

Thank you for a terrific 2025!

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Lighthouse hosts many holiday guests



Visitors to the Heceta Head Lighthouse had a lot to enjoy during the 29th Anniversary of the Victorian Christmas Open House. The Light Keepers House could easily be seen from Highway 101, with holiday lights adorning the entire house and surrounding picket fence. Inside, they found a warm and welcoming atmosphere, food and refreshments, caroling, knowledgeable docents and even got to meet Santa and Mrs. Claus.. Yachats Area Trolley offered rides directly to the lighthouse for those who didn't want to make the hike in the rain. See more photos on page A7 and at thesiuslawnews.com Tony Reed photos

It took so long to go by so fast

2025- A year in Review

COMPILED by TONY REED

It's easy to look back at 2025 and say, "It went by so fast," but when you go back through a year of news stories, we're reminded of how long it actually was and how much took place that we've already forgotten. Here are some clips of the news that made 2025

JANUARY

Following an unsurprising election in November, three Florence City Council members were sworn in at the Jan 6 meeting. After running unopposed, Rob Ward again took the seat as Mayor of Florence.

See **REVIEW**, Page A4



At the dusk of 2025, it's easy to look back and think we could have done some things differently but there's nothing to stop us from doing them in 2026. Tony Reed photos

Cassie's Uptown Coffee Receives Award

David and Cassie Bechtold, owners of Cassie's Uptown Coffee located in the 1700 block of Hwy 101 in Florence, recently received an Appreciation Award from the Florence Band of Brothers. Leader Jim Swant presented the award to the Bechtolds at a Monday morning coffee gathering of local and area Veterans.

Cassie regularly donates coffee proceeds to the local Band of Brothers group in appreciation of their service to our nation. "I'm not a Veteran but always wanted to be a Marine" she stated at the presentation. She typically donates every month and in 2025 totals nearly \$700 in donations to the group.

The Florence Band of Brothers meets for coffee each Monday morning at 11:30 a.m. at the Florence Elks Lodge #1858, net-working with fellow Veterans as well as sharing news and events throughout the Florence Veteran community.



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Getting From One Year to the Next

By BOB HORNEY

As the curtain falls marking the end of 2025, the 2026 curtain rises, bringing us new opportunities, adventures and challenges of all kinds. Some of the most challenging are health issues and they seem to increase in number and severity as we age.

For the most part, we want to see the curtain rise on the new years as long as we can. For many of us, it takes a lot of effort to keep the curtain functioning. Taking nothing for granted, I'm hoping to nudge that 2026 curtain up with more to follow.

Speaking for myself (and probably a whole lot more) the more curtains we raise, the more issues (usually concerning health) will pop up. For instance, nearly 10 years ago I was diagnosed with a vast shortage of Gamma Globulin. That introduced me to Hizentra which is the Gamma Globulin extracted from the blood of our extremely valuable blood donors. One advantage of starting the

treatment in 2016 was that I could do it at home on a weekly basis. That was a fairly recent change from having to make a trip to the hospital once a month for a dose about 4 times greater than my weekly 7 grams. Those patients had more side effects because of receiving maybe 28 grams all at once instead of my 7 grams. My home infusions use 3 simple subcutaneous needles with a wonderful automatic pump that takes about 65 minutes to infuse 7 grams. I am nearing 500 weekly infusions, and they will continue for the rest of my life.

So, we have these long- lasting daily/weekly/ monthly/annual treatments that we must continue but we also must pay attention to those "incidentals" that pop up from time to time. For instance, my cataract surgeries (both eyes) which are occurring as you read this (December 22 and 29). Then there are my compression fractured vertebra (L2/ L3) which my doctor at Pacific Sports and Spine wants to do an Intranept Nerve Ablation. That has

been denied by my current health insurance. I'm changing my insurance provider January 1, 2026 so I'll have a new go at the problem.

Add to the list my polio as a 13-year-old which affected my left leg only (lucky me)! Prostate cancer diagnosed in 2001 – surgery Jan. 30, 2002 – radiation 2007/2008 burned my bladder – incontinence led to Suprapubic Catheter which solved the problem (day/night). Oh yes, my heart attack on New Year's Eve 2022 with ambulance ride to Bay Area Hospital in Coos Bay.

I am sharing the above just to say that in spite of those health issues, life is wonderful, especially my 44 years with Marianne! I totally enjoy my family, friends, our pets – past/ present, and lifting spirits. And if this sharing has lifted your spirits so you can enjoy life again, I am delighted.

Everyone please raise the curtain on a Wonderful New Year filled with Good Health and Cheer!

POLICE LOG

Florence Police Department responded to the following calls from December 17 until December 23.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17

At 2:49 a.m. caller reported a construction barrel in the road on 35th St. near the golf course. Officer arrived and cleared the hazard.

At 7:47 a.m., a caller reported a stop sign missing in the area of 22nd St. and Oak Street. Public Works was contacted and replaced the sign.

At 10:25 a.m., a caller reported that her dog has been bitten by another dog in the dog park off Kingwood.

At 11:30 a.m., officers responded to the 1400 block of ninth Street for a report of a disorderly subject. Officers arrived

to contact the subject and arrested him on a warrant from Florence Municipal Court

At 8:10 p.m., a caller reported a subject leaving a business off Highway 126 intoxicated. Caller was unsure if the subject got into a vehicle. Officer searched the area but could not find the subject or a vehicle.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18

At 12:38 a.m., a caller reported that her car had been taken from the 1600 block of 26th St.. Officers later located the vehicle and found it had been taken by her son. When told, the caller chose

not to press charges.

However, officers cited the son for driving without a license.

At 12:26 p.m., officers responded to the area of Highway 101 and 29th St. for a report that a car trailer had been blown off its hitch by high wind and was in the middle of the street.

At 4:28 p.m., a caller reported a male subject in the 700 block of Highway 101 who was disorderly and possibly intoxicated. Officers arrived to speak to the man who said he was having complications from cancer and asked for a ride to the hospital. Medical personnel arrived to transport him to the hospital.

At 4:28 p.m., a caller said the was in a business in the 1800 block of 37th St. and was assaulted by a female subject after a dispute. Officers arrived to speak to the subjects and the male did not want to press charges.

At 7:09 p.m., a subject was serving a protective order in the 500 block of Skookum Court when the owners of the property said they wanted him removed. The server was unable to complete his duty.

At 11:56 p.m., an officer on patrol reported seeing 10 inches of rising water in the area of 9th St. near Highway 101. The officer placed cones around the area to warn traffic of the deep water.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19

At 12:33 p.m., a caller reported being harassed by another subject on Facebook. Caller was advised to block and ignore the other subject.

At 2:51 p.m., officers responded to the area of 18th St. and Kingwood for a report of a toolbox that had fallen off a vehicle and spilled a large amount of screws in the roadway.

At 3:17 p.m., officers responded to the 1800 block of 37th St. for a report of a subject causing a disturbance. Officers arrived to find a subject they dealt with earlier in the day was now throwing things in traffic. Subject was arrested for Disorderly Conduct II.

At 4:52 p.m., a caller reported a subject dancing in the middle of Highway 101 with a bottle of rum.

At 6:14 p.m., officers responded to the 700 block of Highway 101 for a report of a subject yelling. Officers arrived to find a subject matching the description from the previous call. Officers were taking the subject into custody and he tried to fight them. Subject was arrested for Disorderly Conduct, Theft III, Resisting Arrest, and Assaulting an Officer.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20

At 3:01 p.m., an

employee of Driftwood Shores reported finding jewelry in one of the rooms. Jewelry was taken to the police department to be held until claimed.

At 3:15 p.m., a caller in the 1200 block of 7th Street reported damage to her fence caused by her neighbor kicking it because he was upset about her dog barking.

At 3:59 p.m., a caller reported that a known subject was driving intoxicated in her car and had made comments about intentionally crashing it. Officers arrived in the area but were unable to locate the described vehicle.

At 4:05 p.m., officers responded to the 400 block of Sherwood Loop for a non-injury accident. Drivers swapped information and no further action was taken.

At 4:34 p.m., an ATM debit card was found in the machine at the 600 block of Highway 101. Card is being held at the police department.

At 8:56 p.m., a resident reported receiving prank phone calls. Officers helped the resident block the number on her phone.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21

At 11:20 a.m., officers found an older shepherd dog in the 1200 block of 7th Street. Dog was taken to the Humane Society.

At 5:59 p.m., officers assisted Oregon State Police on a Disorderly Conduct call that ended up with a subject being admitted to Florence jail's detox cell.

At 7:21, a caller in the 3900 block of Oak Street reported loud noise coming from an apartment below. Caller did not want officer response, but just to share the information.

MONDAY DECEMBER 22

At 2:38 a.m., officers responded to the 5100 and Heceta Beach Road for a

report of a dispute. Caller said the male half of the couple had been drinking. Officers arrived and found the male subject had a felony warrant from Lincoln County. He was taken into custody.

At 11:58 a.m., a caller reported a recreational vehicle parked in the area of 6th Street and Ivy with its extensions out, impeding traffic. Officers arrived and the owner agreed to move the vehicle.

At 12:01 p.m., officers responded to the 900 block of Highway 101 for a report that a subject had come into a store, spilled alcohol and left.

At 12:23 p.m., officers located the previous subject at 8th Street and Highway 101 and arrested him for theft.

At 3:11 p.m., a caller in the 1300 block of Highway 101 reported a subject inside the building vaping. Caller said that when the subject was told to leave he said something about stabbing them.

Officers arrived to find the subject had left before they arrived.

At 5:14 p.m., officers responded to the 3900 block of Highway 101 for a report of harassment. Officers arrived to find a family dispute over a vehicle. Subjects were counseled.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 23

At 12:46 a.m., officers made a traffic stop on Highway 126 near the bridge and arrested Taysie Savage for DUII.

At 8:05 a.m., a caller reported finding an E bike with no seat in the 100 block of Maple Street. Bike is being stored at the police department.

At 9:10 a.m., an officer on patrol found a small brown speckled dog in the 86,600 block of Highway 101. Dog was taken to Humane Society.

At 10:47 a.m., a caller reported the registration sticker had been stolen from their vehicle license plate in the 500 block of Kingwood.

At 11:56 a.m., officers, fire personnel, and medics responded to the area of 8th and Highway 101 for a report of an E bike versus a vehicle. One subject was taken to the hospital.

