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## Siuslaw News



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**Siuslaw News**  
NEWS & VIEWS THAT DEFINE OUR COMMUNITY  
VOL. 131, NO. 65  
AUGUST 14, 2021  
FLORENCE, OREGON

**WEATHER**



Mostly cloudy with a high of 64 and a low of 54.  
Full forecast on A3

**COMMUNITY**



Mapleton hosts free Vaccine Clinic  
**INSIDE — A3**

**COMMUNITY VOICES**

**INSIDE — A7-A9**

**SPORTS**



Vikings XC readies for competition  
**INSIDE — B**

**RECORDS**

Obituaries & emergency response logs  
**Inside — A2**

**SIDE SHOW**

Activities and comics  
**Inside — B4**

**CLASSIFIEDS**

Listings and public notices  
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## South Jetty Rd. to undergo construction



Access to crab dock, beaches to be impacted Aug. 16 to October

South Jetty Road will be closed north of beach access #5, which includes the crab dock and two additional beach access points, to all traffic (vehicle, bicycle, foot) from Monday through October as the road undergoes construction and repairs.

By MARK BRENNAN  
SIUSLAW NEWS

The South Jetty of the Siuslaw River is a unique location for locals and visitors, as many people surf and crab at the end of the long road that winds past the miles of dunes that line the road to the jetty. The combination of the moderate waves for surfers to enjoy and the opportunity to go crabbing and fishing has meant the area has become a destination location for travelers and an important recreational spot for locals as well.

However, there have been several serious maintenance issues which have surfaced on this road over the past few years. In addition, the responsibility for maintenance of the pavement, parking lots and restrooms has been unclear at times.

There have been public forums held at Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue, and other locations, which drew dozens of individuals to comment on many aspects of the South Jetty, most focusing on the importance to the community that the proper entities maintain access to the crab dock and the surfing areas at the end of the road.

After a year or two of interagency meetings, public forums and budgetary proposals, it was eventually the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) through the U.S. Forest Service, which ended up with the responsibility for much of the maintenance on the route to the South Jetty.

Now, the near-term plans the USDA has for the area are causing concern among those that use the road and its resources on a regular basis.

On July 22, the USDA released a statement sharing the Forest Service's plans for the upcoming repair.

"Thanks to funding from the Great American Outdoors Act, we will be able to make important road repairs this year," said Central Coast District Ranger Michele Holman. "South Jetty Road in particular has been difficult to maintain for the last few years, as the river current and ocean tides are slowly eating away at the road. We're looking forward to getting both of these roads fixed so visitors can continue to enjoy these areas safely."

Construction for the South Jetty Road project is expected to begin on Monday, Aug. 16, and finish in late October to ensure all the work can be completed ahead of fall and winter storms and high tides.

See JETTY page 5A

COVID-19

## Governments require return to masks

Health advisories declared over rising COVID-19 cases

By CHANTELE MEYER  
SIUSLAW NEWS

On Aug. 10, the Lane County Board of Commissioners unanimously approved an Emergency Public Health Advisory requesting that all individuals, businesses and employers wear masks in indoor shared public spaces, regardless of vaccination status, due to the current unprecedented surge in COVID cases within Lane County.

Similarly, Oregon Gov. Kate Brown held a press conference Wednesday, Aug. 11, to issue two new health and safety measures. The vaccination requirement for state employees and statewide indoor mask requirements seek to address the spike in COVID-19 hospitalizations being driven by the spread of the highly contagious Delta variant.

"Oregon is facing a spike in COVID-19 hospitalizations — consisting overwhelmingly of unvaccinated individuals — that is quickly exceeding the darkest days of our winter surge," said Brown. "When our hospitals are full, there will be no room for additional patients needing care, whether for COVID-19, a heart attack or stroke, a car collision or a variety of other emergency situations."

See MASKS page 6A

## New Rhody Express starts service in town

State grant pays for new vehicle

By MARK BRENNAN  
SIUSLAW NEWS

Providing and using public transit during the time of COVID has been troublesome for both service providers and potential riders. One of the constants during the pandemic has been the ability of Florence-area residents to ride the Rhody Express, often when masked and while maintaining distancing.

The popularity of the service waned during the height of the pandemic, but ridership levels have since rebounded and the addition of a new bus for the route will offer riders an upgrade to the older vehicle in a number of ways, according to John Ahlen, Accessible Services Program Manager, Lane Transit District.

See BUS page 5A

## A BERRY HOT SUMMER

Clear Lake Blueberry Farm yields large crop in fifth summer

By REINA HARWOOD  
SIUSLAW NEWS

As the summer continues, coastal blueberries are back and plumper than ever. Blueberries, native to North America, serve antioxidant health benefits. They are blueish purple, with a light and punchy taste.

This summer, Duane and Debbie Cray, owners of the family-run Clear Lake Blueberry Farm, reopened their blueberry picking service on July 24 for its fifth season to serve the Florence community with "the best crop we've had in four years," the couple said.

The farm offers organic blueberries Tuesday through Saturday from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., charging just \$2 per pint (cash only).

The Clear Lake Blueberry Farm, 84173, Clear Lake Road, is the only you-pick blueberry experience offered in the Florence area.

Families, adults and children from around the Pacific Northwest have come in hot and heavy to fill



Clear Lake Blueberry Farm's fifth blueberry season in Florence will continue through August and potentially into September.

their pails and pick berries to "store up," the Crays said.

Meanwhile, "big pickers" stop by and pack buckets full.

"The amount of fruit we've had in the field is just tremendous this year," the couple said. "It's awesome."

Oftentimes, they've noticed vis-

itors pick from the blueberries hanging around the perimeters at first. As a tip, they encourage berry fanatics to "go inside, because there are bushes overloaded," they said. "Some people won't even go deeper in there and it's like, 'You're missing out! That's where they all are!'"

See BLUE page 6A

**Save the heavy lifting for us!**  
Atiyeh Bros. area rug cleaning and repair service to the Florence area will be August 25th, with return service September 8th and September 22nd for repair orders. We will pick up your rugs, deep clean them in our state of the art facility, repair if needed, and deliver to your home. Please call us at 541-342-3678 to schedule your pickup!

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