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NEWS & VIEWS THAT DEFINE OUR COMMUNITY
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FLORENCE, OREGON

WEATHER

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Full forecast on A3

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'Extreme risk' doesn't deter crowds from Florence



BY MARK BRENNAN & CHANTELE MEYER
SIUSLAW NEWS



PHOTOS BY MARK BRENNAN/SIUSLAW NEWS

Visitors to Historic Old Town Florence had the chance to dine in a new outdoor eating lane thanks to high-visibility barriers the City of Florence placed in front of six restaurants, including (clockwise from top left) 1285 Restobar, Beachcomber and Nosh Eatery. Additionally, uptown restaurant Fresh Harvest Café (courtesy photo) completed paving a 1,500-square-foot patio in time for reduced dining options under Lane County's current designation of "extreme risk" for community spread of COVID-19, which the county reentered on April 30.

Restaurants adapt to restrictions in time for sunny weekend

Last Friday, Oregon Gov. Kate Brown again raised the danger level in Lane County from high risk to extreme risk of community spread of COVID-19. This shift has created numerous difficulties for local restaurateurs and their employees, which have borne the brunt of drastic fluctuations in allowable activi-

ties. Under extreme risk, restaurants are unable to seat patrons inside and must therefore limit their service to outdoor dining or takeout.

Despite concerns presented by a workplace where many are unmasked while eating, Historic Old Town Florence was inundated by visitors. Many seemed undeterred

by the governor's latest announcement reducing indoor restaurant seating, among other restrictions.

The changing nature of the COVID situation has been a challenge for workers, in some cases making it nearly impossible for them to pay their bills and keep their

See EATERIES page 6A

Florence council deliberates on Solid Waste Haulers Rate Review

City cancels Reverse Rhody Days Parade

BY MARK BRENNAN
SIUSLAW NEWS

The Florence City Council was busy on Monday, May 3, as councilors participated in three meetings during the day. Two of the meetings were related to a Solid Waste Haulers Rate Review process undertaken annually to determine what, if any, increase in rates paid would be appropriate to pass on to customers, effective July 1.

The first meeting took the form of a work session, led primarily by Planning Director Wendy Farley-Campbell, the city staff ex-officio representative for the Environmental Management Advisory Committee (EMAC), which has advisory responsibilities for the council.

The meeting was held that morning and, as most city meetings are, was shown on a livestream available to the public.

Councilors were welcomed by City Manager Erin Reynolds, who provided a brief overview of the work to be accomplished and then

turned the presentation over to FarleyCampbell.

The city's planning director first reviewed the history of the rate review process as well as the different types of solid waste and the different size and holding capacity of containers used by haulers to remove and transfer solid waste.

The financial materials scrutinized were provided by the two solid waste haulers authorized to operate in Florence: Central Coast Disposal and County Transfer and Recycling.

Chris Bell from Bell and Associates, hired as a consultant by the city in auditing and interpreting the financial data submitted by the two private haulers, assisted with the explanation of the process undertaken by FarleyCampbell.

"I am very thankful that over the last few years Wendy has asked me to assist the city with the rate review for the haulers. I'll say this, you guys have two haulers that provide great services and they have

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Mapleton elects to have families opt in to standardized testing

April meeting updates March resolution

BY CHANTELE MEYER
SIUSLAW NEWS

The Mapleton School District Board of Directors met for its monthly meeting on April 21. Besides updates on Lane County's elevated risk level for community spread of COVID-19, the board discussed high school graduation, the return of preschool in-person instruction and standardized testing.

Mapleton Superintendent Jodi O'Mara informed the board that graduation is planned for Saturday, June 12, for Mapleton High School seniors. Whether or not the ceremony is held in person will depend on Lane County's COVID-19 risk levels.

"If we remain in high risk, or even go down to moderate or low, we believe we could still have in-person graduation," O'Mara said.

Oregon Department of Education (ODE) has been communicating with Mapleton and other Lane County school districts about grad-

uation ceremonies and where they fall in county health metrics.

"What we're planning is to have a graduation ceremony in person; whether that's outside or inside will be dependent upon our county risk level," O'Mara said.

ODE recommends planning to hold graduations outside. This would allow for greater site occupancy, with numbers determined by the county's risk level as determined by the Oregon Health Authority.

According to O'Mara, Mapleton will plan for outdoors, with an indoor ceremony option dependent on weather.

"It's a lot safer," she added. "We would be able to do that and have more people on site and in person if we did it outside."

On the other side of the spectrum of Mapleton students, the district was able to bring preschool students back to campus for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic began more than a year ago.

See MAPLETON page 6A

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