At 1:23 p.m., it was

See **POLICE**, Page A3

DEATH NOTICES

STEVEN MICHAEL GRENK

Steven Michael Grenke, 67, of Gardiner, OR, passed away on December 5th, 2025. Arrangements have been entrusted to Dunes Memorial Chapel in Reedsport, OR.

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Preparing Your Go Bag

Having an emergency go bag is one of the most important aspects of personal disaster preparedness. Keep one at home *and* in your car in case you have to shelter in place or evacuate. **An emergency go bag should include:**

- Bottled water (1 gallon/person/day)
- Water filter or purification tablets
- Nonperishable foods (incl. pet food) and utensils
- Flashlight and batteries
- Battery powered or hand crank radio
 - 106.9 FM KCST for emergency broadcasts
- A change of clothes
- First aid kit
- Sleeping bags, blankets, towels
- Tool kit with utility knife
- Essential medications and backup eyewear
- Waterproofed map of the area
- Personal hygiene items
- Plastic bags and trash bags
- Manual can opener
- Money sealed in a waterproof container
- List of important addresses/phone numbers
- Knee-high rubber boots and work gloves
- Whistle
- Dust mask
- Duct tape
- Copies of essential documents



To view other supply lists, visit FEMA's www.ready.gov
For a 12-week guide to building your emergency kit, visit www.lanecounty.org/prepare.

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

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Robert Hanson
01-10-1946 - 11-05-2025


Robert "Bob" Hanson, passed away on November 5, 2025, at age 79.

He is survived by his daughters, Bobbie Fay and Marcie Hanson.

Bob was a well loved Icon in this town!

For over 30 years, Bob's craftsmanship as the owner of Hanson Construction helped shape the local landscape. His work includes landmarks like the Florence Events Center, the Western Lane Ambulance facility, and the OPBC Financial Center, along with many Fine Custom Homes.

Bob was known for his handlebar mustache, flat-top haircut, And for



parking his truck wherever he wanted! A loyal friend and proud member of the Florence Elks, he loved buying drinks for friends at The Beachcomber, where he is memorialized forever in a mural on the wall...

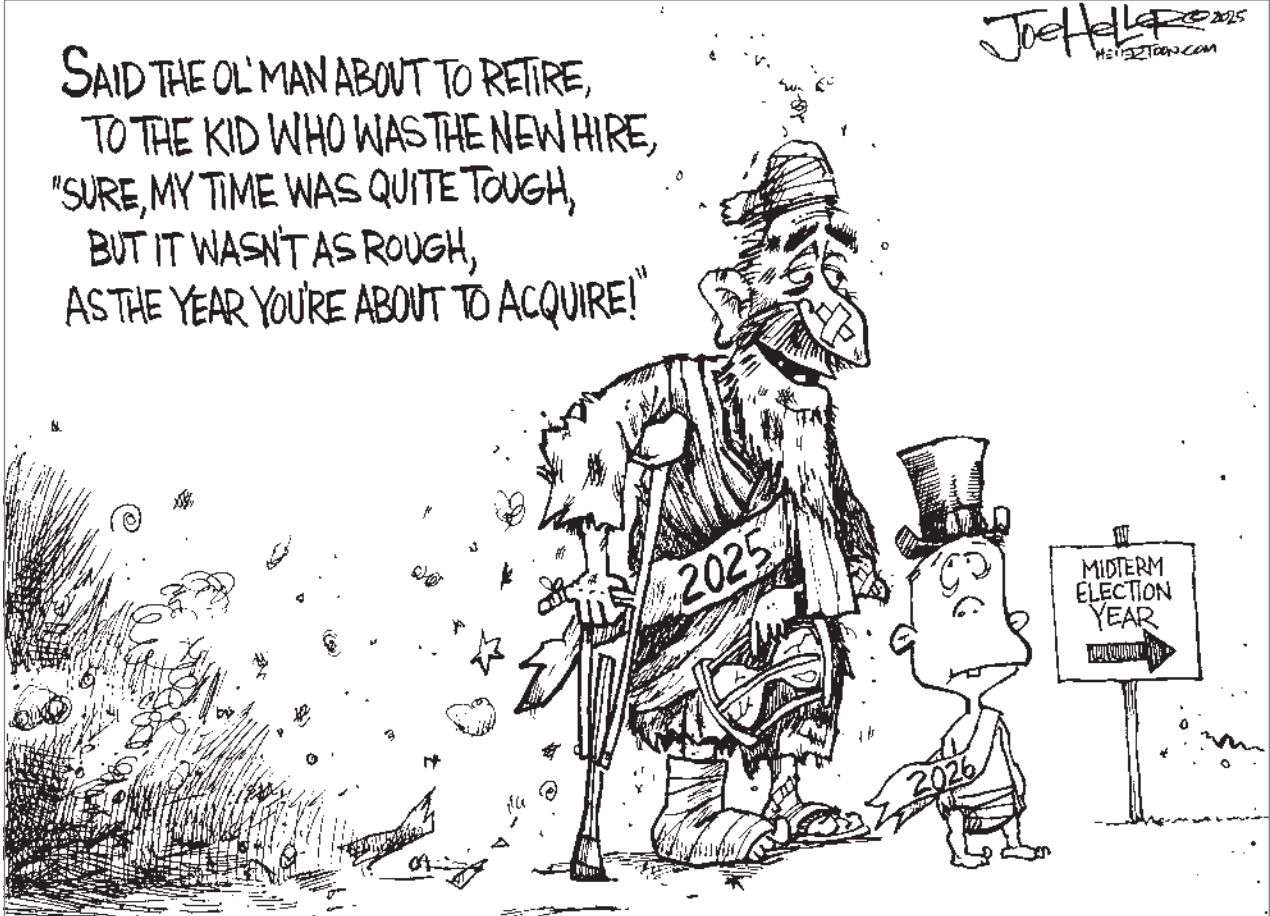
His greatest passions were restoring Classic Cars including his award-winning Red 1957 Chevy Pickup, and Motorcycles!!

He loved riding his Harley with friends.

This town is not the same without Bob "the Builder" Hanson.

In his Honor, a memorial ride and classic car meet will be held in the spring.

*Until we meet again, Dad.
Keep it shiny side up*



LETTERS

CITY OF FLORENCE AND LINCOLN PUD STORM RESPONSE

Throughout the year I hear people complaining about their City Taxes and Utility Bills. I personally think it’s unfounded. I look at the quick response by both after this last storm, and the dedication of those working in such conditions. I was a government worker for most of my life, and have lived in many places. I can say The City of Florence and the PUD are exceptional in what they do — more than any other place I have lived. I’ve at times had my difference of opinion with the City (like the 35th / Rhody development), but was always treated with respect and impartial advice on how to best present my views. I would just like to thank all in the City for what they do, and also the efforts of the PUD, as like most of us — addicted to electricity — not knowing so until its gone. Best wishes and a Happy Holidays to them all. I, for one, feel thankful that they do what they do.

Sincerely
Steve Williams

FIVE ALARM FIRE

Dear Florence City Council,
When a five alarm fire rings into a fire station that is in charge of putting it out, do those who should be prepared to act quickly sit around debating whether it’s a valid issue? Do they put it off and refuse to listen to anyone in the path of that fire, whose house is burning, whose children are unsafe? Climate change is a worldwide five alarm fire. We in our small town can do better for our children than refusing to address this issue head on. The science is clear. The danger is real. Mike Allen has been knocking on your door and sounding the alarm for the better part of six years. When will you answer the call?

Mark A. Levy
Florence

A resolution — and apology

TONY REED, EDITOR

By the time you read this, I should be fully moved into my Siuslaw News office (AKA home). This last month has been hectic, to say the least. Emptying this giant building while making room in my tiny home and working 40+ hours a week has not been easy, light or quick. Some aspects of the transition are still occurring. Once all the changes are made, computers are switched over, calendars are marked up, the Internet is secured and post-its are transferred, I’ll be managing the editorial content of this paper from home. It will be the shortest commute of my life, in that I will simply rotate my chair 180 degrees from my home computer to my work computer. In many ways, it will allow me more freedom to monitor and respond to local news, but will also

apply many distractions I’ve never had at the office, like my neighbors, traffic noise and much less room to move. For over two years, it’s been my creative space, so I don’t yet know how I’ll feel about neglecting the guitars and photo equipment that sit just an arm’s length away. It may take some getting used to. However, a few readers have informed me recently that their papers arrived late and that’s entirely on me. You see, I’ve been delivering the papers to the post offices in Florence, Mapleton, Westlake and local businesses since about Thanksgiving. I’ve certainly made some mistakes learning the route and have dropped off some bundles at the wrong post offices. While my brain isn’t fully functional at 4 a.m., I’m getting better and less foggy-minded about it. Please be patient with me

until our regular driver returns next month. Speaking of mistakes, I also know I’ve made some typos and wording errors in my time here, as well as missing some other details in submissions. An admission: Even after 25 years of news writing, I still have to look at my fingers when I type and am not a fast typist by any means. I recently tested whether voice-to-text would help me get through things like the police log faster, but it didn’t. Until it learns the difference between *caller and collar, rider and writer or Siuslaw and So used law, I would spend any saved time correcting homophones.* This year, all the retired English teachers will be happy to know I’ve enlisted some proofing help so I can catch the mistakes I tend to overlook while reading

my own copy. Every reporter I’ve known has said it takes at least a year to get into the rhythm of a new job, but in many ways, I still feel like a rookie reporter after two years here. I’m still learning some dynamics, meeting new people all the time and doing my best to be everywhere in a town that loves to hold meetings. This year, I resolve to accept help when it’s offered, make the effort to check then double-check and just do better for this community. Collectively, I hope we can all resolve to communicate better, be more accepting of differences, recognize common goals and work to mitigate others’ suffering wherever possible. As always, send any tips, questions, submissions, letters and community bulletins to treed@countrymedia.net.

POLICE

From Page A2

reported that someone had tried to cut through the chain-link fence to make access to the dugout at Miller Park. At 4:39 p.m., a woman reported that she had been walking her dog in the area of Ocean dunes Drive when she was attacked by two coyotes and reportedly sustained a concussion and a bite to the leg. To claim lost, found or recovered items at the police department, call 541-997-3515.

