

AMBASSADOR from page 1A
 retired or moved away. We have a great group of people and it is fun to represent the city. So, if anyone is interested, they should just give us a call or come out for our monthly meetings, which are usually at my house. We have dinner and talk about events, and get to know each other.”
 The Florence Ambassadors can often be seen at ribbon-cuttings and events

around town, most recently at the opening of Miller Park’s new concession facility on Aug. 3.
 Bones was the Florence First Citizen in 2005 and has long-term connections to the Florence Garden Club and the Florence Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society. His participation as a volunteer in fundraising endeavors



The Florence Ambassador Board of Directors consists of (from left) Vice President Igor Kuszniarczyk, President Mike Bones, Secretary Kathy Bones and Treasurer Terry Woodward.
 for local nonprofits show that appreciation, besides making me just plain feel good,” he said. “Giving back and helping others is a very rewarding experience in itself. Besides helping our community look good and prosper, there are many opportunities for everyone to volunteer in our community. Do your part.”

HOUSING from page 1A

Each month, the food share serves 50,000 pounds of food, and about 60 percent of the food donated to the pantry comes from the hands of local businesses and people.
 “Without that, there’s so many families that wouldn’t be able to succeed in this community,” Morgan said.
 In the late weeks of June, there was a “significant increase” of shoppers at the pantry, he said. More people were experiencing food insecurity due to a decrease in federal aid and keeping up with rent payments.
 “We perceived that increase was as more individuals were having to either

catch up on rent, or were experiencing some of the federal aid go away,” Morgan said. “And that should be a real concern.”
 He talked about the area’s low unemployment rate, and how people are having a hard time hiring their open positions.
 “Most of the issues with our inability to hire, or inability to find folks to hire, is due to their workers available. It’s something that we as a community can definitely tackle,” he said.
 He talked about how a grassroots organization like food share heavily relies on community support in order to pass on the assistance to others.
 Around 90 of Florence

Food Share’s clients are unhoused, which could mean couch hopping, staying in their cars or living on the streets.
 Morgan reiterated how the foundation of the community is dependent on housing, and therefore it should be a community effort to address it.
 “We really try to connect those folks with resources that help them out of that situation,” he said. “Because as a community, it’s just better for everyone to be staying somewhere safe.”
 On Aug. 16, Oregon Gov. Kate Brown extended the residential mortgage foreclosure moratorium until Dec. 31, 2021. This means Oregon homeowners are protected from losing their homes due to foreclosures if they have experienced lost income during COVID-19 and are unable to pay their mortgage.

For the 30 percent of Oregonians who fell under the likelihood of eviction or foreclosure earlier in August, this may be helpful announcement.
 “As we continue to see record high numbers of COVID-19 hospitalizations driven by the Delta surge, I am committed to ensuring that Oregonians have a warm, dry, safe place to live during this pandemic,” said Brown. “Extending the temporary residential foreclosure moratorium another three months will prevent removal of Oregonians from their homes by foreclosure, which would result in serious health, safety, welfare and financial consequences, and which would undermine key efforts to prevent spread of COVID-19.”
 For Oregon renters, rental assistance continues to

provide a 60-day safe harbor period from eviction for nonpayment of rent. People can find more information at OregonRentalAssistance.org.
 Though Florence ranks the sixth-best place to retire in Oregon, founded by SmartAsset’s 2021 list, affordable and available housing remains scarce behind closed doors. The impacts of this have opened an economic recession, negatively impacting the overall livelihood of the community, its local businesses, organizations, employees and families.
 The need for housing grows as newcomers move in and pull housing opportunities from right underneath long-term residents who live in search of a home.
 Coldwell Banker Coast Real Estate Principal Broker Andy Johnson believes housing affordability and availability are an issue, and what used to be considered affordable homes have “almost evaporated,” he said. “The main driver is the popularity of Florence and people retiring, or perhaps buying a second home.”
 Local real estate companies have noticed a steady number of people buying homes. On average, there are

new listings every day, but the demand for available and affordable housing outweighs the supply.
 “Anything that was once \$100,000 is now over \$300,000. It’s just the nature of supply and demand with the market,” Johnson explained. “We’re just doing the best we can, trying to bring good homes to the market that are affordable, and at the same time trying to get sellers the most for their property.”
 In terms of local real estate’s involvement in the economy, Johnson believes homeownership facilitates several business opportunities in the community.
 “If somebody is here buying a house, perhaps they’re going to remodel, and maybe that’s going to give contractors, flooring and appliance companies some work. Insurance companies as well,” he said. “All of those things that are associated with homeownership. It’s multifaceted, and that’s how we kind of help the economy.”
 Johnson reiterated how important a collaborative effort is in bringing affordable and available housing to the area. “That’s what it’ll take,” he said.
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