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## Siuslaw News

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**First Day  
 of Winter**  
 Tuesday, Dec. 21

Siuslaw News  
 NEWS &  
 VIEWS THAT  
 DEFINE OUR  
 COMMUNITY  
 VOL. 131, NO. 102  
 DEC. 22, 2021  
 FLORENCE, OREGON

**WEATHER**



Rain with a high of 51 and a low of 40.  
 Full forecast on A3

**COMMUNITY**



Community donates to students  
**INSIDE — A3**

**LIFESTYLE**



Elks host Hoop Shoot  
**INSIDE — B**

**RECORDS**

Obituaries & response logs  
**Inside — A2**

**TV GUIDE**

**Inside — B3-B4**

**KIDS CORNER**

Activities for kids  
**Inside — B5**

**CLASSIFIEDS**

Listings & notices  
**Inside — B6**

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### Heavy rains cause flooding, landslide on Highway 126



By ZAC BURTT & CHANTELE MEYER  
 SIUSLAW NEWS

With over six inches of rain in Florence between Dec. 17 and 19, a landslide closed Highway 126 between mileposts 9 and 10 the afternoon of Dec. 22.

Oregon Department of Transportation closed the highway Monday night due to the estimated 300

yards of mud, rock and trees, with additional debris coming down overnight. ODOT hoped to reopen the highway by Tuesday afternoon. In addition, the heavy rains had the Siuslaw River at near flood levels Monday.

That morning, water had risen onto Highway 126 in Cushman, but the road was still passable.

See ROADS page 6A



ZAC BURTT/SIUSLAW NEWS

### 400 families get Christmas baskets of food from Florence Soroptimists

By MARK BRENNAN  
 SIUSLAW NEWS

On Saturday, the Soroptimist International of Florence distributed hundreds of Christmas Food Baskets to area residents, free of charge. The group has coordinated the giveaway for many years, since a Florence Soroptimist started keeping food and toy donations in her shop for people in need.

“We are so proud to help our community this holiday season,” the Soroptimist of Florence Oregon posted on the Facebook page.

Member Carol Bennett coordinated this year’s distribution. She said she was pleased with the giveaway and particularly with the turnout of the many volunteers needed to stage the event.

“Without the help of all of our volunteers this would be impossible,” Bennett said. “We distributed close to 400 boxes here and we would be unable to do any of this if we didn’t also have the support of our community partners at



Soroptimist of Florence and area volunteers distributed hundreds of boxes of food to local families on Dec. 18 as part of the annual Christmas Baskets program.

Fred Meyer, Safeway and Grocery Outlet?”

Bennett was also appreciative of the donations from smaller businesses like Big Dog Donuts, who supplied dozens of donuts and coffee to the more than 100 people who attended the event to load and distribute the food boxes.

“We get a lot of support,” Ben-

nett said. “This is a generous community.”

Each box of food contained either a turkey or chicken, apples, stuffing, carrots, “cuties” mandarins, butter, potatoes, dinner rolls, canned green beans, canned corn, applesauce, fruit cocktail, graham

See GIVE page 6A

### LIT UP FOR THE HOLIDAYS



CHANTELLE MEYER/SIUSLAW NEWS

Heceta Head Lightstation celebrated the 25th Victorian Christmas Open House over two weekends in December. The Heceta Lighthouse Bed & Breakfast enhanced the interior of the historic Lightkeeper’s Cottage with cheerful traditional decorations and lit up the exterior. Each night of the event featured local musicians and the chance to meet Santa Claus. In the distance, the lightstation cast beams of light across the clouds, sea and trees. Brave adventurers were encouraged to walk past the gift shop and up the mostly lit path to see the lighthouse at night. Learn more about future events at [www.hecetalighthouse.com](http://www.hecetalighthouse.com).

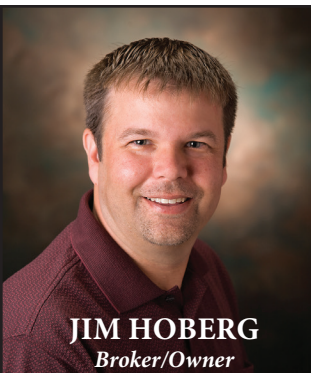
### Gov. encourages vaccine, booster to protect against Omicron

#### Variant detected in Lane County

In a Dec. 17 press conference, Oregon Gov. Kate Brown provided an update on the current state of COVID-19 in Oregon. She was joined by Oregon Health Authority Director Patrick Allen, State Epidemiologist Dr. Dean Sidelinger, Chief Medical Officer at the Oregon Health & Science University Dr. Renee Edwards, and Lead Data Scientist at OHSU’s Business Intelligence Unit Dr. Peter Graven.

“This week we identified the first cases of the Omicron variant in Oregon. While we are still learning about this new variant, it is clear from the experiences of the United Kingdom and other countries that we have only weeks to prepare before Omicron hits our communities and health care systems in full force,” said Brown.

See OMICRON page 5A



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