Visit us at
www.thesiuslawnews.com

ONLINE POLL

LAST WEEK, WE ASKED:








WHY DO YOU READ THE POLICE LOG IN THIS PAPER? RESULTS WERE:

I like to see if anything is happening in my neighborhood25%
I like to know what our local police deal with25%
I enjoy the odd and funny calls.....4.2%
All of the above 45.8%

THIS WEEK WE'RE ASKING:HOW ARE YOU FEELING ABOUT THE UPCOMING YEAR?

- Confident and positive
- Optimistic but cautious
- Pessimistic and not hopeful
- I don't know how to feel

Go to our main page at thesiuslawnews.com to vote and see poll results

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
DECEMBER 31	JANAURY 1	JANAURY 2	JANAURY 3	JANAURY 4	JANAURY 5	JANAURY 6
						
Cloudy 51° 43°	Showers 50° 44°	Showers 49° 40°	Showers 49° 42°	Showers 50° 44°	Showers 52° 45°	Showers 52° 45°



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General news releases, Classified line ads, Legal Notice
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Please submit press releases to
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OUR STAFF

Joe Warren | Director of Publication
jwarren@countrymedia.net

Alyson Davis | Office Manager
snofficemanager@countrymedia.net

Gary Winterholler | Multi-Media Sales Consultant
541.902.3529 | gwinterholler@countrymedia.net

Tony Reed | Editor
541.902.3526 | treed@countrymedia.net

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.

TO SUBMIT TO THE SIUSLAW NEWS:

Email 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.

WHERE TO WRITE

President Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20500
Comments: 202-456-1111
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www.whitehouse.gov

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Email: Rep.BoomerWright@oregonlegislature.gov

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Lane County Dist. 1 Commissioner Ryan Ceniga
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Eugene, OR 97401
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Email: Ryan.Ceniga@co.lane.or.us

U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden
202-224-5244 | 541-431-0229
www.wyden.senate.gov

Florence City Council Mayor Rob Ward & Councilors Bill Meyer, Sally Wantz, Robert Carp & Jo Beaudreaux
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U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley
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U.S. Rep. Val Hoyle (4th Dist.)
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Dunes City Council Mayor Ed McGuire & Councilors Rory Hammond, Tom Mallen, Susan Snow, Melissa Stinson, Robert Orr & Melissa Stinson
Dunes City Hall, 82877 Spruce St., Westlake, OR 97493
541-997-3338
dunescityhall.com

REVIEW
From Page A1

Councilors Bill Meyer and Sally Wantz were also sworn in under the oath of office and took their seats at the Dias. Councilor Jo Beaudreau was appointed council vice president. Councilor Robert Carp was appointed council president.

The council approved a request from the Florence Emergency Cold Weather Shelter Committee to make an alternate location available in town for overnight guests when freezing temperatures are predicted. City Manager Erin Reynolds said the committee had identified a location for a shelter at the Florence Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, outside city limits and jurisdiction, but wanted approval for a backup location in town if needed.



The Former Hoberg's Muffler Shop location has been an empty lot since January 2025.

Reynolds noted that the city code dictates that the council may allow a warming shelter by any non-profit organization or religious institution when low temperatures or adverse weather conditions endanger human life. "The city council has traditionally approved this organization ... for the approximately October through April winter season and has looked at it every year." Almost a year later, some local controversy occurred when the council approved another request to use a shared building off Highway 101 as an emergency cold weather shelter. The former Hoberg's Muffler shop building, a long-standing landmark on Highway 101 through Florence, was removed, along with a neighboring building. According to City reports, the owner, Raycen Raines, was granted permission Jan. 6 to

demolish the building and the neighboring Los Compadres building. The buildings were entirely removed. The properties have remained clear since.

FEBRUARY Western Lane Fire and EMS Authority personnel commemorated the new sign at one of the fire stations in Florence, Jan. 30, after it was renamed for a retired fire captain. Fire Station 2, located near 9th Street at the hospital was renamed Capt. David Rossi Fire Station following his retirement in July 2024. At the retirement ceremony, Chief Michael Schick said Rossi had not been told of the name change, which was apparent on his face when it was announced. Rossi and other fire and medical personnel were on hand Jan. 30 after the new sign was affixed to the building. Rossi started his first responder career as a volunteer firefighter in Mapleton in 1982 and served in many department positions, receiving many awards for his fire and medical response service. A visible crack in the outer surface of the Heceta Head Lighthouse generated some concern, but Oregon Parks and Recreation officials said it poses no immediate threat to the structure.



The brilliant trout sculpture moved from the Highway 101/126 intersection to the Port of Siuslaw where it still swims through the air.

The 10-foot-long crack is located on the south side of the structure, below the cupola. "We are aware of the crack on the exterior of the lighthouse and have had our historical architecture project manager out to assess it," she said. "We are monitoring it regularly for changes, but right now it is cosmetic and only within the outer 'layer' of brick and stucco." Brian McBeth, historic architecture project manager with Oregon Parks and Recreation noted that the crack has been under observation for about eight years, but it's not certain what caused it. He said that since the structure is made of unreinforced masonry and is a historic structure, it would be essentially impossible to remediate. "It's not like we can wrap it in steel and install a bunch of seismic bracing, so we're just going to deal with it," he said. "It's survived for as long as it has and it will likely survive for another hundred-plus years..." The 2025 Winter Music Fest sold out the Florence Events Center for a three-day performance. Put on by Florence Arts, Culture and Entertainment (FACE), the production featured performances by Della Mae, Henhouse Prowlers, Kristen Grainger and True North Crying Uncle Bluegrass Band, Tony

Furtado and Luke Price, Whiskey Deaf, Thunder & Rain, Cascade Bluegrass and Nechville Banjos. 'Golden/Yellowstone' sculpture sold. The City of Florence's Art Exposed Rotating Outdoor Art Gallery announces the sale of "Golden/Yellowstone," by artist Rick True, to the Port of Siuslaw. The sculpture of a golden trout has been rotating above the landscaping at the Highway 101 and Highway 126 intersection since June as part of Art Exposed ReVision Florence. The Port made the decision to purchase "Golden/Yellowstone" during the Jan. 15 meeting of the Port of Siuslaw Board of Commissioners. Garbage filled over 2 dump trucks after a contracted crew from Eugene spent two days cleaning up trash left in a network of homeless campsites off Highway 126.

Greg Coakley, Director of Operations with Hazmat One LLC., said the city contracted the company to clean up the camp Feb. 3 and 4. Noting that the company regularly cleans camps in the Eugene area and others, he said cleanup was completed in just over a day. Asked what types of materials warranted a hazmat operation over a public works project, Coakley said, "Oh, needles, poop buckets, pee buckets, and of course, all the trash."

Now-retired public works director Mike Miller said the cleanup was unrelated to the completion of the Estuary Trail, as the two are on different sides of Munsel Creek. He said from the trail, one would not have been able to see the debris left in the other sites. Miller said the total area affected by campsites is over an acre in size.

Flock Cameras have received growing attention this past year, but in February, the Florence City Council unanimously approved a grant application from the Three Rivers Foundation in the amount of \$33,250.00 for the purchase of five Flock cameras and two years of service. At the Feb. 3 meeting, Police Chief John Pitcher told councilors that the solar-powered camera has been in place about a year and has been a valuable tool, especially when working with other law enforcement agencies. Flock cameras have been brought up several times at public meetings since then.

2026 will begin with a Jan. 5 special meeting of the City Council to discuss Flock cameras, following concerns aired by Sen. Ron Wyden and others, regarding the potential misuse of Flock data for citizen tracking and Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

The Oregon Coast Humane Society entered into a contract to acquire Oceanside Veterinary Clinic. According to an OCHS report, the acquisition will allow OCHS to transfer current veterinary operations to the facility at 1739 22nd Street. The hometown shelter will first concentrate on transferring current services for shelter pets to the new facility. "OCHS does not anticipate serving privately-owned animals in 2025, and maybe not even 2026, depending on how the process goes." OCHS Director Elizabeth Thompson said at the time.

the spotlight

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Pet of the Week

SALSA

Salsa came to OCHS as part of the "Spicy" group and is still learning that humans can be pretty great. A little shy at first, Salsa is slowly warming up and letting her personality shine through. It's been wonderful to watch Salsa gain confidence, explore her surroundings, and show off a playful, curious, and sweet side. With patience, love, and a calm home, Salsa is ready to find a forever family where she can continue to grow and thrive, with just a hint of spice to keep things interesting.

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REVIEW

From Page A4



City Councilor Mike Webb was appointed to the City Council in March following the resignation of former councilor Bill Meyer.

MARCH

Stand Down serves over 100. Over 100 people, many with pets, came through the Siuslaw Veteran and Community Stand Down Feb. 22 to take advantage of a variety of services and resources.

A tally at the end of the event showed 106 people attended, 47 of whom were U.S. Veterans.

Staff at the registration table said the most-requested services related to pets, haircuts and dentistry.

Many others left the event with food, sleeping bags, clothing and personal items.

The best of the best community resources came to bear here,” said Pastor Rick Chilton, “but that’s not the end of the story because every person who came here will have a follow-up call. We’ll ask, ‘Did you find everything you were looking for, and if not, we’re going on a mission to help them.’” Chaplain Rick recognized and thanked the Elks Lodge for the use of its facilities to hold the Stand Down, as well as its kitchen and thrift store to provide food and offer clothing to those who needed it. While the Stand Down was originally enacted for veterans, the Florence event has been expanded to help anyone in need.

An 86 room, 4-story hotel to be located in the open area across from the Florence Events Center passed the design review hurdle after years of planning.

The Florence Planning Commission approved the request, with conditions during a regular meeting March 4, which lasted about four hours.

The Siuslaw Estuary Trail opened just down the hill from the site of the hotel groundbreaking,

City Manager Erin Reynolds noted that the trail lies within the Florence Urban Renewal Agency Boundaries. The trailhead and parking lot property were secured over five years before.

Jesse Beers, Cultural Stewardship Manager for the Tribes, said interpretive signs will share some of the native language of the Siuslaw. He noted spoke of the area where the creek enters the river, noting that its Siuslaw name, translated into English means “canoes get stuck place.” Asked later about the first ideas for an Estuary trail, Miller said it has been on the City’s mind since about 1999. In 2012, the city’s comprehensive plan highlighted the need for such a trail and the city developed a vision for the trail in 2013. Miller said that the original trail design had input from local Native American tribes, the Army Corps of Engineers,

birding enthusiasts and walking groups, among others. The trail is just over a quarter mile long and connects Quince Street south of the Event Center to the edge of Highway 126 next to Munsel Creek. From 126, park at the lot west of the car wash, walk over the bridge and turn left.

