtain grant funding to improve the lighting systems and the runway surfaces, which has led to an increase in air traffic to and from the

airport. Tomeny, a pilot and a volunteer at the airport, said he is pleased with the recent higher profile of the committee and people who have joined the group. "I am very happy that we got some more volunteers. I'm sorry that we lost some folks that had been on the committee, but I think the backgrounds of people are fantastic and I think that will bring a lot to the committee," he said. He tasked the committee members with considering subcommittees to serve on. TAC meetings are generally scheduled on the second Thursday of the month, with the next meeting planned for March 11, beginning at 2:30 p.m. For more information, visit ci.florence.or.us.

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