

Sign up for SOLVE's statewide Beach & Riverside Cleanup

People can come together with thousands of Oregonians on Saturday, Sept. 25, for SOLVE's Beach & Riverside Cleanup, in partnership with the Oregon Lottery. Volunteer registration is now live and all Oregonians, from Astoria to Brookings, Pendleton to Sunriver, are encouraged to sign up for this statewide cleanup event.

For nearly four decades, SOLVE has hosted the annual

Beach & Riverside Cleanup. SOLVE is a statewide non-profit organization that brings Oregonians together to improve the environment and build a legacy of stewardship. SOLVE mobilizes and trains tens of thousands of volunteers of all ages across Oregon to clean and restore our neighborhoods and natural areas, and to build a legacy of stewardship for our state.

Increasingly, Oregonians are

sounding the alarm to protect freshwater. As more people become aware of the Western States drought crisis, more people want to step up and help where they can.

Removing invasive plant species, nurturing native plants, and collecting litter are all easy ways volunteers can create a huge positive impact on Oregon's water quality.

Each piece of litter collected removes the possibility of it en-

tering a nearby river, waterway, or storm drain, where it can eventually make its way to the sea and contribute to our global marine debris crisis. Invasive plant species crowd out native plants and typically have shallow roots, leading to increased erosion and poor water filtration.

Visit solveoregon.org to see a list of volunteer projects and sign up. All necessary tools and supplies will be provided.

Picnic with Florence STEP

The Florence STEP (Salmon Trout Enhancement Program) Picnic is scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 1, at the Elks RV Park at 5607 Mercer Lake Road in Florence.

The picnic will begin at noon. STEP will provide hamburgers, hot dogs, drinks and condiments. Members are asked to bring a dish to share.

For more information, visit www.florencestep.com.

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and are working really hard this summer," said Johnson. "I think they can come in and aggregate to be really close to about the same that Gracie and Brea were together, which is saying a lot, but I think they can do it."

Also starting as a freshman this year is Maya Wells, who Johnson said is "really good."

The girls' team isn't large, but like the boys' team, their returners are strong and last year's experience at state will help a great deal.

"We don't have a lot of depth right now," said Johnson. "We still have Rylee Colton, who was fifth at the state meet last year and she had a great summer of training. Jane Lacouture and Corduroy Holbrook had great state meets last year, and Cordy gained a lot of experience and confidence coming off of a really great track season where she was big for us on that 4x4."

With Assistant Coach Amy Flora coming on this year to add even more support for the Viks, Siuslaw is definitely set up to succeed.

"We just do what we do, we train every day," said Johnson. "We're looking forward to having a few more chances to run fast with more big meets this year and a full schedule, and not having to deal with the mask stuff, at least at this point. So, it's kind of a breath of fresh air."

Like all of Siuslaw's athletics, the cross country teams are following all governmental guidelines for masking and social distancing as necessary under the COVID-19 pandemic. Johnson's statement came be-

fore Oregon Gov. Kate Brown's announcement that indoor mask use will be required, regardless of vaccination status, starting Aug. 13. It is unknown if further restrictions will be implemented.

"This is an ever-changing landscape," Johnson said.

Siuslaw's first track meet of the 2021-22 school year will be the Country Fair Classic held at the Country Fair Grounds in Veneta on Friday, Sept. 10. Girls begin at 5 p.m., and boys begin at 5:45 p.m.

"The team is a great group

of kids, and I know that they're all just as fired up to try to come back and win again as [us coaches] are," Johnson said. "But you never know what other teams are going to look like. There are a couple of teams on the horizon who were strong last year, who look strong again. So, we'll just go to war, we'll do what Siuslaw does, and then we'll add them up at the end."

To follow both teams' progress this season, visit www.athletic.net/CrossCountry/School.aspx?SchoolID=183.

COACH from page 1B

After her first year in administration as the Dean and AD for Bandon, Flora then spent six years as an administrator for the Coquille School District, working as a vice principal and eventually a principal.

As Siuslaw Elementary School's new principal, Flora looks forward to being involved more completely in Florence's community.

"Now that I'm living in Florence and working here, and I don't have the crazy commute, it just afforded me some more time to become fully immersed in this community and be a part of coaching again," she said. "I have volunteered with the cross country and track programs [at Siuslaw] over the last 10 years, just in a smaller capacity, but now working here, I'll have more time to be more involved."

In the interest of keeping the hiring process impartial, Chris was not on either committee to hire Flora. However, as the assistant coach position's hiring committee did not have relevant experience with cross country, he was able to provide them with interview questions and support with their concerns throughout the process.

One undeniable fact is Flora's qualifications to take on the role. After winning for cross country twice at state in high school, Flora went on to win the 1500 twice and the 800 once for Myrtle Point's track and field program. After leaving high school, she held the state record for her classification in both the 1500 and 800.

"Not only does she have an incredible coaching background, where she came in, in almost every situation, she changed culture to the point where kids were setting school records and winning state championships trophies," Chris said. "She has an incredible background as a competitive athlete."

Indeed, Flora brings to the table experience that Chris has not had, which in turn will help both Vikings' teams a great deal.

"There are a lot of things that I think I do well as a coach, but there are certain things that I can never go back in time

and change," the AD said. "I can never go back and make myself a five-time state champion; I can never go back and make myself a division one athlete; I can never go back and make myself a state record holder and somebody who won national championships in the Junior Olympics. She brings the perspective of that elite-level athlete."

Flora plans to supplement Chris and the already strong Cross Coun-

try program.

"As everybody knows, Chris is an amazing coach," she said. "He's been doing it for a long time, and he's had lots of success, but I think we bring different backgrounds to the program. ... Some of those things that kids are going through, I've experienced, and I feel like I can help bring some of that aspect to the program."

The pair also share a key mentor — Pat Towne, who was an assistant track

coach at Siuslaw, also coached Flora in high school. It's another link to strengthen the coaching of the team.

Coming on, Flora's transition will be smooth as she has already been working with the Viks in a volunteer capacity for many years.

"I already have relationships with a lot of the kids because I'm there when I can be. It is easier to adjust when you're going into a program that you've

already been a part of and have already built some of those relationships and have good connections with not only just the kids, but the families as well," she said.

Chris is also grateful to have Flora on staff as a female coach because she is naturally able to address the needs of his girls' team in a different way having been through the experience herself.

"Just having someone they can really lean on,

and know that she's been through what they've been through, is just really awesome," he said. "And she'll be great for our boys too, because she's a go-getter; she's an animal! And I think that'll be a great complement to our program and a great asset to our kids."

Many of Siuslaw's fall sports teams have started practicing.

For more information, visit www.siuslaw.k12.or.us.



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<https://www.florencecrossroadag.org/church-online>
Other platforms update after the service.
florencecrossroadag.org
office@florencecrossroadag.org

FLORENCE CHRISTIAN CHURCH
2nd & Ivy - 541-997-2961 - Non-Denominational
Service is on Sunday at 10:00a.m.
Sunday Service also streaming live at 10:00 am at florencechurch.com

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(2 blocks east of Hwy. 101 on 18th St.)
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www.churchofchristflorence.org

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RUAAU? All are welcome to explore the answer.
Until it is safe to meet in person, Sunday Worship Services are available 24/7 on our website: www.florenceuuf.org

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