APRIL

CROW allegations declared unfounded.

A third-party investigative firm said it found “no substantial evidence of criminal activity or systemic mistreatment within CROW (Children’s Repertory of Oregon Workshops, Inc.) The investigation summary by Gunderson Services of Portland, noted that it was hired to conduct a limited and targeted investigation into specific allegations made against CROW, its staff and volunteers. The company investigated “any claim for which criminal or civil action could be brought.” When asked, Florence Police Chief John Pitcher said his department had not conducted any investigation of CROW.

“Numerous complaints cited negative experience related to body image, harassment and inappropriate conduct. While some claims were addressed with policy changes and staff training, others lacked sufficient detail for conclusive findings. CROW has created an online reporting form and has adopted a whistleblower policy to enhance transparency and accountability.”

Gazebo removed and replaced. After serving for many years in coastal weather, the covered Gazebo in Old Town was removed to make way for a new one. The new one was not as tall, making it more accessible. The new one was installed by July 2, due to weather issues.

A single male killer whale was seen swimming up to Siuslaw River by several residents according to local reports, the whale turned around somewhere near the Coast Guard Station. The Oregon Coast Killer Whale monitoring program confirmed it to be T051, a 24-year-old that had been seen on several occasions while swimming along the coastline. T051 and T049A2 made headlines after they spent 44 days in a lake in Alaska.

Banned book. The Siuslaw School District Board voted that a controversial book should be removed from the school library, as it was found to revolve around a teen protagonist facing harassment and pressure at school for being gay. While the controversy continues on social media as to whether it was correct to remove the book, the attention has surely prompted more people to read it themselves.

At the District Board meeting, several speakers asserted that banning the book deprives students of the ability to read and judge for themselves, while discrediting the authors’ First Amendment freedoms of expression. Asked afterward if the book is “banned” from students at Siuslaw High School, Grzeskowiak confirmed that it had simply been removed from the school’s library, but is not against the rules for students to read or possess. The book and its removal came up several times at subsequent meetings and election forums.



Crowned in May, Joel Sissel and Ashlyn Hart are the King of the Coast and Queen Rhododendra and will remain so until the next coronation.

MAY

Florence Events Center filled to the walls for the 2025 Coronation of the King of the Coast and Queen Rhododendra. Following talent, formal wear and impromptu questions, Joel Sissel and Ashlyn Hart were crowned King and Queen. Hart and Sissel also received the \$750 Ambassador Scholarship, presented individually, for going above and beyond in their public interactions since joining the Rhody Court.

Rhododendron Days in Florence was one event after another, with the Kid Parade, Car Show, Quilt Show, Car Cruise, Carnival and Rhody Run leading up to the two-hour long Rhododendron Days Parade.

All along the almost two-mile route, parade watchers lined the west sidewalk to see everything from live music to marching bands to traditional Mexican dancers to the Rhody Court royalty to a giant CROW perched on an ATV. Grand Marshal Wayne Sharpe had a prominent seat in a vintage convertible, followed by Florence First Citizen Carol Bennett.

The Florence Area Chamber of Commerce estimated this year’s parade featured 85 entries.

JUNE

Safety Fee. At its regular meeting June 2, the Florence City Council voted to adopt a Public Safety Fee to maintain and sustain current staffing



The First No Kings protest was one of many held in Florence, including one held in memory of slain activist Charlie Kirk.

levels at Florence Police Department.

Justification for the new fee was, by no means simple and was the result of several meetings by the council, budget committee and city staff. The goal of the public safety fee is to raise \$1.2 million annually, to go toward public safety services. Police Chief John Pitcher noted that Florence Dispatch covers the entire coast region’s fire, medical and police needs, and has seen an increase in volumes over the past couple years. Comparing current rates to the proposed 2025 2026 budget showed a total increase as of July 1 at 6% with an additional total city service increase of 8% on January 1. On the second year, the increase will amount to 5% over current rates. At its Nov. 17 meeting, the council approved the second step in a funding plan which will increase the fee from \$5 to \$15, starting Jan. 1.

Construction started

on the Siuslaw Pioneer Museum’s long-anticipated west wall reconstruction initiative, a major capital project aimed at preserving the museum’s historic structure and the artifacts within. The project addressed a growing dry rot issue that has affected the siding and structural framing of the museum’s west wall. Repair of the wall will ensure the preservation of the museum’s thousands of historical artifacts, which document more than 150 years of the lives of native peoples, pioneers, homesteaders and settlers of the area. Built in 1905 as one of Florence’s original schools, the museum’s current home has long been a cornerstone of Old Town. The west wall project marks the museum’s second major restoration effort in recent years, following the successful south wall reconstruction completed in 2024.

Over 90 people came to the Florence Events Center June 9 to attend the Tsunami 101 Roadshow where they heard the science of quakes and tsunamis and tips for surviving everything from a small event to a major Cascadia Quake.

The two-hour event featured information about how tsunamis are formed, the difference between a distant tsunami and a local tsunami and how much time coastal residents may have to respond. Before the evening presentation, tsunami and geological experts spent the day training local

government personnel. Assistant City Manager Megan Messmer explained the components of the Western Lane Emergency Operations Group, and its mission to educate, promote and implement actions to eliminate or reduce long-term risk to human life and property from the effects of natural and man-made hazards.

JULY

The 4th of July brought tons of visitors out to sit under clear skies for the fireworks display over the Port of Siuslaw. The number of attendees was evidenced by the fact that some walked all the way from Safeway for lack of parking anywhere in or around Old Town. The display ended with a loud round of applause from all who attended.



A spectacular July 4 fireworks display was held under perfect skies in 2025

Lotus Building. At its regular July 21 meeting, the Florence City Council approved a change to the Florence City Code to “allow continued use of a nonconforming structure with a nonconforming use in the Development Estuary District until the structure is converted to a conforming use.” While it sounds complicated, it’s specific to the former Lotus Building and other applicable structures.

The adjustment allows the building to conform to Development Estuary codes. At its regular meeting Feb. 24, the Council voted unanimously to approve the amendment of a comprehensive plan diagram and a zoning change that will allow the owner of the former Lotus building to potentially renovate the former Lotus building to house 16 residential apartments.

While residents have been using the building’s parking lot since the building became vacant in 2003, it is now cordoned off for construction reasons and is not open to public parking.

A tsunami warning triggered by an 8.8 quake off the coast of Russia July 30 didn’t result in any measurable difference in Florence. Western Lane

Fire and EMS Authority Chief Michael Schick said that overall, the evening wasn’t that exciting for first responders. Assistant City Manager Megan Messmer said she received notice of the quake right after it happened.

“It was an information statement that basically said, ‘stay tuned,’ she said. She said she kept the unified command team aware

See **REVIEW**, Page A6



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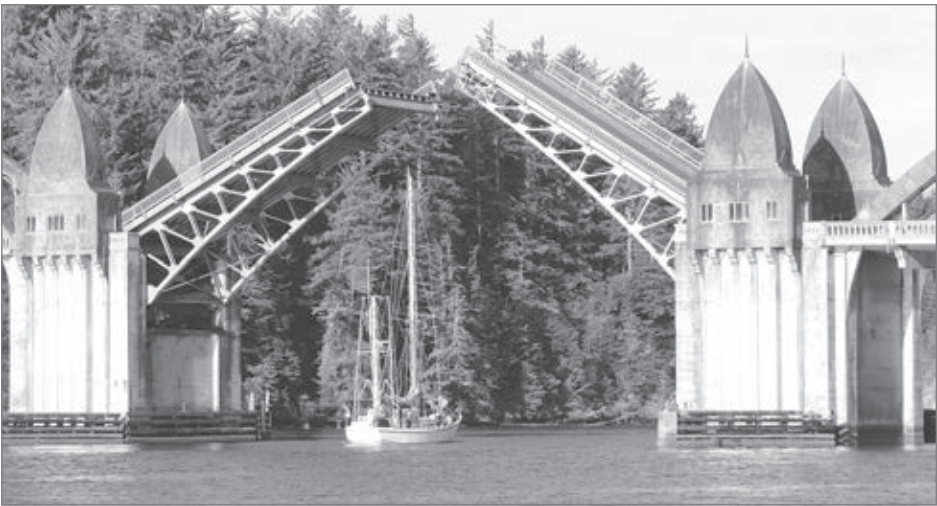
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The fishing vessel Aleta passed under the raised Siuslaw River drawbridge a few times this summer, delighting nearby photographers.

REVIEW

From Page A5

as reports were monitored and updates were sent out until the final cancellation at 10:40 a.m. Wednesday. No major damages or injuries were reported on the Oregon Coast.

AUGUST
Florence Emergency Cold Weather Shelter Committee (FECWSC) announced the Bridges Program of Florence has closed due to the lease ending and uncertain future funding. The 20-unit emergency shelter was funded by a state and county All In grant from December 2023 people - June 2025.

Despite the unfortunate closure of Western Lane’s only emergency shelter, many people’s lives were positively impacted and significant resources were spent within the community for the facility infrastructure, construction, staffing and ongoing supplies.

Over 46 guests were assisted in the program over the 18-month period with 35% attaining more stable housing. By the end of the program, all the current guests had income through jobs or SSI. All guests were assisted in signing up for housing lists as well as obtaining driver’s licenses, birth certificates and other services needed for stability.

Florence Police Department will soon get a new patrol vehicle,

following approval by the City Council in August. Now retired public works director Mike Miller said several of the department’s vehicles have had to be taken out of service due to a crash, high mileage and mechanical issues. While the price for the car alone is \$50,092, Police overhead lights, radar, and systems package, including installation, from Lehr adds \$19,499.46, bringing the total price to \$69,591.46.

Miller said the overall savings over a typically-equipped vehicle would be about \$8,223. He said that when the budget was put together, the department was expecting price increases and budgeted \$100,000, under budget by \$30,408.

Several local kids will likely remember August 2025 for the time they got to go up in planes, fly around the Florence area and communicate with airport dispatch on the radio. Kids, age 8 to 16, completed Florence Air Academy, a two-week course designed to introduce them to career fields in aeronautics, travel, and more. Florence Air Academy is owned and operated by Terry and Winette Tomeny. Some of the class highlights included a visit by a Coast Guard helicopter crew, a visit to a Coast Guard boat, a trip to the Lane Community College Flight and Maintenance schools, a visit to the Police Station, flying remote control airplanes with a local RC Club, flying

drones with a local expert, and even building and launching model rockets.

