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Florence, Oregon

Siuslaw News

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Wednesday, January 28, 2026

Number 4 • 136 years



Tony Reed photo

Building unity and peace

Over 100 people took to the streets of Old Town Jan. 17 to honor the memory and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The parade was preceded by a rally gathering at Nopal and 1st streets, and concluded the following day with a showing of Selma at the City Lights Theater. Selma is a 2014 historical drama chronicling Dr King's 1965 voting rights campaign in Selma, Alabama, focusing on the struggle for Black Suffrage, the historic marches to Montgomery, and the eventual signing of the Voting Rights Act. All were invited to recommit to the dream of peace, love and equity. See more photos at thesiuslawnews.com

City Council preps for Flock cameras decision

SIUSLAW NEWS STAFF

The Florence City Council held a shorter-than-usual work session Jan. 22 to formulate a final determination on its position regarding the use of Flock license plate reading cameras. The meeting began with a synopsis by City Attorney Ross Williamson, who reminded counselors that they are part of a representative government, wherein they represent the community in matters on



A screenshot from the Jan. 22 City Council work session live feed.



Sen. Ron Wyden stands next to Florence Mayor Rob Ward during a town hall last week. Tony Reed photo.

Sen. Wyden comes to Florence

By TONY REED
The Siuslaw News

Oregon Senator Ron Wyden hosted a town hall Jan. 21 at Siuslaw Middle School to hear and answer questions from about 300 people in attendance. Mayor Rob Ward noted that Wyden had already hosted 1,142 town halls in Oregon.

Wyden answered a host of questions about state and national affairs, ranging from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to the Epstein files.

One speaker opened by noting that he was appalled at the actions of immigration and customs enforcement around the country, particularly in Minneapolis, saying that the agency is the largest of its kind in the nation and possibly the world. When asked if any of

the funding for ICE could be redistributed into local law enforcement and community safety, Wyden said this was another discussion about whether or not to "fund the government."

"The Senate has no business funding ICE without new, strong guardrails against the lawlessness of the Trump administration," he said to applause in the gym. "It's all about accountability. It's time to take the masks off the ICE Agents. Something I feel very strongly about is protecting the rights of communities like Newport to make sure that they are not going to have forced detention centers. I don't want to have 'Airport Alcatraz' in Newport. I think it's time to make sure the communities

"As I sat back and reflected on it, I asked, what do I know about these medical treatment centers?" he said. "The truth was, not much."

He said he looked into it and at first assuming methadone was just another drug.

He said that upon visiting the clinic in Eugene for a day, he discovered that most of the clients, by all appearance, are just regular folks.

"It really got me thinking, okay, what could this do for Florence?" he said. "Since my first campaign four or five years ago, Florence needs more services, they want the county to be involved more. So I thought okay, maybe this is something Florence wants. You know what, I drive by one of those clinics twice a day. It

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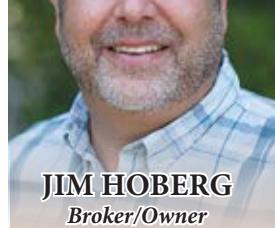
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Watch Those Little Changes – They Add UP

By BOB HORNEY

So, what are these little changes that we should be on the watch for?

I submit a couple personal experiences which can and do make a significant difference in our lives – and are sneaky in how they do it. I'm referring to very subtle changes occurring over many years. They can be quite significant when the total change is considered. Last December, Marianne and I joined the Cataract Generation after being counseled for a few years that the time was approaching. Exam by exam our prescriptions changed for the glasses we were wearing.

Those little changes were giving us a clear

signal...if...we were paying attention. We finally got the clear vision when told if we waited too long the cataracts would harden and surgery become less effective.

That's when we said it was time to take that next (and necessary) step – cataract surgery. Cataract surgery is also referred to as lens replacement surgery which I like better because it is more specific about what cataract surgery is all about. Personally, what was holding me back those years while my eyesight was diminishing and I was being advised my cataracts were growing was the description of the surgery. To understand that my eyes would be cut open, cleaned out

as necessary and a new lens inserted didn't seem very inviting. (Little did I know that I would feel ABSOLUTELY NO PAIN with either eye's surgery!)

I admit that the decision was made easier because Marianne made her decision to get her cataract surgery done at the same time. Good neighbors drove us to Eugene in our vehicle which enabled us to each get our left eye corrected on December 22 and our right eye corrected on December 29 – two trips to Eugene rather than 4 trips.

We sincerely appreciate Dr. Mando and his staff working us both in with only one patient between us on the 22nd and back-to-back on the 29th. That

kind of cooperation is certain to be valued by his patients. Marianne and I highly recommend sooner rather than later.

Our results? We have been completely astonished by the absolute clarity of our vision. Who knew everything was so bright and colorful! After wearing prescription glasses plus tinting for glare for so many decades, we had no idea how truly amazing everything looked. It's a whole new world out there!

Now this...Growing up on a 365-acre farm in Indiana and spending hours and hours working in very loud and noisy conditions, no one gave a second thought to protecting one's ears from that noise. You know, "It

is what it is" and we will all end up with squealing hearing aids. That was part of life growing up on farms.

I actually hid my hearing loss for years – certainly more from myself than others since I was directing choirs for many of those years. I distinctly remember Marianne asking me while we were living in Hemet, California – Do you hear that bird? Nope, as far as I was concerned, there was no bird out there in the back yard. That went on until visiting Puyallup, WA one summer and going to the State Fair.

We came across an exhibit offering free hearing tests. Marianne convinced me to get tested. They examined me and

then asked me what I did for a living. I'm a middle-school chorus teacher I answered. Their comment – Boy, you must be good at faking it. When we returned to Hemet, I immediately scheduled a hearing exam and got the same results. Voila!

Suddenly, I was hearing sounds that I hadn't heard in years, including those birds in our backyard. Life was full of sounds and the TV Ears were shelved!

The lesson here is that many of these little changes are too subtle for us to pick up on our own. So, pay attention when someone mentions the changes that you don't notice...you may put renewed sights and sounds back in your life.

Florence Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (FUUF) Look, Over There!

Last week at FUUF, we reflected on resistance—how it often emerges after tragedy, when grief or outrage pushes us to respond. We explored what it means to build our capacity for

resistance ahead of time, so we are grounded, connected, and prepared rather than scrambling in the aftermath of a crisis.

This Sunday, Feb 1, we turn toward resilience. If resistance is pushing

back, then resilience is bouncing over—adapting, re-rooting, and continuing forward with care. Resilience is not about avoiding pain, but about cultivating the strength to stay present and engaged

through difficult days. Come be with us as we explore the medicine of resilience as both spiritual practice and practical strategy for living through hard times—together.

Florence Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
87738 Highway 101 at Heceta Beach Road
Doors open at 9:30; program begins at 10am
Everyone is welcome to join us
For more information, please contact: Sally Wantz ~ Florence.Unitarian@gmail.com

POLICE LOG

Florence Police Department responded to the following calls from January 13th to January 19th

TUESDAY, JANUARY 13TH

At 12:53 p.m., officers responded to the 2000 block of 12th Street for a reported theft. Officers were informed of a possible theft, and the case remains under investigation.

At 1:56 p.m., officers responded to a report that a vehicle had hit a subject in a wheelchair in the 700 block of Maple Street. Officers found the subject had sustained injuries and was taken to the hospital. Officers were able to move the motorized chair.

At 2:36 p.m., officers responded to the 200 block of Munsel Creek Drive for a report of a person yelling. Mental crisis response staff also responded, and the subject left the area with them for evaluation.

At 3:20 p.m., officers responded to the area of 23rd and Willow for a reported dog attack. Officers arrived to find a girl with a dog that was aggressive, but did not bite the reporting party.

At 4:12 p.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle crash in the 500 block of Highway 101. One driver was cited for making an illegal U-turn. Neither party reported being injured.

At 4:57 p.m., officers responded to the area of 35th Street and Highway

101 for a reported vehicle crash. One driver was cited for reckless driving, reckless endangerment and disobeying a traffic signal.

At 5:38 p.m., officers responded to the 1000 block of Highway 101 for a report of a vehicle that ran into a building. Officers arrived to find the vehicle gone and only minor evidence of a vehicle hitting the building. Officers contacted the driver and advised him to contact the building owner.

At 9:18 p.m., officers made contact with the subject in the 1500 block of 12th Street to find he had a felony warrant from Coos County. The subject was taken into custody.

At 11:04 p.m., officers responded to the 2200 block of 12th Street for a report of noise from a neighboring residence.

Officers arrived to speak to the neighbor, who denied making any noise. The neighbor was counseled that officers would return if the noise resumed.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14TH

At 9:57 a.m., officers responded to the 2700 block of Willow for a report of a dog attack. Officers arrived to find the same 10-year-old girl with a dog from a previous call and counseled her.

Officers found that no bite occurred.

At 5 p.m., a subject came into the police department to surrender a BB pistol.

