

Construction begins on Ninth Street for waterline, roadway improvements

Reedsport-based contractor Laskey-Clifton Corporation began construction of the Ninth Street Waterline and Roadway Improvement Project on Tuesday (April 20). The contractor will complete exploratory excavation in several locations along Ninth Street between Rhododendron Drive and Kingwood Street to verify underground utility locations.

Actual installation of the new 16-inch water main and other construction activities will begin Monday, May 3. The \$2.027 million project will replace the small diameter water lines within Ninth Street, between Rhododendron Drive and Kingwood Street, with a new 16-inch water main; install 18-inch and 12-inch stormwater lines; install

two new stormwater curb inlets; improve a 42-inch diameter stormwater line; replace 30 sidewalk curb ramps in order to meet current American with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards; replace 3,030 square feet of sidewalks; and replace 1,500 linear feet of standard curb/gutter. Once the water, stormwater, curbs/gutters, ADA ramps and side-

walks have been completed, the contractor will complete a full width grind and inlay of new road surfacing material. Underground utility providers have already been out on Ninth Street marking the location of their utilities. The project is schedule to be completed by the end of October. Please proceed cautiously through the work zones or take alternate routes

when necessary. "We'd like to extend our thanks to the public for their patience as we begin this very important project that will bring improved water supplies for fire suppression to the hospital and surrounding area," said Public Works Director Mike Miller. "Although we have planned the construction well and have worked hard to minimize any inconve-

nience, due to the nature of this construction project there will be slight inconveniences. The City sincerely apologizes for any inconvenience we or the contractor might cause during this project and we will certainly try to minimize those inconveniences." For more information, contact the Public Works Department at 541-997-4106.

Peace Harbor volunteer will leave legacy of service to veterans, families

For 11 years, Florence resident Mel Lewis has performed a special kind of volunteer work that probably can't be replicated.

A retired pharmacist who served as a staff sergeant with the U.S. Air Force Strategic Air Command, Lewis signed up to be a Hospice and Palliative Care volunteer with PeaceHealth Peace Harbor Medical Center a few years after moving



Hospice and Palliative Care volunteer Mel Lewis with PeaceHealth Peace Harbor Medical Center was with the program for 11 years. He will soon be leaving to live closer to family in Salt Lake City, Utah.

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from California. He soon found his niche: Providing support to local veterans and their families. "Mel is always someone we could count on to support our vets," said

Karin Guy, Hospice volunteer coordinator. "His ability to care and empathize with them has been a gift from the heart. They have appreciated his capacity to 'just be' while listening to their stories." April 18-24 has been National Volunteer Recognition Week — and it happens to have coincided with Lewis breaking the news to Peace Harbor that he'll soon be moving to Salt Lake City to be closer to family. "He's been one of our most dedicated volunteers and this program will miss him greatly," Guy said. "We want to share our immense gratitude to Mel, and also highlight how important our volunteers are to our patients and their families. They bring so much comfort and support to

many in our community during a time of need." Lewis said he appreciated being able to give back to people who have served the country. "I enjoyed being of some service to someone who needed help, and I enjoyed Hospice and the people who work for Hospice," he added. "The patients liked the added attention from having a volunteer there." PeaceHealth Harbor Hospice volunteers provide various kinds of support: companionship to the patient, respite for loved ones, care for pets and gifts of hand-made flower arrangements. They keep tabs on what supplies families need, and call bereaved loved ones to offer support and resources. Unfortunately, the volunteer program had to

be paused in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but Guy is hopeful Peace Harbor can soon welcome back these invaluable members of the team. "We look forward to when we can have volunteers be back at the bedside of a patient, providing a listening ear and an opportunity for a loved one to take a break." Lewis's absence will be felt even more once the program resumes, Guy added. "We are always in need of more Hospice and Palliative Care volunteers," she said. "No experience is required—just a heart to be there for someone in need." For information about volunteering with Hospice, call Guy at 541-997-3418.

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