Eight planes went out to the runway together and took off only minutes apart, flying north. Kids were then flown over the Heceta Head Lighthouse, around to the area over Three Rivers Casino, over the Siuslaw River, Old Town, the Siuslaw River Bridge and the jetties before returning to the airport.

SEPTEMBER
Controversy over the July arrest of Oregon Coast Military Museum (former) director Geoffery Cannon led to a number of locals asking that he be fired immediately. Cannon was arrested for four counts of Sexual Abuse II, of a teenage girl. Controversy over the demands to fire Cannon and repercussions of a widely-shared meeting recording and petition culminated in the resignation and replacement of the museum’s board of directors. The museum was



Residents, veterans, first responders and others welcomed Veterans home after they took the Honor Flight to Washington DC in October.

also closed for some time. Cannon was sentenced to five years of probation in November, along with having to register as a sexual offender and discontinue all contact with the victim and her family.

After 18 years with the City of Florence Public Works, the City Council and community members said goodbye to Director Mike Miller, whose last day was Sept. 28. City Manager Erin Reynolds reflected on Miller’s time in the department.

“Over the past 18 years, Mike has shown unwavering dedication, leadership and an unyielding commitment to our community,” she said. “His contributions have not only elevated the standards of public works, but have left an indelible mark on the City of Florence.” August Murphy was assigned to serve as Interim Public Works Director during the transition.

Siuslaw Outreach

Servics’ (SOS) opening of its Siuslaw Area Resource Center in Florence Sept. 22, brought over 200 people together at the site. SOS President Stephanie Restrepo and Project Chair Montee Kennedy said the center fulfills a dream years in the making, starting with an idea by former SOS president Kim Schwartz and Executive Director Bob Teter to come up with a single regional resource center shared by multiple agencies serving people in need. Calling the facility “a one stop shop campus,” Teter said it will increase access and assistance for low income families and those in need.

OCTOBER
The Facilities Advisory Committee went public with proposals for a bond to replace the current high school and make several necessary upgrades and repairs to the elementary school.

Noting that the process is still in its early stages, Harklerode said two options exist when it comes to the most critical need at the high school.

“One is a larger replacement high school at 174,500 square feet,” he said. “The other one is a somewhat smaller school at 156,000 square feet.” During a presentation to the City Council, Harklerode said the school was built in 1970 and when it was opened, it was meant for 350 to 375 students. We routinely have more than 400 students at the school.”

He said that while the school isn’t necessarily overcrowded, it does have some classroom capacity issues.

“I’d like to point out that school buildings should last longer than 55

years,” he said. “This one didn’t,

Harklerode noted everything from seismic to security issues at the high school campus to security, traffic and age concerns with the Elementary School.

Our Coastal Village President Layne Morrill updated the City Council on the progress of the Elm Park Early Learning Center, to be built soon, adjacent to the Elm Street Apartments, currently under construction northwest of the Florence Justice Center.

“We are expecting to be ready for our financial closing Nov. 15 and to start construction by the end of November,” he said. “That would allow us to be open for business on September 8, 2026, when the school year begins.”

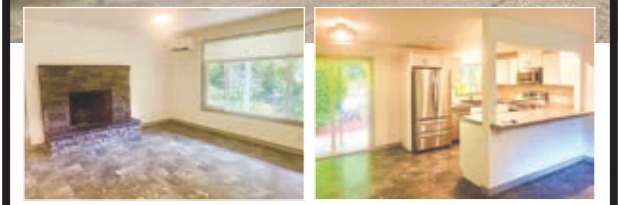
He explained that the center will feature four classrooms, two of which will be run by Head Start of Lane County, and two run by a community provider, serving those who are not eligible for Head Start.

“Overall, the main point is that this is a community- originated, and community-activated project,” he said. Mayor Rob Ward said the issue reinforces the notion that one cannot talk about providing housing in Florence without addressing childcare challenges.


NOVEMBER
Siuslaw Valley Charter School announced that it is purchasing the former Rite-Aid building at the corner of Highway 101 and 35th St., starting with K-3 classes, adding more over time until K-8 status is reached.


At a joint workshop of
See **REVIEW**, Page A7

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More Lighthouse holiday photos



REVIEW
From Page A6

Siuslaw School District (SSD) and Siuslaw Valley Charter School (SVCS) boards Oct. 29, directors discussed plans for the school and voiced concerns about timing, recording of SVCS board meetings, and the eventual expansion from k-3 to k-8 classical education. SVCS Chief Operating Officer Jennifer Waggoner said the SVCS board is confident that it will be able to open Whitmore Classical Academy next fall, serving grades kindergarten through 3rd.

During a tour of the building, Waggoner and Director Chuck Trent showed where the building’s classrooms, parking, entries and playground will be located.



City and planning Staff along with FURA reps and former councilors, shoveled sand to kick off construction of a new hotel across from the Events Center. The hotel opening is projected for spring 2027.

DECEMBER
After long discussion, the Florence City Council approved a request from Florence Emergency Cold Weather Shelter Committee (FECWSC) to operate an overnight shelter in winter months when temperatures are forecast below 34 degrees or 38 degrees during windy,

rainy nights. The location, 4480 Highway 101, is next to the Muffler Works building. FECWSC Chair Taylor Kohn noted that the shelter would be for nights when cold weather could actually threaten a human life, and that the shelter would use drivers to pick guests up from various locations around

the city.
“This year, we have a good, solid team of paid staff and backup unpaid staff, she said. We feel pretty comfortable with our security and oversight.” She noted that guests would not be able to come and go during overnight hours. All guests must be out of the

shelter by 8 a.m.
Controversy followed with contrasting views of what the shelter could bring to the area. Councilor Robert Carp said no one had presented the idea to neighbors in the area, and asserted that serving homeless people often results in pollution and damage. Councilor Sally Wantz disagreed, saying cold shelter guests have not caused damage or issues in previous winters.
An 86-room Wyndham Microtel-branded hotel broke ground in the field across from the Florence Events Center Dec. 9. Just before the end of the year, ground was broken at the site and developer Matt Braun repeated that

the plan will be to open the hotel for business in Spring 2027.
The concept of putting a hotel on the site of the former middle school goes back to the time the events center was being built, as was stated at the groundbreaking Dec. 9.
“We built that building 30 years ago over there,” Mayor Rob Ward said, pointing at the events center, “with the anticipation of having a hotel over here, and well, it finally got here.”
At year’s end, Florence had just gone through a heavy wind and rain storm that brought down trees, caused power outages and damage around the city. At press time, forecasts called for more rain.



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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 31

Low2:19 a.m.....4.0
High.....8:34 a.m.....8.7
Low 4:03 p.m.....-0.6
High..... 10:54 p.m.....6.3

THURSDAY, JANUARY 1

Low3:31 a.m.....4.2
High.....9:33 a.m.....9.0
Low 4:57 p.m.....-1.2
High..... 11:50 p.m.....6.7

FRIDAY, JANUARY 2

Low4:37 a.m.....4.1
High.....10:30 a.m.....9.2
Low 5:48 p.m.....-1.5

SATURDAY, JANUARY 3

High.....12:39 a.m.....7.1
Low5:35 a.m.....3.8
High.....11:24 a.m.....9.2
Low 6:35 p.m.....-1.7

SUNDAY, JANUARY 4

High.....1:23 a.m.....7.4
Low6:30 a.m.....3.5
High..... 12:16 p.m.....9.1
Low 7:18 p.m.....-1.6

MONDAY, JANUARY 5

High.....2:04 a.m.....7.5
Low7:21 a.m.....3.1
High..... 1:06 p.m.....8.7
Low 7:59 p.m.....-1.2

TUESDAY, JANUARY 6

High.....2:44 a.m.....7.7
Low8:12 a.m.....2.9
High..... 1:56 p.m.....8.1
Low 8:38 p.m.....-0.7

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7

High.....3:22 a.m.....7.7
Low9:04 a.m.....2.6
High..... 2:46 p.m.....7.3
Low 9:14 p.m.....0.1

THURSDAY, JANUARY 8

High.....3:58 a.m.....7.7
Low9:58 a.m.....2.5
High..... 3:37 p.m.....6.5
Low 9:50 p.m.....1.0

FRIDAY, JANUARY 9

High.....4:34 a.m.....7.7
Low10:56 a.m.....2.3
High..... 4:35 p.m.....5.8
Low 10:26 p.m.....1.9

SATURDAY, JANUARY 10

High.....5:11 a.m.....7.6
Low11:59 a.m.....2.1
High..... 5:44 p.m.....5.2
Low 11:04 p.m.....2.9

SUNDAY, JANUARY 11

High.....5:50 a.m.....7.4
Low1:06 p.m.....1.9
High..... 7:13 p.m.....4.9
Low 11:50 p.m.....3.7

MONDAY, JANUARY 12

High.....6:35 a.m.....7.3
Low 2:12 p.m.....1.6
High..... 9:00 p.m.....5.0

TUESDAY, JANUARY 13

Low12:54 a.m.....4.4
High.....7:29 a.m.....7.3
Low 3:13 p.m.....1.2
High..... 10:24 p.m.....5.4

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14

Low2:13 a.m.....4.7
High.....8:26 a.m.....7.4
Low 4:05 p.m.....0.8
High..... 11:14 p.m.....5.8

THURSDAY, JANUARY 15

Low3:24 a.m.....4.7
High.....9:21 a.m.....7.6
Low 4:49 p.m.....0.4
High..... 11:50 p.m.....6.1

FRIDAY, JANUARY 16

Low4:20 a.m.....4.6
High.....10:09 a.m.....7.8
Low 5:28 p.m.....0.1

Vikings holiday hoops update

Will LOHRE
Country Media, Inc.

Both Siuslaw basketball teams got the week off for the holidays, but before the hiatus, they headed to Gold Beach for the Kringle Classic. The tournament took place Dec. 19-20, and while the girls finished atop the heap, the boys lost by the slimmest of margins.

Christmas came early for the girls basketball team, as the Vikings earned the tourney title, beating two opponents to earn the honors. The first game was played on Dec. 19 against Riddle, an opponent the Vikings quickly solved. In the game, the Vikings scored a season high 52 points while holding Riddle to just 15. The 37 point winning margin was the second highest of the season.