At 2:27 p.m., a subject came into the police department to turn themselves in on an active warrant from Florence Municipal Court

At 5:53 p.m., officers responded to the 1100 block of Highway 101 for a report that a subject had been assaulted and was bleeding. Officers found the victim uncooperative, but she later admitted that another female subject attempted to burn her with a blowtorch. The case remains under investigation.

At 11:18 p.m., officers responded to the 900 block of Highway 101 for a subject reporting unauthorized charges to his bank card.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 15TH

At 4:00 a.m., officers responded to the 2400 block of Oak Street for a report of an assault occurring. After an investigation, officers arrested one subject for strangulation, assault 4 and booked him into a detox cell.

At 5:35 p.m., officers responded to the 4700 block of Highway 101 for a report of a very intoxicated subject attempting to defecate and removing clothing. Officers arrived to locate the subject, who was uncooperative. The subject was arrested for disorderly conduct.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 16TH

At 7:43 a.m., a caller reported hearing two explosions in the area of 21st and Willow Street.

Officers suspected the noises may have come from over the dunes, but were unable to locate the source.

At 10:44 p.m., officers responded to the 400 block of Kingwood for a report of a hit-and-run that

reported that a driver in the area of Highway 101 and 18th Street did not look both ways before proceeding. Officers in the area were unable to locate the vehicle.

At 1:48 p.m., officers responded to the 4700 block of Highway 101 for a reported shoplifter. Officers made contact with the subject and cited him for Theft 2.

At 3:15 p.m., a business in the 4000 block of highway 101 reported an intoxicated subject inside a store. Officers arrived and contacted the subject, who was advised to leave.

At 4:48 p.m., a caller reported being bitten by a dog in the 1500 block of 12th Street. The caller refused an in-person interview but sent emails to the department.

The case remains under investigation.

At 6:21 p.m., a caller reported a possible hit and run with a vehicle in the 5600 block of Highway 126. The caller wanted officers to find the vehicle so they could exchange insurance information.

Officers found the vehicle at a residence but could not contact the owner. A card was left on the car with instructions.

At 8:12 p.m., a caller reported hearing two explosions in the area of 21st and Willow Street. Officers suspected the noises may have come from over the dunes, but were unable to locate the source.

At 10:44 p.m., officers responded to the 400 block of Kingwood for a report of a hit-and-run that

caused damage to a vehicle. Officers determined probable cause to investigate the case as a possible DUI. Officers arrested Kenneth Bartley for DUI, Driving while suspended, reckless driving and reckless endangerment.

Officers then determined Bartley had a warrant from Florence Municipal Court for failing to appear in court after a DUII arrest on Jan. 10.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 17

At 7:53 a.m., an officer on patrol in the 4300 block of Highway 101 was waved down in regard to a possibly intoxicated subject. Officers made contact with the subject, who was having other issues.

Officers were able to arrange a ride home for the subject.

At 1:47 p.m., Reedsport Police Department contacted Florence to report that a stolen vehicle may possibly be heading north.

The alert was canceled later when the vehicle was located.

At 11:02 p.m., Florence police officers assisted sheriff's deputies and looking for a possible runaway at a Munsel Creek Road address. Officers knocked on the door of a residence where the juvenile was believed to be, but no one answered.

At 1:21 p.m., a caller reported losing a bag with a wallet in the 400 block of Highway 101.

At 2:48 p.m., officers responded to the area of Heceta Beach and Rhododendron for a

two-vehicle crash. One driver was cited for driving while suspended.

At 5:33 p.m., a caller reported seeing a bottle of alcohol being passed between a driver and passenger in a southbound vehicle on Highway 101. Officers patrolled the area but were unable to locate a vehicle matching the description given.

At 9:36 p.m., a caller reported a vehicle with a trailer in the area of Highway 101 and 126

that was driving off the side of the road. Officers were unable to locate the described vehicle.

At 11:04 p.m., a caller reported a sexual offense in Florence. Officers arrived to make sure the victim was safe and contacted the Department of Human Services.

MONDAY, JANUARY 19TH

At 3:15 a.m., a caller reported a burglary in progress in the 1600 block of Rhododendron. Officers arrived to investigate and, upon looking in a broken window, observed the suspect. The subject was arrested for trespassing, disorderly conduct, and criminal mischief.

At 10:16 a.m., officers responded to the 1500 block of 12th Street for a fight involving several subjects. Officers arrived and calmed the situation.

No one wished to press charges. No further action was taken.

At 6:08 p.m., officers responded to the 1800 block of Oak Street for a report of a missing juvenile. Juvenile later returned safe and sound.

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LETTERS

DEAR EDITOR,

The Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928 is the primary international treaty prohibiting wars of aggression. It obligated signatories, including the United States, to renounce war as an instrument of national policy and settle disputes peacefully.

In 1945 the Crime of Aggression was prosecuted for the first time in history before the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg. In his opening statement, Robert Jackson, chief U.S. prosecutor, described the trial as representing "mankind's desperate effort to apply the discipline of the law to statesmen who have used their powers to attack the foundations of the world's peace and to commit aggressions against the rights of their neighbors". Jackson played a critical role in establishing Nuremberg Principle VI (a) prohibiting crimes against

peace.

The Constitution states that our treaties are the Supreme Law of the Land and that only Congress has the power to declare war. Our Uniform Code of Military Justice declares an order to be unlawful if it violates U.S. laws.

We now have a man-child President threatening military action to annex Greenland. Our NATO allies are fuming. If there were a Nobel Prize for Bluster and Wrongheadedness....

One can only hope that our military leadership and Congress will do their duty.

Jim White
Florence

DEAR EDITOR,

It is time we the people admit what the rest of the world already

is saying out loud: the person in the Oval Office is not OK. If Congress is unable to impeach and convict him because too many Republicans are still in his thrall, then perhaps we can instead impeach, convict, and remove his more spineless and his more poisonous advisors, beginning with Kristi Noem; Pam Bondi; Robert Kennedy, Jr.; Marco Rubio; and especially Stephen Miller. It is too late for us to reclaim our position as leader of the free world—our allies would be foolish ever to trust us again—but not too late to save what remains of the rules-based world we once knew, if not for the world, then for our children and grandchildren. I know this message sounds like hyperbole, but I assure you it is not. The time for drastic measures is now.

Debra Walker
Florence

Tax season opens Jan. 26

OREGON DEPT. OF REVENUE

With the start of tax season less than one week away, the Oregon Department of Revenue is providing guidance to help taxpayers file their return and claim their share of Oregon's \$1.41 billion kicker. Oregon will begin processing e-filed 2025 state income tax returns on January 26, 2026, the same day the IRS will begin processing federal returns.

You have to file a return to get your kicker.

The kicker is a refundable credit that will either increase a taxpayer's Oregon state income tax refund or decrease the amount of state taxes they owe. It is not sent to taxpayers separately as a check.

Only taxpayers who filed a tax year 2024 return and also file a tax year 2025 return can receive a kicker. The credit is a percentage of Oregon personal income tax liability for the 2024 tax year.

ELECTRONIC FILING IS FASTER—ESPECIALLY IN 2026

On average, taxpayers who e-file their returns

and request their refund via direct deposit receive their refund within two weeks. E-filed returns will be processed in the order they are received, with the first refunds expected to be issued February 17. For paper filed returns, refunds will not start being issued until early April.

Due to the late receipt of tax forms and information from the IRS in late 2025, processing of paper-filed Oregon personal income tax returns is expected to be delayed until late March, a process that has historically begun in February.

The delay in paper return processing will mean that the department won't be able to tell taxpayers who file paper returns that their return has been received until paper return processing starts at the end of March and their specific return enters processing. That also means information on paper-filed returns won't be available in the "Where's My Refund?" tool until that time.

Free e-filing options open January 26 Oregon residents who normally mail their paper tax return to the department should consider using

Direct File Oregon, a free filing option available through Revenue Online, or other online tax preparation software, to e-file and receive their refund—and their kicker—sooner.

In addition to Direct File Oregon, other free filing options are also available. Free guided tax preparation is available from several companies for taxpayers that meet income requirements. Using links from the department's website ensures that both taxpayers' federal and state return will be filed for free.

All electronic filing software options approved for filing Oregon personal income tax returns can be found on the Electronic filing page of the agency's website. Taxpayers seeking to hire a professional to prepare their taxes can find helpful tips in the department's "How to Choose a Tax Practitioner" video.

FREE AND LOW-COST TAX HELP

Free tax preparation services are available for low- to moderate-income taxpayers through AARP

Tax Aide, VITA, and CASH Oregon. United Way also offers free tax help through their MyFreeTaxes program. Visit the Department of Revenue website to take advantage of the software and free offers and get more information about free tax preparation services.

HOW WILL U.S. POSTAL SERVICE CHANGES AFFECT FILING?

Taxpayers who choose to file a paper return, should mail it early. Due to changes at the U.S. Postal Service, returns mailed in after April 9 may not receive a postmark on time. Taxpayers who still want to mail their paper returns can take them to a local USPS office and request a postmark no later than April 15, 2026.

Paper returns can also be physically deposited in drop boxes available on both the east and west sides of the Department of Revenue Building in Salem, or outside the DOR offices in Portland, Eugene, Medford, and Bend. A drop box at DOR's Gresham office is available during business hours.

