

RESTAURANTS from page 1A

Locally, recent short-term closures include The Hukilau, Bridgewater Fish House, Little Brown Hen Café, Novelli's Seafood and Dairy Queen. Not all of these closures are directly related to COVID, as equipment issues at the Brown Hen and Novelli's are to blame for closures at those locations, but repair times have been extended as shipping and production of components needed for repairs has been interrupted, in some instances for months.

Meanwhile, short-term closures at Hukilau and Bridgewater are due to positive COVID tests and both

establishments have shut their doors for multiple days to deal appropriately with the virus and its after effects. In addition, Dairy Queen has closed due to an as yet unexplained fire, but the extensive damage incurred by the establishment will take a major repair with a time-frame extending well into 2022. The cause of the fire remains under investigation by local and state fire marshals.

Some restaurants are also closing permanently. Paul Meeker is the owner of the Off Bay Street Bistro and he has decided recent developments at the business, tangentially related to COVID, will force him to close.

In a statement, he wrote, "We have overcome and persevered through many obstacles since the opening of our restaurant in July 2019. The pandemic restrictions and shutdowns, the passing of our beloved employee Ryan, the chimney fire we had, the lack of employees, food ordering restrictions and the lack of provisions have all been difficult hurdles we have overcome."

The final burden came with a city-mandated need for an upgrade to the fire suppression system for the building. As tenants, the owners of Off Bay Street Bistro could not afford this improvement.

"We have spent many hours trying to come up with ideas to solve this dilemma, unfortunately to no avail," Meeker said.

The restaurant plans to close in October.

"We are not asking for money and we don't want to set up a GoFundMe page or anything like that. We just want to inform the public, with a heavy heart, that we will be closing and we want to thank you for the support you have given us throughout the years. We appreciate you very much," Meeker said.

Up on the highway, Claw-



MARK BRENNAN/SIUSLAW NEWS

The second local restaurant that has decided to close permanently is Off Bay Street Bistro.

son's Wheelhouse officially closed on Aug. 15. The restaurant was unable to navigate the shifting mandates from the state and the available product from their food vendors, along with a shortage of staff.

There have been some winners in the restaurant shakeout, as venues with outdoor seating or larger interior spaces have been the beneficiaries of short-term

closures at other establishments. In addition, city programs have allowed some businesses to utilize parking spaces in front of restaurants for additional seating. Restaurants have also been able to adjust their menus to accommodate available food supply.

The City of Florence is hoping to work with restaurant owners having trouble purchasing and receiving

food items.

Senior Economic Development Analyst Sarah Moehrke and city staff have been communicating with partners at the county and state levels to find resources to support the local food and beverage community. Restaurants in need of resources can contact Moehrke at sarah.moehrke@ci.florence.or.us for more information.

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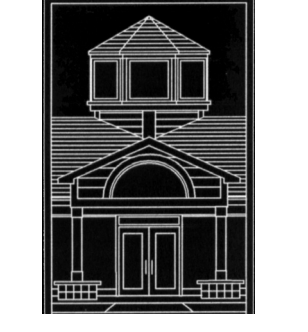
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Book Review
"Fox and I: An Uncommon Friendship"
By Catherine Raven

When Catherine Raven finished her PhD in biology, she built herself a tiny cottage on an isolated plot of land in Montana. She was as emotionally isolated as she was physically, but she viewed the house as a way station, a temporary rest stop where she could gather her nerves and fill out applications for what she hoped would be a real job that would help her fit into society. In the meantime, she taught remotely and led field classes in nearby Yellowstone National Park.

Then one day she realized that a mangy-looking fox was showing up on her

Library Tidings

News about the Siuslaw Public Library By Kevin Mittge

property every afternoon at 4:15 p.m. She had never had a regular visitor before. How do you even talk to a fox? She brought out her camping chair, sat as close to him as she dared, and began reading to him from "The Little Prince."

Her scientific training had taught her not to anthropomorphize animals, yet as she grew to know him, his personality revealed itself and they became friends. From the fox, she learned the single most important thing about loneliness: we are never alone when we are connected to the natural world.

Friends, however, cannot save each other from the uncontained forces of nature.

"Fox and I" is a poignant and remarkable tale of friendship, growth, and coping with inevitable loss — and of how that loss can be transformed into meaning. It is both a timely tale of solitude and belonging as well as a timeless story of one woman whose immer-

sion in the natural world will change the way we view our surroundings — each tree, weed, flower, stone or fox.

Library YouTube Channel

Do you want to know about new authors to read? View past library programs that you might have missed? Would you like to see spotlights on particular library collections? If so, then you should be visiting the library's YouTube Channel. Just visit the library's website, www.siuslawlibrary.org, and scroll to the bottom for the YouTube link. We now have almost 100 videos for view, ranging from new books, to Endowment Books, to Best Books, to a Christmas music concert.

Holiday Closure

In honor of Labor Day, the library will be closed on Monday, Sept. 6. Regular hours in Florence resume on Tuesday, Sept. 7, at 11a.m. As a reminder, the library's current hours are

Monday and Tuesday, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., and Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

In Mapleton, the branch hours are Thursdays, noon to 5 p.m.

Try TumbleBooks!

Have you checked out TumbleBooks for Kids yet? Library patrons have access to this fun new service for all ages, including animated ebooks and math help for kids, YA titles, audiobooks and romance novels.

To get started, go to the library's website and click on the "Magazines and Research" tab on the right hand side of the page and then select TumbleBooks at the very bottom of the page.

For more information

about the Siuslaw Public Library or its programs, stop by 1460 Ninth St. in Florence or 88148 Riverview Ave. in Mapleton, or visit www.siuslawlibrary.info.

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SIUSLAW NEWS

Mapleton Lions cancel breakfast

The Mapleton Lions Club has announced the cancelation of the September pancake breakfast due to safety during rising COVID-19 cases in the community.

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FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17 * 7 p.m. (Free/tickets required)
Keynote Speaker - Melody Carlson

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 18 * Book Fair * 10 a.m.- 4 p.m.
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