The final against Gold Beach proved a stiffer

test. Siuslaw again registered a new season high in points scored, but they needed every bit of firepower to knock off the hosts. The Vikings scored 57 points, a new high-water mark, while the Panthers notched 53. The win ensured that the Vikings left the Kringle Classic as the champs. Zooming out, the two victories pushed Siuslaw's record to 3-5 in the early stages of the season.

The three wins in the campaign so far match the total for the Vikings all of last season. During the 24-25 season, the Vikings finished with a 3-21 record. Taking the top spot in Gold Beach gives the Vikings 17 more chances to eclipse their win total from last year.

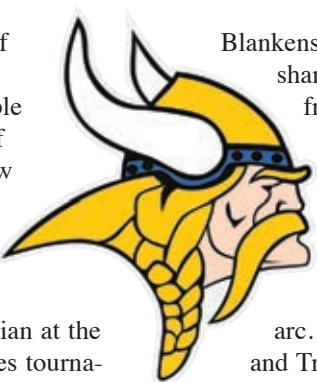
The Vikings next played against North Valley on Dec. 27 and Oakridge on Dec. 29.

The results of those games are unavailable at the time of press. Siuslaw will be back in action against Umpqua Valley Christian at the Bandon Dunes tournament on Jan. 1.

For the boys, the Kringle Classic offered a chance to continue polishing skills, and the Vikings narrowly missed out on the tournament championship.

The tournament started on a high note, with Siuslaw smashing Glendale to the tune of an 89-44 final score on Dec. 19. The 89-point eruption was the highest-scoring performance by a Vikings team for at least a decade.

Senior Micah Blankenship was incendiary, flaming the Pirates with 28 points.



Blankenship was a sharpshooter from the outside, dropping in seven buckets from beyond the arc. Tom Morgan and Trenten Harer also made their presence felt in the game. Morgan scored 15 points but also showed his worth on the defensive end, racking up six steals. Harer shone in a game that saw him play his most minutes in a varsity game to date. The sophomore scored 15 points, including some distance sniping, knocking down four three pointers.

While those three led the way, Head Coach Dylan Perry was thrilled with the performance of his whole crew.

"All 11 players on our varsity roster yesterday

got playing time and contributed to a great team win," Perry said ahead of the tournament final on Dec. 20.

The last game of the weekend pitted the Vikings against the hosts, Gold Beach. It was a tight game, and the final margin couldn't have been any closer. The Vikings ended up on the short end of the scoreline, falling 46-47 when the final buzzer sounded. Despite the loss, the weekend offered the Vikings another chance to fine-tune before league play tips off in January.

The Vikings next played against North Valley on Dec. 27 and North Bend on Dec. 29. The results of those games are unavailable at the time of press. Siuslaw will next play Umpqua Valley Christian at the Bandon Dunes tournament at Bandon High School on Jan. 1.

Siuslaw wrestlers shine at Grants Pass

Will LOHRE
Country Media, Inc.

Siuslaw's wrestling season has been go-go-go since the start of December, and Head Coach Neil Wartnik has loved what he's seen from his group this year and is eager to see what the future holds.

With seniors Jacob Mann and Danin Lacouture leading the way, the Vikings are already forming a bond that Wartnik will help the team go far this season. It's been a big help to have Mann and Lacouture be the culture setters for the team.

"It's been huge. They're respected in the school. Danin and Jacob are two of the chief leaders in the school, not just on the team," Wartnik said. "When they set the tone, the whole spirit and quality turns really positive."

While wrestling is an individual sport, Wartnik said the team must operate as a unit and appreciate the effort and

performances of their teammates. Warnik said it's been fun to work with the group, and this year's crop lives up to the talent and success that have become the standard at Siuslaw.

"What's really cool to watch is the improvement. The improvement has been rapid, and the trajectory has been really positive," Wartnik said. "I don't know where it's going to end this year, but hopefully we stay healthy."

Preparation began in the summer for this winter, and Siuslaw sent nine wrestlers to the Purler Wrestling Academy in Missouri to hone their techniques and mindsets. Wartnik said the nine wrestlers who attended the summer camp returned with a "very different attitude, spirit, and vision."

One of the program's start programs, Jacob Mann, has attended the camp the past two years, and now he helps coach and teach the method to Vikings at practices.

The coaches have been leaning on Purler's methods as well. The goal is to set a high bar, push athletes to reach their potential, and ensure they have fun without feeling overburdened.

So far, the hard work has been yielding excellent results. It isn't always about placing or winning; seeing the improvement wrestlers are showing is a different measure of success. Recently, the Vikings traveled to the Grants Pass Winter Kickoff to compete with more than 40 teams from around Oregon and California.

"We had success on every level, and more than that, even the kids that wrestled and lost and got eliminated, we saw improvement there. I think the power of this team is watching the coaching staff go to work," Wartnik said. "I've got Sarah and Shawn Mann, a husband and wife team. We have Devin White, who graduated from Siuslaw in 2009. We also have

coach Brian Lacouture. So these are seasoned adults."

In addition to the more senior coaches, Wartnik has been thrilled to also have alumni volunteer assistants Jameson Hubner and Charles Nelson, who graduated last year, helping with the group. At the tournament in Grants Pass, Siuslaw also had the help of Siuslaw state wrestling champion turned collegiate athlete Macali Lade on the sidelines.

"We have all these people who are circling around our kids, and after wins and losses, they're giving a lot of thoughtful, caring, mentoring reflection on the matches," Wartnik said. "Helping the kids see what they did well and what they can improve upon."

With plenty of support around them, the wrestlers get to focus on the mat, and at Grants Pass, the Vikings showed what they've been learning. On the boys side, there were standout performances from Jacob

Mann, Ali Ijaz, and Gage Mills. All three placed, and the Vikings finished 11th at the tournament with 77.5 points.

Wrestling at 285 pounds, Mann performed to his usual high standard, losing just one match and finishing third. Mann faced off with Joe Weil in the semifinals, which was a rematch of the 215-pound state final last year. Mann lost to Weil in Grants Pass but rebounded, winning his final two matches to secure a third-place finish. He finished the tournament with a 5-1 record.

Ijaz's performance stood out to Wartnik, as Ijaz is the "fastest improving" wrestler in the program right now. Last season was his first competing at the varsity level, and this season he is proving to be one of the Vikings' most reliable competitors. Ijaz went 4-2 over the weekend and finished fourth. Both losses came against the same opponent. After

See SIUSLAW, Page B2

OSAA Executive Board finalizes districts for next four years

The Oregon School Activities Association Executive Board has approved the leagues and classifications for sports in Oregon's high schools for the next four-year time block.

In a 13-1 vote Monday, the Executive Board largely went with the final recommendation of OSAA's Classification and Districting Committee, making three changes, none which directly impact the South Coast schools.

Marshfield and North

Bend will remain in the Class 4A Sky-Em League, with a few new members after adjustments to the enrollment range for the classification moved several schools up from Class 3A to Class 4A.

Cottage Grove, Junction City and Marist Catholic remain in the league and Elmira returns after spending the current time block as a Class 3A school. South Umpqua also moves up to join the league.

Also moving up

to Class 4A are Taft (Oregon West Conference), North Valley (Skyline Conference) and Valley Catholic (Cowapa League), which all had representatives several times ask the Classification and Districting Committee to leave them in Class 3A. Both Banks (Cowapa League) and Cascade Christian (Skyline Conference) requested to move up to Class 4A for the next time block.

One of the changes by

the Executive Board was a slight change to the upper end of the Class 4A enrollment scale that moved both Henley and Cascade back into Class 4A after the final recommendation had them moving up to 5A.

Because of that change, the Executive Board also went back to an earlier proposal with the three remaining 5A schools in Southern Oregon (Eagle Point, Ashland and Crater) as part of a 6A-5A hybrid league with South Medford,

North Medford, Grants Pass and Roseburg. Eagle Point and Ashland representatives had asked the committee not to include them in a hybrid league with teams they would rarely or never play against in any sports. They have been in a league with the Eugene-area 5A schools the past four years and those schools will now be part of a hybrid league with 6A schools Sheldon and South Eugene.

See OSAA, Page B2

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Community Briefs

Coffee conversations

Florence ORganizes presents coffee conversations. Come join them on first and third Fridays from 10 AM to 11:30 a.m. At the Bridgeport market, 75 Harbor St., at the east end

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SIUSLAW

From Page B1

“getting caught” in the first loss, when they met again, Ijaz made adjustments and pushed his opponent to the limit. That match-to-match improvement was one of the highlights of the tournament for Wartnik.

“Ali’s fourth place finish was a great accomplishment,” Wartnik said. The last placer for the boys was Mills, and Wartnik said he wrestled well, building off a solid

foundation he already had. Mills finished fourth at the tournament with a 3-2 record.

On the girls side, the Vikings finished 14th of the 41 teams in attendance. The big highlight was Danin Lacouture winning the tournament at 145 pounds. It was the first time she had won a tournament of this size, and she did it in impressive fashion.

“She wrestled with such composure. She dominated in the early rounds, and in the finals, she wrestled [Karlye Dodson] from Del Norte, who

actually beat her at the Coast Classic the week before,” Wartnik said. “This time, Danin really kind of dominated the match. The score wasn’t indicative of the dominance Danin had. The other girl was thoroughly frustrated.”

Lacouture went 4-0 on her way to the top of the podium.

Another great performance came from Molly Mills. Wartnik said it’s the first time Mills has placed at a tournament of this caliber, and her 4-2 weekend earned her a hard-fought fourth-place

finish.

“Huge event for Molly, and just really proud of her,” Wartnik said. “We’re just thrilled to see that.”

Last but certainly not least, Wartnik had a big shout-out for JV wrestler Gabby Sweet. Wrestling at one of the “biggest JV tournaments” around, Sweet walked away with a championship finish, winning the title at 285 pounds.

“Gabby has improved so much over the last year. He’s come so far,” Wartnik said. “We’re really thrilled for Gabby. Won a lot of big matches,

learning how to battle and stand in with guys who are a lot taller than him.”

In the coming weeks, the schedule won’t let up for the Vikings. Siuslaw sent four athletes to the Sierra Nevada Classic in Reno, Dec. 29-30. Results from that tournament are not available at the time of press.

For those interested in watching the Vikings in person, the next home tournament is the Nick Lutz Memorial on Jan. 16-17. Keep an eye out for more wrestling updates in the coming weeks.

OSAA

From Page B1

The hybrid leagues are designed to greatly reduce travel for the schools.