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
JANUARY 28	JANUARY 29	JANUARY 30	JANUARY 31	FEBRUARY 1	FEBRUARY 2	FEBRUARY 3
Showers 56° 44°	AM Showers 57° 45°	Showers 57° 45°	Showers 57° 45°	Showers 57° 44°	AM Showers 59° 44°	AM Showers 61° 45°



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The *Siuslaw News* welcomes Letters to the Editor and Guest Viewpoints as part of a community discussion of issues on the local, state and national level. Letters are subject to editing for length, grammar and clarity. Publication of any letter is not guaranteed and depends on space available and the volume of letters received.

Email letters to treed@countrymedia.net

TO BE CONSIDERED FOR PUBLICATION:

Letters must address pertinent or timely issues of interest to our readers at-large. In addition:

• Letters reflect the opinion of the writer. The *Siuslaw News* cannot verify the accuracy of all statements made in letters. Authors should ensure any information is accurate, fair and not from second-hand knowledge or hearsay, and include sources where possible.

• Letters have a suggested 300-word limit and may be edited for grammar and clarity. Occasionally letters will be longer.

• Authors must sign their full name and include their street address (only city will be printed), as well as a daytime phone number and/or email address for verification. The person who signs the letter must be the actual author. *Siuslaw News* does not accept anonymous Letters to the Editor.

• *Siuslaw News* will not print form letters, libelous letters, business promotions or personal disputes, poetry, open letters, letters espousing religious views without reference to a current issue, or letters considered in poor taste. Letters also may not be part of letter-writing campaigns.

• Writers are limited to one published letter every two weeks.

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Emailed submissions are preferred. All letters need to include full name, address and phone number; only name and city will be printed. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed.

The newspaper, at the sole discretion of the publisher and editor, reserves the right to reject any letter that doesn't follow the above criteria.

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Annual Valentines Day Group Vow Renewal returns

The annual Valentine's Day Celebration of

Renewal and Commitment will be held Saturday,

February 14th at the Little Log Church Museum in Yachats.

The annual group renewal of marriage vows originated in 1996 at the historical Little Log Church Museum, which has been closed to the public since April of 2020 while the building underwent comprehensive structural evaluations in preparation for making necessary major repairs and restoration. During the time the museum could not be used, the Valentine's Day vow renewals were held at the Yachats Community

Presbyterian Church. Unmarried committed couples are invited to attend.

The ceremony will be facilitated by Mary Crook, an independent non-denominational minister, who has presided over the event since its beginning. Over the years couples have come from throughout Oregon and several other states to renew their vows. "For some it is a first-time experience, for others it has become an annual tradition," says Crook. Music will be provided by local favorite David Cowden, who plays keyboard and guitar. The theme this year will

be "New Beginnings." Couples who participate will be given a special certificate as a memento of the occasion.

All proceeds derived from this event will benefit the Little Log Church Museum and will be allocated to its restoration project. The Friends of the Little Log Church Museum suggests a donation of \$20.00 per couple. Seating is limited; therefore reservations are required. To reserve a space for this memorable occasion, please call the Events Coordinator Mary Crook at 541-547-4547.

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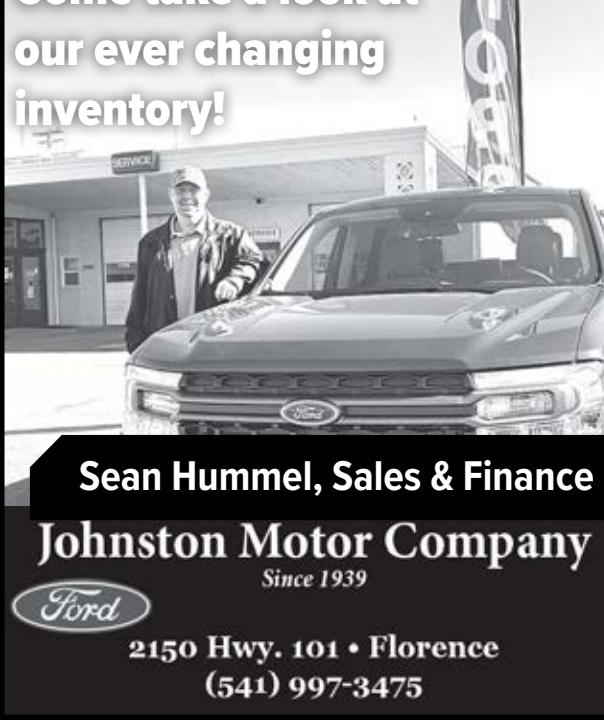
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Committee Democrats uncover Potential abuse by high-ranking Trump official

Independent investigation demanded

Evidence suggests third-highest ranking Interior official's family received \$3.5 million windfall tied to lithium mine her office helped approve

Washington, D.C. — Today, House Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member Jared Huffman (D-Calif.) and Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee Ranking Member Maxine Dexter (D-Ore.) called on the Department of the Interior's (DOI) Office of Inspector General to investigate Associate Deputy Secretary Karen Budd-Falen for potential conflicts of interest, ethics violations, and self-dealing related to her family's multi-million-dollar financial stake in a Nevada lithium mine. Last November, Huffman and Dexter raised serious concerns over Ms. Budd-Falen's failure to come clean to Congress about her financial and ethical dealings, noting the potential that she still illegally had ownership in the cattle ranching entity KJM LLC. Although DOI continued to withhold that information from Congress, they sent the records to a private party. Those records revealed that Budd-Falen not only kept her ownership interest in KJM

LLC, but she also has a stake in three separate cattle ranching corporations. New evidence compiled by Committee Democrats shows Ms. Budd-Falen may have abused her power while at the Department of Interior to give her family a \$3.5 million windfall, tied to their ranching assets. Budd-Falen's family ranch sold water rights to Nevada Lithium Corporation that were essential for the company's Thacker Pass mine to move forward. In November 2019, while serving as Deputy Solicitor with authority over Fish and Wildlife Service matters, she secretly met with company executives in her DOI office. Her family wouldn't see the potential \$3.5 million payday unless the mine won federal approval, which was still pending at the time. The lawmakers' investigation also uncovered that the project faced a series of obstacles and strong pushback from career scientists and other experts at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. These experts flagged serious

concerns about the mine's impacts on endangered species and groundwater, calling portions of the environmental review "wholly inadequate" and not "worth the paper ... it's written on." Those objections were ignored after political appointees got involved, with Bureau of Land Management officials threatening to "press the issue up the chain of command." The Budd-Falen family got their final payday from Lithium Nevada Corporation in November 2023, only after the mine received federal approvals. Despite filing multiple financial disclosures during this period, Budd-Falen reported income from her family ranch as "None (or less than \$201)." Interior has refused to answer congressional inquiries and instructed staff not to cooperate with oversight requests, so the lawmakers are formally and publicly demanding the DOI Inspector General investigate whether Budd-Falen violated federal ethics rules and criminal conflict-of-interest statutes.

the spotlight

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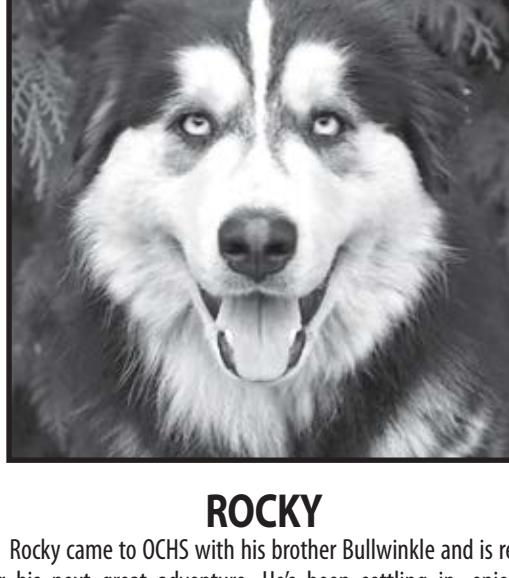
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Rocky came to OCHS with his brother Bullwinkle and is ready for his next great adventure. He's been settling in, enjoying attention, and getting the hang of shelter life. Rocky is looking for a home where he can be a trusty sidekick and star in his own happily-ever-after. If you're missing the other half of your dynamic duo, Rocky might just be ready to save the day with you!

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Environmental Group to meet January 31

Woahink Lake Association will hold its Winter general meeting Saturday, January 31 at the Honeyman Group Meeting Hall (Yurt) on Canary Road. The event, which will feature guest speaker Noelle Windesheim of Trailkeepers of Oregon (TKO), will begin with lunch at noon. Noelle is volunteer coordinator for TKO, a statewide non-profit dating from 2006, whose mission is to protect and enhance the Oregon hiking experience through stewardship, advocacy, outreach and education.

The event is free and open to those interested in the welfare of Woahink Lake and its surrounding watershed. Attendees may bring a dish to pass or a dessert; lunch and beverages will be provided.

The Woahink Lake Association was established in 1995 to promote the understanding, protection, and thoughtful management of Woahink Lake, its watershed, and its ecosystem.

AG's opinion questions transportation tax repeal requested by Gov. Kotek

NIGEL JAQUISS
Oregon Journalism Project

A 90-year-old legal opinion could jeopardize Gov. Tina Kotek's desire to repeal House Bill 3991, the controversial Oregon Department of Transportation funding package she backed, and lawmakers passed in a September special session.

The opinion, dated Nov. 13, 1935, is about a bill lawmakers passed that year related to student fees at Oregon colleges. Before the measure went into effect, however, citizens gathered enough signatures to send it to the ballot for voters to decide.

Then-Gov. Charles Martin asked then-Attorney General I.H. Van Winkle whether lawmakers could simply repeal the bill rather than engage in a ballot fight.

The answer Van Winkle gave, based on case law from Oregon and numerous other states: No.

"The right of the people to a referendum vote on a statute enacted by the Legislature can not be defeated by a subsequent repeal of the act referred," Van Winkle wrote, quoting a Missouri case.

The opinion is newly



Legislative leaders have previously taken a wait-and-see approach to what they will do in the session that starts Feb. 4 and did not take a position after Kotek's call for repeal.

relevant because of the machinations around HB 3991. After lawmakers failed in 2025 to pass a long-planned ODOT funding measure, Kotek then called them back in September, and the Democratic supermajorities ultimately passed a slimmed-down measure that would generate new revenue from a 6-cents-a-gallon gas tax hike, increases in vehicle registration fees, and a doubling of the state-wide payroll tax to fund transit.

But after Kotek signed the bill into law in mid-November, critics of HB 3991, led by state Sen. Bruce Starr (R-Dundee), Rep. Ed Diehl (R-Scio) and Jason Williams of the Taxpayer Association of Oregon then stunned many political observers: They quickly gathered about 250,000 signatures to refer HB 3991 to the November 2026 ballot.

Kotek subsequently changed her mind and now wants to repeal HB 3991 because the

consensus is the referral would succeed in repealing the tax increases.

Rather than allowing critics to use the repeal as a cudgel against her and legislative Democrats between now and November, Kotek decided to take the pain and move on.

But she may not be able to. A reader tipped OJP to the 1935 AG's opinion which is so old it's not online but is findable at the Oregon State Library.

It's unclear what consequence the opinion will have.

Kotek spokeswoman Elisabeth Shepard says the governor was unaware of the opinion when she declared in a Jan. 7 speech: "Here is what I am asking the Oregon Legislature to do in the February session—repeal House Bill 3991."

"The governor's office was not specifically aware of this 1935 opinion," Shepard told OJP in an email today. "The Legislature will certainly be doing its due diligence about how best to proceed on this issue."

(Legislative leaders have previously taken a wait-and-see approach to what they will do in the session that starts Feb. 4 and did not take a position after Kotek's call for repeal.)

Jenny Hansson, a spokeswoman for Attorney General Dan Rayfield, says the Department of Justice has not yet formed a legal opinion on the proposed repeal.

"We are aware of the 1935 opinion," Hansson says. "Since 1935, the relevant portion of the constitution has been amended, and there is additional case law bearing on the issue. We have not analyzed whether the 1935 opinion's conclusions remain valid in light of more recent legal developments."

In a Jan. 9 interview with OJP, Starr said he and his co-petitioners in the referral were disappointed that Kotek wanted to repeal HB 3991, which would short-circuit the process.

"I understand how the game is played," Starr said then.

But when OJP shared the AG's opinion with Starr, he struck a different note.

"This opinion makes the law unmistakably clear," Starr said. "Once the people invoke the referendum, the Legislature has no authority to repeal it. The constitution requires an election. There is no statutory workaround, no procedural loophole, and no legal basis to keep this measure off the ballot."

House Minority Leader Lucetta Elmer (R-McMinnville) echoed Starr's displeasure.

"When more than a quarter million people sign a petition demanding a vote, the response should be transparency and respect, not back-room maneuvering,"

Elmer said. "This is about trusting the people, following the constitution, and letting voters decide for themselves."

Nigel Jaquiss is a Senior Investigative Reporter with the Oregon journalism project. He may be reached at njaquiss@oregonjournalismproject.org

Professional Development Scholarships available

Are you a teacher or non-profit professional looking for a chance to increase your skills? Do you want to bring an exciting new program to your students or clients that will require specialized training? The Florence Rotary Club's Continuing Professional Education Fellowship program is offering up to two fellowships for \$1,000 to \$2,000 to support local people who serve our community. The simple and free application process must be submitted by midnight on Friday, February 13, 2026. The form and additional information are available online at theflorencerotary.org.

Since the Rotary Professional Education grant first began, more

than a dozen local teachers and nonprofit professionals have received training and education. Here are some of the results:

A middle school science teacher attended a graduate-level course at Portland State University focused on engineering and design education.

A local nurse attended specialized training to increase her skill in providing direct service to patients.

An elementary-school teacher who was struggling to engage the highest and lowest achievers in her classroom used our funding to attend a national conference about using tablets to manage differentiated learning.

This approach advocates the use of small workstations throughout a classroom where students can learn in different ways — using a computer or tablet, touching or interacting with objects, engaging in discussion, or pursuing individual study.

A counselor received training to teach women and children how to deal with and prevent domestic abuse.

Anyone engaged in serving the community is eligible, and complete details about the program are available online at theflorencerotary.org.

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2 Weeks Ready Tips:

- Learn about the potential hazards in your area.
- Sign up to receive emergency alerts through the county's Lane Alerts system.
- Know local evacuation levels, procedures, routes.
- Make a communication/care plan with your household and neighbors.
 - Share knowledge, resource, and skills.
 - Know where to go if separated.
- Have an emergency kit (for sheltering in place) and go bag (for evacuating).
 - Keep a go bag in both your house and car.
- Stay tuned for a PSA on "Preparing Your Go Bag".

For more information visit www.WLEOG.org, www.ready.gov, and www.oregon.gov/oem. For a 12-week checklist on being 2 weeks ready, visit www.lanecounty.org/prepare.

This message is brought to you by the West Lane Emergency Operations Group.



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CENTER

From Page A1

looks like a chiropractor's office. You would not know."

Ceniga said though working with facility staff and showing up unannounced, he has learned that the treatment center is not at all what he originally thought.

"So, if you're in here saying no, it will never happen here, I understand. I was there. Do some research, and if you are still that way, reach out to me and talk to me. If anyone wants to do a tour and you are in Eugene, give me a call, we can swing by the clinic and they will let us in. I think you would be impressed. They strive to be good neighbors and they are good that way."

Kachina Inman, Health and Human Services representative, said that while HHS has some contracted services in Florence, it has no buildings, offices or centers here. She said she was hopeful that the center could create more possibilities for HHS presence on the coast.

Dr. James Kassube said the county went through a similar public input process in Eugene in 2021 while opening a clinic there.

Clinical Supervisor Carla Ayres said that upon reviewing survey data, 73% of patients at the Eugene Clinic have a GED or higher education. She said 52% have some college and or have graduated. 80% of patients are employed or retired, 20% are unemployed, and 98% of patients are very satisfied with the treatment provided at the center.

WHAT IS IT?

"There's also confusion about methamphetamine and methadone," she said. "Those are two very different substances. Methamphetamine is a stimulant that people use and that's not something we treat. Methadone is a depressant, and it treats addiction for opiates like oxycodone, fentanyl, heroin [and] morphine." Ayres explained that when a patient comes to the program, they are self referred and do not come from criminal justice referrals.

"People come in because they want help, they want something different and they want to live a different life, so by the time they get to us, they are really motivated. They come into our clinic, we do what's called a pre-screen to determine their eligibility, and if they qualify we do intake paperwork, confidentiality agreements, HIPAA consent forms. Then from there, folks will go in and meet with the doctor and he will do his assessment. We do an assessment and a treatment plan. They will attend what's called orientation groups and that's basically where we're talking about what's expected of them and what we are going to provide for them."

She said all patients agree to certain behaviors in order to take part in the program. Support services, skill building groups, educational process, peer support and housing/employment assistance programs are also available to help people change their lives, Ayres said.

HOW IT WORKS

She said patients begin by coming into the clinic for daily medication, and once they stabilize, and stop using, they are allowed to take medication home so they don't have to visit daily.

Ayres said it's a huge benefit for those who are working, parenting or managing other tasks, because the daily visit can be hard to manage.

It used to be that one folks would enroll in a methadone treatment program, they would plan on staying there for the rest of their lives" Ayres said. "But it's different now. We have different ages and populations. Some folks will come in and stay for a year or two, stabilize and go on with their lives. We have folks that come in that will stay five, maybe 10 years, and go on with their life. Then we have folks who started using at a really young age, and they, most generally, will stay with us for the rest of their lives, but that's not the majority of the people we are serving."

Ayres said all provided services are billed to insurance, but cash is also accepted.

Methadone clinics currently operate in North Bend, Seaside and Eugene. Ayres said while about 30 people from Florence currently come to the Eugene facility, others have decided they cannot make it because of the drive.