In Class 3A, Coquille

will remain in the Far West League, which will be the biggest in the classification to fit in three schools in Southern Oregon.

Siuslaw, Sutherlin, Douglas and Glide remain in the league with the Red

Devils, but South Umpqua has moved up to 4A.

Brookings-Harbor returns after a few years in the Southern Oregon Conference, which has been fractured with North Valley and Cascade Christian moving up to 4A and Lakeview and Rogue River dropping down to 2A. St. Mary’s of Medford also returns to the Far West League and Illinois Valley of Cave Junction will be a new member as it moves up from Class 2A.

In Class 2A, the Sunset Conference keeps South Coast members Bandon, Myrtle Point, Reedsport and Gold Beach, along with Oakland and adds new member North Douglas of Drain, which is moving up from Class 1A.

In Class 1A, Powers and Pacific remain in the Skyline League along with current members Camas Valley, Days Creek, Elkton, Glendale, Milo Adventist Academy, New Hope Christian, Riddle, Umpqua Valley Christian and Yoncalla. Rogue Christian Academy of Grants Pass also is listed with the league, though the small school this year only sponsors three sports, all part of special districts rather than leagues — cross country, wrestling and golf.

The other change the Executive Board made Monday was moving Class 2A school Enterprise from the Blue

Mountain Conference to the Wapiti League, which better geographically fits the school in the northeast corner of the state.

The Classification and Districting Committee also asked the Executive Board to reconvene the Computation of ADM task force next year to look further into recommendations about the classification and districting process.

Among suggestions during various meetings of the committee were returning to using enrollment for all four grades when determining school size during the classification process. Only the lower three grades were used in computing the enrollment numbers this year.

Another suggestion was for the committee to consider participation in extracurricular activities, not just enrollment, when determining where schools should be placed.

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Outside the Box is the January theme that inspired the versatile artist members to create their pieces. With 30-some artists, you'll find a wide variety of art including, outstanding oil, acrylic, and watercolor paintings—from subtle to vibrant colors, unusual woodwork, clay pieces from sculptures to utilitarian pieces, elegant jewelry with crystals and gems, gleaming glass sculptures, distinctive fiber weavings, masterful photographs, and unusual paper painting collage, not forgetting



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The team also delivered three large crates of toys and more than 40 bicycles to the Florence Police Department, supporting more than 100 local families. In Coos Bay, an additional 1,436 pounds of food and 163 toys were donated to support local families in need. "We are incredibly proud of the generosity we see from our community every year," said Rich Colton, director of marketing at Three Rivers Casino Resort. "Every toy and every pound of food donated represents a family that will feel supported this holiday season."

Giving back is at the heart of who we are, and we are grateful to everyone who helped turn this drive into such a meaningful show of holiday spirit."

The annual drive is made possible through partnerships with local police departments and community organizations that help identify families in need throughout the region. "We really appreciate working with Three Rivers for the toy and food drive program we have here in Florence," said Florence Police Department School Resource Officer Hailey Coons. "They're a big part of the service we're able to offer our community during the holiday season." "I think it's wonderful when businesses give back to the community they serve," said Beth Bolles, a food drive recipient. "My wife and I live on Social Security, and it was becoming increasingly difficult to decide which bills to pay. Discovering we were

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This special ceremony

is held in loving memory of Rev. Donna Smith of Roseburg, who first introduced the White Stone Ceremony to our fellowship and shared its profound significance with our community. Her legacy lives on through this cherished tradition. Join us on January 4, 2026 as we gather in community to honor the past, embrace the present, and look toward the future with intention, mindfulness, and hope. Together, we continue a tradition that invites reflection, connection, and a renewed sense of purpose for the year ahead.

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Community

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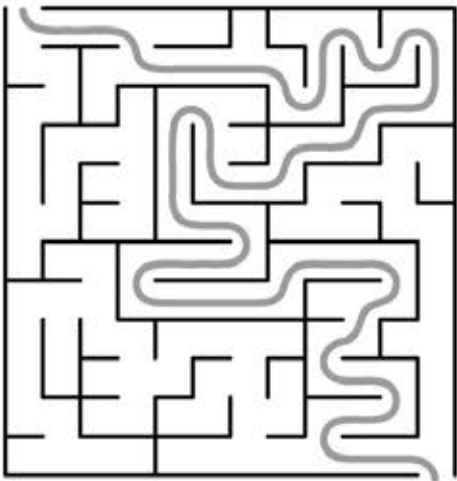
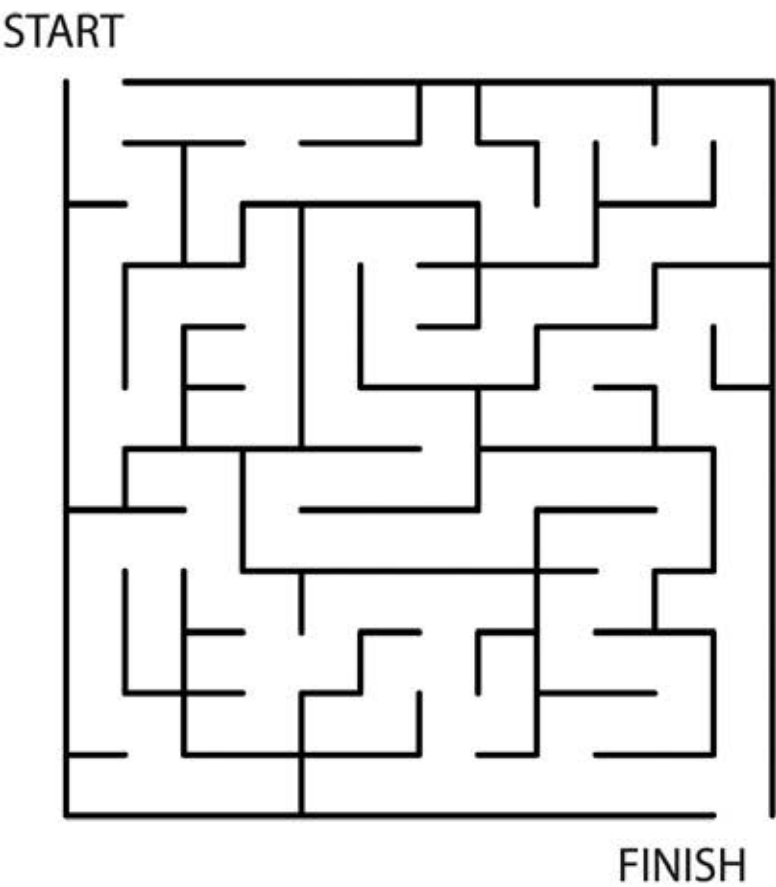
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Can you find your way through the maze?



1607: Pocahontas pleads for John Smith's life when tribal leaders attempt to execute him.

1845: The United States annexes the Republic of Texas.

1913: Cecil B. DeMille begins filming Hollywood's first feature film.

NEW WORD

COCOA

a hot drink made from cocoa powder mixed with sugar and milk

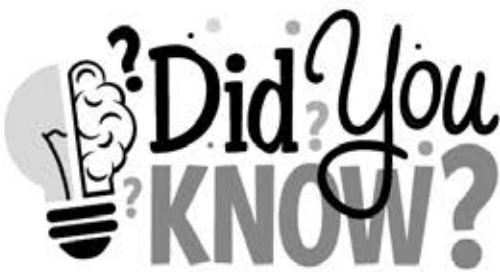


This sweetened beverage was once a bitter drink made from roasted cocoa beans.

Answer: Hot chocolate



English: Mug
Spanish: Taza
Italian: Tazza
French: Mug
German: Tasse



A mug of hot cocoa can be made more delicious with the addition of whipped cream and miniature marshmallows.



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

Answer: Hot chocolate

SHOPPING WORD SEARCH

A	L	B	G	H	V	N	S	R	A	L	M	H	Q	L	S	T	S	C	C
U	T	E	G	D	U	B	E	N	C	L	C	P	P	T	P	F	N	F	O
A	Q	Q	Q	A	H	P	O	H	D	S	A	L	E	I	F	B	V	P	U
D	A	C	T	D	P	N	E	D	P	C	N	B	E	Q	M	L	E	L	P
I	O	B	S	O	E	C	R	P	O	E	U	C	D	E	H	D	C	N	O
K	N	G	H	B	K	E	V	C	E	P	E	T	R	F	A	T	N	O	N
B	L	S	R	O	I	C	U	F	I	R	B	C	C	N	C	N	A	K	Y
D	I	F	U	H	G	G	E	Y	N	S	H	R	D	O	S	V	R	R	B
L	N	T	S	S	C	Q	R	T	V	A	M	Q	H	V	V	K	A	E	C
M	E	A	A	E	O	O	A	K	N	P	U	R	C	H	A	S	E	T	A
T	C	Y	C	A	T	L	K	D	H	Q	Q	N	E	I	K	U	L	A	R
M	Y	I	S	N	L	O	I	G	V	G	U	T	O	E	B	E	C	I	T
G	R	D	E	A	V	S	D	N	P	A	O	Q	N	N	L	A	O	L	V
P	H	V	M	G	E	P	Q	L	T	V	A	G	V	U	V	S	G	O	U
F	N	M	E	G	T	N	O	R	F	E	R	O	T	S	O	Q	I	U	V
I	Y	R	E	V	I	L	E	D	R	N	I	V	K	G	T	C	L	A	D
S	H	Q	M	Q	L	U	I	P	O	B	D	B	I	I	P	C	S	L	P
B	B	Q	L	G	V	S	I	B	O	U	T	I	Q	U	E	M	F	I	P
O	U	S	S	I	I	I	E	D	O	C	R	A	B	C	R	P	O	V	D
G	D	D	N	U	F	E	R	Q	E	N	Y	N	A	E	V	S	A	B	Q

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

WORDS

- AISLE
- BAG
- BARCODE
- BOUTIQUE
- BUDGET
- CART
- CASHIER
- CHECKOUT
- CLEARANCE
- COUPON
- DELIVERY
- DISCOUNT
- INVENTORY
- MALL
- MERCHANDISE
- ONLINE
- PRICE
- PURCHASE
- RECEIPT
- REFUND
- RETAIL
- SALE
- SHOPPER
- STOREFRONT

Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



OLIVE & POPEYE

By Randy Milholland



HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



CryptoQuip

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

Clue: X equals O

CGURTH YRFWGXJ ZRLRUGJH
YHROQTGJL AWXOXF XY CGL
PROHT ZRZZRIF PGOW YIGAHTF:
ZRJROHH YRGT.