Ayres said seven clinics operate in the Eugene Springfield area and everyone has patients from Florence who asked to be notified if a clinic is to open on the coast.

A video showed the interior of the Eugene clinic and the typical process each patient goes through.

She said when the clinic was first opened, neighbors in the area had concerns that led to the formation of a good neighbor agreement between the clinic and area residents.

"So there are a lot of myths about methadone, and I get it, I watch TV too," she said. "I think that's the biggest predictor of that, but before I came to work, I had a lot of the same beliefs that many of you might have. With hearing about the crimes people commit, the less than desirable looks that people have, a lot of myths. Working in that program, none of those have come true. None of that has been my experience and I have been doing this since 2014."

IN RESPONSE

What started as a regulated question and answer session quickly became more personal, with several audience members speaking from the cuff around the room while not giving their names.

When asked, a majority of those in attendance expressed concern for the Wildflower Montessori School, some fearing that the creation of a methadone treatment center could prompt some parents to seek another location for their kids.

However, a repeated response among audience members was the sentiment that the county purchased the building knowing it is across Highway 101 from a known school but expected county commissioners to waive that restriction.

Property line maps could not be found by press time, but the front

doors of both buildings are just over 300 ft apart.

ORS 430.590 says it is unlawful for any person to commence operating a methadone clinic: (a) Within 1,000 feet of the real property comprising an existing public or private elementary, secondary or career school attended primarily by minors; or (b) Within 1,000 feet of the real property comprising an existing licensed child care facility.

However, subsection 4 states that a county or a local public health authority may waive the siting restrictions under this section to the extent necessary to remove unreasonable barriers to patients' accessing medically necessary treatment at methadone clinics.

WHY HERE

It was explained that since the building was formerly a medical facility, it was thought to be ideal and affordable fit for a methadone clinic since it already has the necessary infrastructure. Regardless, many in the room voice their opposition and suggested that if Florence is to have a methadone clinic, it should not be located near a school.

One speaker noted the school has been operating for over 10 years and asked who will be liable if, after a waiver is granted, the operation causes damage, loss or injury.

The question was not answered directly, but Inman said a Good Neighbor Agreement may offer security by putting certain rules in writing.

"We haven't seen those issues come up," Inman said. "We had a karate organization with kids right across the street, and they became a good partner, so I just want to invite parents and people in the community who are thinking about kids to know how we put those safeguards in place. We want to do that with you." She said that in Eugene, the clinic may have brought more safety and security to that neighborhood.

Pressed for an answer to the question of who would be liable, Inman said she would have to confer with her legal counsel. She said that while it has not happened

at the Eugene clinics, it's hoped that if trouble arises, people would call the clinic directly to resolve any issues.

"In Eugene, when a person is exhibiting needing support, we have trained staff in behavioral health so we help support them even though they are not our client," Inman said. "If there was a situation that happened and caused injury or harm, I don't know that [answer] but we owe that to you and we will come back to you after talking to our legal counsel."

METHADONE USE

A speaker identifying only as John said he did not know the program until the school reached out to him. John asserted that since methadone is a drug, patients can be arrested for DUII after using it. He said the program essentially subsidizes the use of drugs, knowing patients currently drive to the Eugene clinic. He expressed further concern that if the clinic is approved, those drivers would be arriving for treatment within 300 ft of the Montessori School.

"Are we allowing driving under the influence?" he asked, later adding that he does not support subsidizing drugs for treatment of addiction.

She said the methadone blocks the neurotransmitter affected by fentanyl, opiates and heroin.

"When they're leaving our clinic, they are not DUII, because they're not intoxicated," she said.

"But if I get pulled over, I would get a DUII," John responded.

"If you've just taken it and you don't have any opiates in your system, you're going to have a different response than someone who's on that medication or on the substances when they leave the clinic."

Ayres said the clinic does not give patients enough medication to intoxicate, but just to taper up to a point where they can function normally.

Ayres said there are many paths to recovery and no one that works for all.

She said if someone can use medication to taper off their addiction and have a better quality of life, it's a win for the clinic, the patient and the

community.

John suggested alternatives for use of methadone treatment funding, such as sponsoring sober living scholarships or providing ride share for those traveling to Eugene.

When he later argued that take home medications could pose a hazard to kids and those who may use it illicitly, Ayres said all patients are given a locking box for the medication and have to abide by rules for storing the medication and bring back prescription bottles when empty. When asked, Ayres confirmed that patients are also subject to random drug testing.

FROM THE SCHOOL

Ms. Kristen, owner of the Wildflower Montessori school, said that while she believes everyone deserves the chance to find recovery and better themselves, she felt the county dropped the ball regarding location and planning.

She said that between the families the students and others, she sees about a hundred people per day go through her building.

"I don't know what to expect yet, from something like this, but I know my job, as a business owner and as a teacher is to protect my students and my families and my staff."

One speaker asked where people would live and work if a treatment center is opened in Florence.

Others expressed repeated concern that creation of the facility may bring people to Florence.

After discussion about the building's purchase, staffing, funding and possible other HHS uses in the building, one speaker suggested the county simply cancel the project and move the clinic somewhere else. Another said that even though the county "put the cart before the horse" in this instance, the Florence community shouldn't immediately say no to a treatment facility in another location.

Davis said The facility design will be finished soon and shared with the public at that time.

He said that as renovation occurs and good neighbor workshops are scheduled, the public will be notified and invited to take part.

FLOCK

From Page A1

which the community cannot vote.

Police Chief John Pitcher noted that an additional two cameras were installed as scheduled, bringing the total number in Florence to six.

Councilors reflected on input from previous meetings and input received outside council meetings.

Mayor Rob Ward said he values community safety and is in favor of keeping the cameras, as long as they are used for that purpose. He said he values Police Chief John Pitcher's weekly audits of the system data that would show if the system is being misused. Ward said that when compared to the number of cameras in the Eugene-Springfield area, the six cameras in Florence seem much more manageable.

Councilor Mike Webb also said he supported using the cameras but

suggested the practice of saving Flock Data for 30 days could be changed to only store images for about 72 hours.

Webb asked if smaller audits could be made public, but Pitcher noted that the information is currently on the transparency portal. He said a major concern of the public appears to be the security of the stored data. He said that while there has been a lot of news coverage and Internet reporting on the issue, he hasn't found anything concrete that relates directly to Florence's contract.

Councilor Jo Beaudreau, who had the most questions of a Flock representative at the Jan. 5 special meeting, reminded the council that the topic was not license-plate-reading-cameras in general, but specific to its contract with Flock Safety. Calling it "scary," Beaudreau said Flock hasn't been entirely transparent and that the Jan. 5 testimony sounded more like a sales pitch to her than an explanation.

City Manager Erin Reynolds said she agreed that the question revolves around the use of Flock Safety, but added that the city cannot afford to create or buy a new system if the council opts to discontinue its contract. She said that in looking at the full financial picture, the City can only afford to run the six cameras until June 2027.

"Whatever gets decided will be the end of the discussion related to ALPRs," she said.

She said later that staff will look into ways to share additional Flock data with the public while being careful not to impede law enforcement or impact public privacy.

Beaudreau continued, saying the use of Flock could potentially be a security risk, not just to the City but to the entire nation. She referred to an instance where Flock portal data showed 10 cameras in Florence while some of the six were being moved, saying it seemed like Florence was being used

as a test ground for beta technology.

Councilor Sally Wantz said she was recently shown how the system operates by Chief Pitcher. She said she was impressed by the system and could see how it would be useful. However, she disagreed with one particular camera angle that not only showed the back of cars as intended, but also the front of oncoming cars in certain situations. She questioned whether that camera could be moved to better isolate the rear of passing cars. Chief Pitcher said he would ask Flock staff if that's possible.

Saying she's torn on the issue, Wantz said she takes the concerns of the public seriously, but did not favor veiled threats from community members who threaten to vote her out of office, depending on her Flock decision.

Wantz said she did not like a particular camera on Spruce Street because of its prominence.

Councilor Robert Carp

said he has received many comments and emails from the public and has heard input at all related meetings. He said his priority is safety, and when the City gets a new tool to enhance it, the council needs to take a close look. He said no violations of citizen rights or reports of misuse have come in during the last year of using the cameras.

Carp referred to a comment made by a citizen during a previous discussion about the warming center, which asserted that the city would have blood on its hands if anyone died because a shelter was not available. Carp said the same logic would apply if police were unable to locate an abducted child because the City discontinued its use of ALPR cameras.

Councilor Wantz noted that the Council received a late memo from a Eugene-based attorney offering best approach suggestions that would amend contract language. Chief Pitcher said some

state legislators are working on new rules for ALPR cameras and said he could reach out to them for additional information.

At a Town Hall meeting in Florence the night before, Sen. Ron Wyden said Flock is the largest ALPR company in the nation and possibly the world. He said the stakes are high because of the possibility that the data

could be used to enforce abortion bans in some states and that questions remain about Flock's audits. He said that based on those things, it's understandable why local jurisdictions are stopping their contracts with Flock. Last year, Wyden called for an investigation of Flock Safety and whether it failed to adequately protect its stored data from hackers, criminals and outside agencies.

The issue will come before the council Feb. 2 for a decision.

The transparency portal is live online at <https://transparency.flocksafety.com/florence-or-pd>



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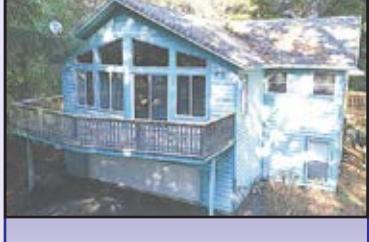
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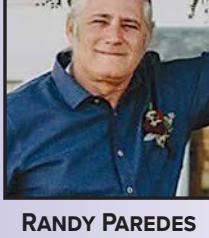
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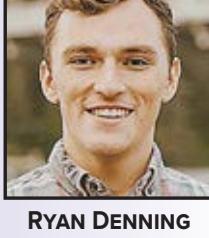
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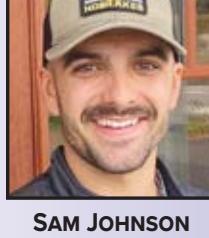
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SPORTS & LIFESTYLE

www.thesiuslawnews.com

WEDNESDAY, January 28, 2026

SECTION B



Siuslaw host Nick Lutz Memorial wrestling tournament

Will LOHRE
Country Media, Inc.

The Nick Lutz Memorial Invitational is the biggest wrestling weekend in Florence, and on Jan. 16 and 17, Siuslaw High School hosted a three-tournament, 35-team event that welcomed wrestlers from across the state to the home of the Vikings to compete.

The three competition levels were varsity boys, varsity girls, and JV boys. Siuslaw put on a spirited performance; the boys placed ninth, the girls finished 11th, and the JV squad took seventh.

"Our teams competed very well in each of the events," Head Coach Neil Wartnik said.

Zooming out, Pleasant Hill won the Varsity boys tournament, North Eugene won the Varsity girls tournament, and Springfield won the Junior Varsity boys



SHS also hosted a Senior Duel wrestling night Jan 23, welcoming Coquille and Reedsport to the mat. Tony Reed photo.

tournament.

Powering the Vikings to their eventual places in the standings were many

of the wrestlers who have become staples on the podium. Senior Jacob Mann continued to show

why he's been a force of nature for the Vikings. Mann wrestled his way to a gold medal at 215

pounds and was also named most outstanding

See WRESTLING, Page B2

Siuslaw tips off league play

Will LOHRE
Country Media, Inc.

Far West League action has gotten off the ground, and the Siuslaw Vikings will be hoping to build off promising preseason results to grab some big wins in 2026.

Though both the boys and girls teams ended up on the losing side of their opening night games against Sutherlin on Jan. 15, there's still plenty of season left to play.

The boys entered their opening league game with a 9-6 record and were looking to keep a three-game winning streak alive. The matchup with Sutherlin had the Vikings out for revenge after the Bulldogs ended Siuslaw's season in the league playoffs last season. What ensued was a

back-and-forth battle that was decided by just one basket, with Sutherlin edging out the Vikings 49-47 at the final buzzer.

The Vikings led for much of the game, but just couldn't keep the Bulldogs at bay. Siuslaw entered the fourth quarter up 40-33, but Sutherlin saved its best quarter for last, stymying the Vikings' offense and scoring just enough to get over the line. After Sutherlin took the lead, the Vikings did their best to regain control, and the game came down to a Siuslaw dead ball. Siuslaw got a couple of looks in the closing seconds to force OT or get the win, but they couldn't get them to drop.

Jericho Lake led the Vikings in scoring with 16 on the night, while Asher Borgnino and

Tom Morgan chipped in 12 and nine points, respectively. Lake and Borgnino showcased their range and sharpshooting, knocking down three three-pointers each, but they couldn't quite lift Siuslaw to victory.

The game against Sutherlin was the first of three road games the Vikings played to start the season, though the results of the games against Coquille and South Umpqua on Jan. 23 and Jan. 27 are unknown at the time of press.

The girls also opened the league season with a defeat, falling to Sutherlin 55-24. The opening quarter was gritty for both teams, and it ended 7-4 in favor of the hosting Bulldogs. Things swung in Sutherlin's favor in the second quarter when the

Bulldogs went on a 9-0 run to take an 18-6 lead, and they never looked back. Sutherlin kept up the pressure throughout the game, extending their lead each quarter. Sutherlin rebounded the ball well, collecting 31 rebounds, and overpowering the Vikings. Even though Siuslaw got a lot of stops, Sutherlin hurt the Vikings with all the extra possessions they created on the glass.

"Overall, our defense was disruptive, but Sutherlin out-rebounded us offensively for second-chance points," Vikings' Head Coach Amanda Richards said.

Sutherlin rebounded the ball well, collecting 31 rebounds, and overpowering the Vikings. Even though Siuslaw got a lot of stops, Sutherlin hurt the Vikings with all the extra possessions

they created on the glass.

Aidell Cadet led the way for Siuslaw in the scoring department, finishing with 11 points, and she did it by constantly putting pressure on the Sutherlin defense. Cadet played aggressively, getting into the lane and drawing fouls. She converted seven of her 10 attempts at the line. Other baskets for the Vikings came from Pearl Jensen (6 points), Ryleigh Panschow (4 points), Avey Hulet (2 points), and Sophia Stymans (1 point).

The girls also played at Coquille and South Umpqua on Jan. 23 and Jan. 27, but the results of the games are unknown at the time of press. They will be back in action in their first league home game against Glide on Jan. 30.

Mapleton Girls basketball player hits thousand-point goal

Submitted

The Mapleton High School gym erupted in cheers Jan. 13 after Mapleton player Lucie Burruss made a layup to surpass 1,000 career points, a rare event in Mountain West League basketball.

"I wouldn't say it happens very often," Burruss's coach, Vanessa Clemons said. "In the six years I've been here I don't know that it's been celebrated." Among the 82 schools statewide in Mapleton's 1A Division, one or two players might hit the 1,000 mark in any given season, Clemons said.

Making such a career

accomplishment is even rarer in Mapleton's Mountain West League, which has nine schools, she said. The only other

Mapleton player in recent memory to achieve 1,000 points was Shauna Allen in the early 2000s, Clemons said.

According to Yahoo!Sports, "Scoring 1,000 points in basketball is the most celebrated individual milestone in high school sports."

The 16-year-old from Deadwood started the game against arch-rival

Triangle Lake Charter School only 27 points short of the 1,000 mark.

Burruss, a shooting guard, led her team in

baskets to cross the

1,000 threshold in the third quarter. The game stopped as parents and fans rushed to congratulate Burruss.

"I was happy for myself and the achievement," Burruss said. Just as important was experiencing the achievement with her team. "I'm really proud to be on the team I'm with and have them support me and my goals."

The Mapleton Sailors went on to beat the Triangle Lake Lakers 58-16.

Burruss's goals include eventually playing on a college team, an objective that has her coach's

See GOAL, Page B3



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Implementing Trump's tax law to cost Oregon \$114 million in SNAP investments

MIA MALDONADO
Oregon Capital Chronicle

The Oregon Department of Human Services says it needs \$114.6 million from the state's general fund to fill gaps in its 2025-27 budget because of cuts and other changes to federal food assistance.

The long-awaited funding request comes after Oregon lawmakers in 2025 set a two-year budget days before President Donald Trump signed a major tax and spending law in July that drastically changed the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, by adding work requirements, limiting benefits for noncitizens, creating more eligibility checks for people enrolled in the program and increasing the administrative cost burden for states.

The timing left lawmakers scrambling to respond to unforeseen budget changes affecting the one in six Oregonians who rely on SNAP.

The department's funding request has support from Gov. Tina Kotek, who on Tuesday reflected on the results of her 60-day food emergency

during the government shutdown that left thousands of Oregonians without access to their SNAP benefits. She directed \$5 million to Oregon's statewide food bank network and \$1 million to the nine federally recognized tribes in Oregon.

The state received a \$6 million match from Oregon Disaster Funders Network.

"We acted quickly to help get emergency food to families, restore SNAP benefits as soon as the courts allowed, and support the community organizations that step up every day to feed people," Kotek said in a statement. "That leadership saved lives — and it sets the standard for how Oregon will continue to respond."

Despite the state's quick response to the disruption of benefits, Oregonians are already seeing the impacts of the new federal law.

"We have households who saw reduced benefits because of changes in utility cost calculations, legal asylees and certain refugee populations lost SNAP eligibility entirely and work requirements expanded from six counties to all 36

counties across the state — increasing verification compliance demands on both clients and the state," said Nate Singer, the agency's eligibility program director.

Singer, alongside other Oregon Department of Human Services staff, gave lawmakers a breakdown of what federal SNAP changes may cost Oregon ahead of the 2026 legislative short session.

AGENCY SAYS WORK REQUIREMENTS WILL INCREASE STAFF DEMAND

The agency is requesting \$13.8 million to address the work requirement changes under the law.

The federal law tightens restrictions on who qualifies for exemptions from the SNAP work requirements. For example, it removed exemptions for former foster youth, unhouseholded individuals and veterans and adults ages 50 to 65. It also narrowed benefits for noncitizens.

The requested amount would support IT system upgrades, outreach and staff resources to manage an increased workload for staff who process applications and determine

household benefit levels.

OREGON NOW HAS TO SPLIT SNAP BENEFIT COSTS WITH FEDS

The agency is requesting \$39 million for the 2025-27 budget cycle to invest in improving the state's SNAP payment error rate.

SNAP benefits previously were 100% federally funded, but the new law requires any state with a SNAP payment error rate above 6% to pay between 5% and 15% of benefit costs beginning October 2027. Oregon's error rate in 2024 was 14%, and it's mostly because of people not reporting their incomes on time and receiving either too much or too little in benefits, Singer said.

The agency has consulted with states with low error rates and experts to make a plan to lower its own and minimize its financial liability, Oregon Department of Human Services Deputy Director Dana Hittle told lawmakers.

"The resulting plan focuses on the operational basics, such as call center performance management of teams,

improving training for staff and communications to clients, as well as integration of artificial intelligence and other technology solutions to streamline and improve processes," Hittle said.

It would need an estimated \$450 million in the 2027-29 budget if the state's error rate doesn't improve.

ADMINISTRATIVE COST SHARING

The agency is requesting \$54 million to cover the increase in SNAP administrative costs the state must pay from

50% to 75% beginning October 2026. This amount is meant to cover the change in the 2025-27 budget cycle.

The agency is requesting \$142 million for the 2027-29 budget cycle.

"This means a significant increase in general fund obligations just to maintain core operations for us," Singer said.

"These are your eligibility, workers that process and do hearings, call centers, customer supports, our vendor contracts, system maintenance — all these areas shift the cost from the federal government to the states significantly

INVESTING IN SNAP CARD SECURITY

To address increasing reports in electronic benefit transfer SNAP cards, the state will seek \$7.1 million from the general fund to support transitioning SNAP cards to chip-enabled cards to strengthen security against skimming and fraud.

There's been more than 10,600 instances of validated theft of benefits worth \$4.1 million since 2023, according to the agency.

"At its core, this budget request is about helping Oregonians meet their basic needs, food on the table and access to health care and services," Hittle said.

<https://oregoncapitalchronicle.com/2026/01/13/implementing-trumps-tax-law-to-cost-oregon-114-million-in-snap-investments/>

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GOAL

From Page B1

support. "I think she could play today at any community college we have," Clemons said. Clemons expects Burruss to improve during her senior year and then play for a four-year college.

"I would put her in the top five of kids I've coached," in 17 years of coaching, most of it in larger schools, Clemons

said.

Burruss scored 330 points her freshman year, 403 her sophomore year and has 284 points a little over halfway through her junior-year season, normally 24 scheduled games, excluding tournaments. She leads the League with a 20.3 points-per-game average. Burruss also leads the League in assists with a 3.0 average, steals with 5.4, and blocks with 1.1, according to the MAXPREPS high school sports web page.



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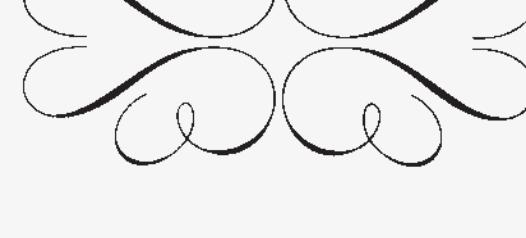
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Health FACT:

Getting organized can help reduce this, which is good for personal health.

Answer: Stress

“How they say that in...”

English: Clutter
Spanish: Desorden
Italian: Disordine
French: Désordre
German: Unordnung

What's the Difference?

Find the four differences between the two pictures.

A



B



Answers: 1. Baskets on bottom 2. Teapot on second left shelf 3. Different basket on top center 4. Labels are missing on white bags



1813: Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice" is first published in the UK.

1878: "Yale Daily News" becomes the first independent daily college newspaper in the United States.

1915: An act of Congress creates the United States Coast Guard.



arranged in a tidy way

Get the  PICTURE?



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

Answer: Closet shelves

BASKETBALL WORD SEARCH



Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

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 BASELINE
 CLOCK
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 FOUL
 FREE THROW
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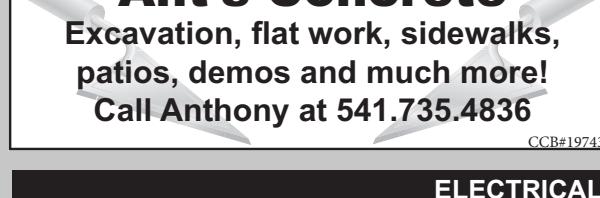
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TSN26-106 NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Florence Planning Commission will hold a public hearing at 5:30PM on February 10, 2026, in the Florence City Hall Chambers, located at 250 Highway 101, to hear and consider the following matter: RESOLUTION PC 25 21 CUP 07 - Oregon Coast Humane Society (OCHS) 2840 Rhododendron Connex Temp Storage Request for a conditional use permit to allow the continued temporary placement of a metal storage Connex container serving as dry storage for the Oregon

Coast Humane Society. The site is located at 2840 Rhododendron Dr, Florence, OR 97439 in the Marine District, regulated by FCC Title 10, Chapter 18.

TSN26-107 PORT SEEKS BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBER

The Port of Siuslaw Board of Commissioners invites applications from residents interested in serving on the Port's Budget Committee. Interested persons should obtain an application from the Port office at 100 Harbor Street, or from the Port's web site: www.portofsiuslaw.com. Applications will be accepted until 5pm, Friday, March 13, 2026. Applicants must be registered voters residing within the Port of Siuslaw district. The district boundary encompasses most of the Siuslaw River watershed, including the communities of Florence and Dunes City, and extending upriver to Mapleton, Walton, Lorane, and Blachly. The Budget Committee is a standing committee of five members that sits jointly with the Port Commission to publicly review and revise the annual budget. The Budget Committee approves the budget and tax levy.

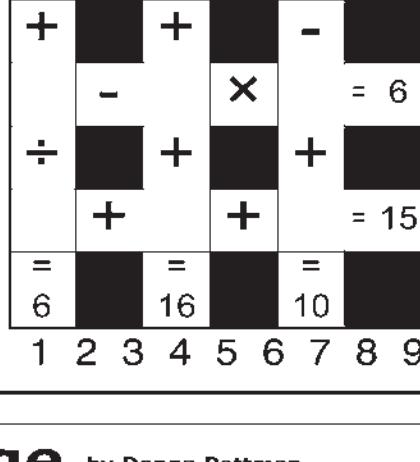
The budget then goes to the Port Commission to be adopted. Committee members serve three-year terms which expire on June 30. A Budget Committee Member is expected to spend up to 20 hours that includes reviewing the budget and meeting 1-3 times from May through June each year. The Committee may be called to meet again during the year in the event of a significant budgetary change. Questions should be directed to the Port office at 541-997-3426.

TSN26-108 PORT SEEKS COMMISSION APPLICANTS

The Port of Siuslaw Board of Commissioners will appoint a district citizen to fill the Position 2 vacancy created by the recent resignation of R. Dale Edwards. The term of the appointee will expire on 30 June 2027 at which time an elected successor will be seated. Persons wishing to be appointed to the Port Commission vacancy should obtain an application from the Port office at 100 Harbor Street, or from the Port's web site: www.portofsiuslaw.com. Applications will be accepted until 5:00pm Friday, March 13, 2026.

GO FIGURE!

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.



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Even Exchange

by Donna Pettman

Each numbered row contains two clues and two 6-letter answers. The two answers differ from each other by only one letter, which has already been inserted. For example, if you exchange the A from M~~A~~STER for an I, you get MISTER. Do not change the order of the letters.

1. Cartes du jour	— E — — —	Subtraction sign	— I — — —
2. Car bumper	F — — — —	Financier	L — — — —
3. Clothes stiffener	— T — — —	Look for	— E — — —
4. Throw like Nolan Ryan	— T — — —	Tweak	— N — — —
5. Cool and invigorating	— — — S —	Mason's block	— — — C —
6. He asked for "more"	O — — — —	Splinter	S — — — —
7. Gawk	T	Petrify	C
8. Hesitate	— A — — —	Strainer or sieve	— I — — —
9. Swap	— — — D —	Smidgeon	— — — C —
10. Racket	N — — — —	Composure	P — — — —

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Working Out Which Plant-Based Milk Substitute Is Healthiest

DEAR DR. ROACH: Everyone in my family, except for me, has converted to using almond milk instead of cow's milk. I just saw something on the internet stating that almond milk is possibly the worst plant-based milk substitute. I trust your opinion and research. Can you please educate me on what is best? Are plant-based milks really better than cow's milk, and which plant-based milk is best? — D.G.

ANSWER: When trying to compare plant-based milk substitutes with each other and with animal milks in their health impact, it's important to look at what each of them have in terms of macronutrients and micronutrients.

Cow's milk, like other animal milks, contains macronutrients like protein, sugars and fats, as well as micronutrients like calcium. (Most cow's milk is fortified with vitamin D.) While most North Americans consume adequate protein, many people try to increase their protein intake through cow's milk.

Similarly, although the data are mixed, most experts agree that saturated fat, which is found in cow's milk, increases heart disease risk. (Cow's milk can be whole, low-fat, reduced fat or skim, varying in their percentages of overall fat.) However, cow's milk contains beneficial fats like conjugated linoleic acid and methyl-branched-chain fatty acids. Most North Americans consume much more simple sugar than what is optimal with cow's milk.

Almond milk has much less protein than cow's milk (1 gram versus 8 grams), and the quality of the protein based on the amount of essential amino acids is less. Soy milk is much higher in protein than almond milk — almost as much as cow's milk, about 7 grams. Coconut milk has almost none.

However, almond and soy milk have no saturated fat (or almost none) and more monounsaturated fats. Coconut milk has about the same amount of saturated fat as cow's milk. Almond, soy

and coconut milks are typically fortified with calcium to match what is found in cow's milk, but the calcium in plant milks is not absorbed as well.

Almond milk can be bought unsweetened or sweetened with typically 7-8 grams of sugar per cup, compared to 12 grams per cup in cow's milk. Cow's milk has multiple other micronutrients naturally, while plant-based milk is fortified with vitamin A and D.

So, is your family right that almond milk is the worst? No, I don't think so. In my opinion, the nonexistent protein and high saturated fat content of coconut milk makes it the least acceptable from a health perspective. Soy and almond milk seem like the better alternatives, but neither of them is really comparable to cow's milk in terms of other micronutrients.

The choice of almond versus soy milk is not clear from a health perspective, so your taste preference should be your guide. In all cases of plant-based milks, I recommend unsweetened and unflavored products.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I get regular pedicures. I never go for gel, but I often use a bright color. When the polish comes off, almost every single one of my nails is quite mottled with brown and white spots. Of course, I thought about not wearing polish and allowing the new nails to slowly grow out, but I can't stand the look of my toes.

I know this is just a cosmetic problem. My pedicurist seems to know nothing about it. The real question is, what causes such gross discoloration in some people but not in other others? — N.W.

ANSWER: I'll bet you have keratin granules, which represent damage to the nail. They are often described to be chalky white and happen in many people if nail polish is left on for too long (more than 7-10 days). Experts recommend an acetone-free remover when it's time to remove them. You can also use a base coat to protect the nail. Let the nails go without polish periodically.

Fortunately, keratin granules are not dangerous and will grow out. They can be mistaken for toenail fungus, so your regular doctor or a dermatologist can help if these tips don't stop them from developing.

Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu.

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Great white sharks are

the largest predatory

fish on our planet,

growing as long as 20

feet and weighing as

much as 4,000 pounds.

The mouth of a great

white is equipped with a

set of 300 sharp, trian-

gular teeth arranged

in up to seven rows.

Sources:
oceana.org,
www.natgeokids.com,
www.fisheries.noaa.gov

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STREAMING SOURCE

Here's what to watch and where to watch it for the week of Feb. 2, 2026.

ON NOW: "School Spirits" (Season 3) — Paramount+

ON NOW: "If I Had Legs I'd Kick You" (R) — HBO Max

ON NOW: "Yo Gabba GabbaLand!" (Season 2) — Apple TV

3-Feb: "Honey Don't" (R) — Netflix

3-Feb: "Mo Gilligan: In the Movement" (Comedy Special) — Netflix

4-Feb: "Relationship Goals" (PG-13) — Prime Video

5-Feb: "Search Party" (Seasons 1-5) — Netflix

5-Feb: "The Lincoln Lawyer" (Season 4) — Netflix

6-Feb: "Splitsville" (R) — Hulu

8-Feb: "The Burbs" (Season 1) — Peacock

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1. Menus, Minus	6. Oliver, Silver	10. Noise, Poise
2. Fender, Lender	7. Slave, Scare	4. Pitch, Pinch
3. Starch, Search	8. Faile, Filter	5. Brisk, Brick
4. Pitch, Pinch	9. Trade, Trace	6. Trade, Trace
5. Brisk, Brick	10. Noise, Poise	7. Slave, Scare

Donna M. Petriani

Even Exchange



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New Listing



New Listing



87675 Hwy 101 #5 - \$28,000

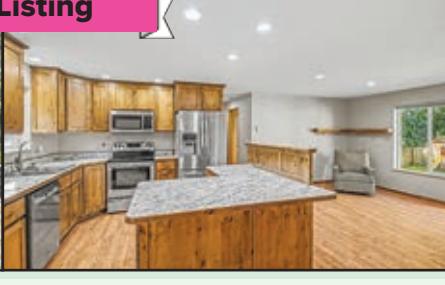
2 Bdrms, 1.5 Baths, 684 SqFt. Single-wide mobile-only in Heceta Village Park, sold as-is, fixer-upper, renovation opportunity. #3731-628167206

1647 12th St. - \$359,000

1660 SqFt Commercial building. Contractor's special with parking and outdoor shower, owner financing available, redevelopment potential. #3730-111752945



New Listing



New Listing



2937 Munsel Lake Rd. - \$410,000

3 Bdrms, 1 Bath, 1013 SqFt. Move-in ready single-level home with updated kitchen, fenced yard, RV parking, and abundant natural light. #3725-445649944



New Listing



Price Reduced



2060 20th St. - \$410,000

3 bdrms, 1 bath, 960 SqFt. Extensively updated home with modern kitchen, new roof, fireplace, garage upgrades, outdoor spaces. #3728-362336387



4990 Mitchell Loop Rd. - \$585,000

3 Bdrms, 2 Baths, 2665 SqFt. Custom ranch style home with open living, sunroom, and garage with RV parking. #3695-161538459

5262 Nopal St. - \$430,000

3 Bdrms, 2 Baths, 1493 SqFt. Coastal charm meets modern living in the desirable Three Mile Prairie neighborhood. #3670-317018212

89510 Hwy 101 #26 - \$60,000

2 Bdrms, 1 Bath, 784 SqFt. Recently upgraded doors, shower, laminate flooring, windows, ceiling fans, electric panel, shed and carport. #3694-555498165

1601-676 Rhododendron Dr. - \$349,000

3 Bdrms, 2 Baths, 1512 SqFt. Updated home in 55+ Greentrees Village with vaulted ceilings, skylights, covered porch, and ample parking. #3665-689410988



4838 Lake Blvd. - \$925,000

3 Bdrms, 3.5 Baths, 1884 SqFt. Large turnkey home with Siltcoos Lake views, boathouse/dock and RV Parking. #3700-717794144

179 Outer Dr. - \$299,000

3 Bdrms, 2 Baths, 1100 SqFt. Peaceful Coast Village home with natural light, cozy spaces, garden paths, and convenient amenities. #3716-756515536

1600-29 Rhododendron Dr. - \$249,000

3 Bdrms, 1 Bath, 1308 SqFt. Inviting 55+ retreat featuring pellet stove, efficient heating, new appliances, covered deck, workshop. #3698-344579839

83763 Hwy 101 #10 - \$115,000

2 Bdrms, 2 Baths, 800 SqFt. Move-in ready home in 55+ Lakeshore Park. Peaceful, low-maintenance, all-season comfort and charm! #3664-366140328



238 Horseshoe Bend - \$189,500

1 Bdrm, 1 Bath, 500 SqFt. Nice corner lot with RV hookups. Home is well cared for with bonus room and garden. #3690-524301067

87830 Terrace View Dr. - \$435,000

2 Bdrms, 2 Baths, 1482 SqFt. Shop/Garage, RV Garage with 30 AMP, private covered deck, enclosed sunroom/greenhouse. #3702-456128863

3890 Spruce St. - \$420,000

3 Bdrms, 2 Baths, 1478 SqFt. Oversized garage, RV parking, beautiful fir trees, in-town! #3671-699141635

3932 Spruce St. - \$539,000

3 Bdrms, 2 Baths, 1472 SqFt. Enclosed sunroom, RV parking with hookups, outdoor hobby room and tool shed with gardens. #3717-687208935



87511 Tiernan Rd. - \$425,000

2 Bdrms, 2 Baths, 1866 SqFt. Secluded property with mature fruit trees, custom kitchen, bonus room, shop, and river access. #3714-272688773

3760 Hwy 101 #16 - \$60,000

2 Bdrms, 1 Bath, 840 SqFt. New flooring, HVAC, insulation, paint in/outside, water heater and fridge. #3622-639962623

5170 Grand Ave #19 - \$129,000

2 Bdrms, 2 Baths, 1052 SqFt. Nice, clean, completely upgraded manufactured home in Big Spruce MHP is a must see! #3685-571961488

89510 Hwy 101 #23 - \$60,000

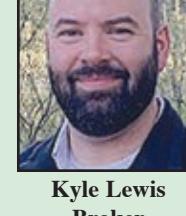
2 Bdrms, 2 Baths, 924 SqFt. Spacious, clean, and affordable. Appliances included. Lake access. Move-in ready condition. #3679-545143954



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