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SCRAMBLERS

Unscramble the letters within each rectangle to form four ordinary words. Then rearrange the boxed letters to form the mystery word, which will complete the gag!

Chant
DABALL
New
LOVEN
Ruler
ERGENT
Collect
GEARTH

TODAY'S WORD

By the way, when are you going to clean out the _____?

December 29, 2025 Posting Date

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Ship's sail
- 4 Some TVs
- 8 Corned beef recipe
- 12 Terre Haute sch.
- 13 Greek vowel
- 14 Iso-
- 15 Flop
- 17 Pop's sister
- 18 Coated with gold
- 19 Is boastful
- 20 Forest clearing
- 22 Satiating
- 24 Partially mine
- 25 Screwdriver type
- 29 — Lanka
- 30 Warning
- 31 Compass dir.
- 32 Sailing challenge
- 34 Wound cover
- 35 Breaks down
- 36 Piles
- 37 Pink hue
- 40 Seniors' org.
- 41 Each
- 42 Unexpected gain
- 46 Story
- 47 Shoppe descriptor
- 48 24 horas
- 49 Building wings

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13				14		
15			16					17		
		18					19			
20	21				22	23				
24				25				26	27	28
29			30					31		
32			33				34			
			35				36			
37	38	39				40				
41				42	43				44	45
46							47			48
49				50					51	

DOWN

- 1 Skippy rival
- 2 "This — stick-up!"
- 3 Sofia's land
- 4 Rummage (through)
- 5 Stallion-to-be
- 6 — standstill
- 7 Plopped down
- 8 Fireplace part
- 9 Water color?
- 10 Crooned
- 11 Chart toppers
- 16 Pot covers
- 19 Cigar remnant
- 20 "Holy cow!"
- 21 Entice
- 22 Secluded spots
- 23 Cooking fat
- 25 Move like a butterfly
- 26 Adventure
- 27 Now, in a memo
- 28 Society newbies
- 30 Missing GI
- 33 Curtains
- 34 Lowly worker
- 36 Devil's domain
- 37 Blanchett of "The Aviator"
- 38 Milky gem
- 39 Sandwich bread
- 40 "The King —"
- 42 Misery
- 43 Under the weather
- 44 Architect
- 45 Young fellow

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Weekly SUDOKU

		2		5		3	9	8
		9		2		4	7	
	7				4	5	1	
				8	3	9		
1			7		6		5	3
2				1		6	8	7
6		1		3	9		2	4
		3						
		5	4	6	1		3	

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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Hanging around

H	A	N	D	S

- What a dealer deals
- Room darkener
- Tether
- Cetacean
- Entire
- Bathroom accessory

Solve each row by replacing one letter from the answer above or below and scrambling to make a new word. When complete, the top and bottom words will have no letters in common.

FiveSpot is a trademark of Michael McLinden
See more at www.fivespotpuzzle.com

02543

END				ELIS			SL	ELLS
DIA				OLDE			TALE	
FALL				WIND			POPO	
P				AARP			CORAL	
S				HEAPS			ROTS	
B				SCAB			HEAD	
SSE				ALERT			SRI	
D				FLAT			OURS	
GLADE				GLUT			GLADE	
GILTS				BRAGS			FALL	
FLAT				FLAT			ISU	
EQU				IO			IO	
HA				R			HA	

Solution time: 26 mins.

Answers

King Crossword

Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez

- GEOGRAPHY: What body of water lies between Ukraine and Russia?
- SLOGANS: Which company uses the advertising slogan "Think Different"?
- MOVIES: Which actor plays himself in the movie "Zombieland"?
- HISTORY: Which U.S. president authorized the Indian Removal Act, which forcibly relocated Native Americans?
- BIOLOGY: How do plants take in oxygen and carbon dioxide?
- TELEVISION: What's the name of the bar in "The Simpsons"?
- MUSIC: Which pop singer refers to her fans as "little monsters"?
- ANATOMY: Where is the deltoid muscle in the human body?
- FOOD & DRINK: What is the primary ingredient in the Greek dish mousaka?
- LITERATURE: Who wrote the children's book "Where the Wild Things Are"?

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GARAGE

Today's Word

- 3. Regent; 4. Gather
- 1. Ballad; 2. Novel;

SCRAMBLERS

T	O	W	E	L
W	H	O	L	E
W	H	A	L	E
L	E	A	S	H
S	H	A	D	E
H	A	N	D	S

Solution

7	2	5	4	6	1	8	3	9
6	4	3	8	7	2	1	6	5
2	8	1	5	3	9	7	2	4
6	3	4	9	1	6	7	8	5
1	9	8	7	4	6	2	5	3
5	6	7	2	2	8	3	9	4
8	7	6	3	9	4	5	1	2
3	5	9	1	2	8	4	7	6
4	1	2	6	5	7	3	9	8

Answer

Weekly SUDOKU

CryptoQuip
Bizarre fashion magazine featuring photos of big water mammals with flippers.
answer
Manatee Fair.

- 10. Maurice Sendak
- 9. Egeplan
- 8. Shoulder
- 7. Lady Gaga
- 6. Moe's Tavern
- 5. Tiny pores on the underside of leaves called stomata
- 4. Andrew Jackson
- 3. Bill Murray
- 2. Apple
- 1. Sea of Azov

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Inviting 2 bdrm, 2 bath home with 992 sq. ft. of living space with an open concept layout, bonus hobby room, workshop, extra storage and attached 1-car garage. Lots of parking space. **\$329,000 List #1342/678662522**

Prime commercial lot with 250 feet of Highway 101 frontage. Property was previously a site for restaurant with a paved parking lot for 15 cars. Blocks off the Hwy 101 & Hwy 126 junction. **\$458,000 List #1343/ 503682183 or 349985048**

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PUBLIC NOTICES

TSN25-203 NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING PC 25 16 CUP 04 & PC 25 07 DR 05
The Florence Planning Commission will hold a public hearing in the City Hall Chambers, 250 Hwy 101, Florence, on Tuesday, January 13, 2026 at 5:30 PM to consider a Conditional Use Permit and Design Review at 1150 Bay Street to allow a multi-unit dwelling consisting of 6 units within the footprint of the existing building. Located in the Old Town Area A and the Development Estuary District.

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REDUCE REUSE RECYCLE

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.

	+		×		= 56			
+		+		+				
	+		×		= 60			
×		÷		÷				
9	+		÷		= 13			
=		=		=				
45		3		14				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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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 MASTER for an L, you get MISTER. Do not change the order of the letters.

1. Cabbage garden	— A — — —	Toss the baseball	— I — — —
2. Wood's homophone	— — U — —	Earth	— — R — —
3. ___ shop quartet	— A — — —	Carpet style	— — E — — —
4. Runway walker	— — D — — —	Traveler's inn	— — T — —
5. Buffett or Beatty	— — — R — —	Prison official	— — — D — —
6. Funniness	H — — — —	Gossip's specialty	R — — — —
7. More rapidly	— — — — — R	Button up	— — — — — N
8. Small river	— — T — — —	Banshee sound	— — C — — —
9. Welcome	— — — E — —	Vast	— — — A —
10. Baton or rod	— — — I — —	Jammed	— — — U — —

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The Garden Bug

This plant is a parasitic perennial; its white or translucent berries grow on the trunks and branches of deciduous trees. American mistletoe (*P. serotinum*) is widespread across the U.S., while its European cousin (*V. album*) can only sometimes be found in California. Often used as a winter holiday adornment in the home, these plants are potentially deadly for children and pets, as they contain phoratoxin, a toxic protein. It is best to avoid real mistletoe in favor of artificial versions - Brenda Weaver

Mistletoe

Sources: pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov, onlinelibrary.wiley.com

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Fun Fact

Tradition has it that **St. Nicholas** was born in ancient Patara, now an archaeological site in modern Turkey. He was imprisoned for some time for his Christian faith, and went on to serve as bishop of Myra. He was and still is considered to be a special protector of young people, and is revered at many locations around the world.

Source: www.americanheritage.com, www.stnicholascenter.org

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STREAMING SOURCE

Here's what to watch and where to watch it for the week of Jan. 5, 2025.

7-Jan: "Beast Games" (Season 2) — Prime Video

7-Jan: "Marcello Hernandez: American Boy" (Comedy Special) — Netflix

7-Jan: "Bruce Springsteen: Nebraska Live" (Documentary) — Hulu

8-Jan: "HIS & HERS" (Limited Series) — Netflix

8-Jan: "The Traitors" (Season 4) — Peacock

8-Jan: "The Pitt" (Season 2) — HBO Max

8-Jan: "Girl Taken" (Limited Series) — Paramount+

9-Jan: "Depeche Mode: M" (Documentary) — Netflix

9-Jan: "Coldwater" (Limited Series) — Paramount+ Showtime

10-Jan: "The Artful Dodger" (Season 1) — Hulu

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Even Exchange

ANSWERS

1. Patch, Pitch	6. Humor, Rumor
2. Would, World	7. Faster, Fasten
3. Barber, Berber	8. Stream, Scream
4. Model, Motel	9. Greet, Great
5. Warren, Warden	10. Stick, Stuck



Pulmonary Nodules Appear, Leading To Concern About Cancer

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am a 76-year-old woman in what I thought was excellent health. On a recent coronary calcium CT scan that was ordered because of my age and slightly elevated cholesterol, an incidental finding was described in the report as “innumerable, tiny noncalcified pulmonary nodules bilaterally.” The largest of these is in the “left lower lobe with multiple additional 2- to 4-mm nodules,” and they recommended “clinical correlation and a consideration of a dedicated chest CT.”

I found the report quite scary, especially considering my mother and grandfather died of lung cancer (although they were smokers and I never smoked). My primary physician has ordered the chest CT but wants to wait four weeks. She says that the nodules could be caused by inflammation or infection and might resolve on their own.

My fear is that they're actually lung cancer and waiting four weeks might be problematic, not to mention extremely anxiety-producing. I would appreciate your input. —M.S.

ANSWER: I certainly understand why you are concerned about lung cancer given your family history, but primary lung cancer is very unlikely. Since there are so many of these tiny nodules, I agree with your doctor that these are highly unlikely to be lung cancer, which is generally only a single nodule.

Your doctor is correct that there are inflammatory and infectious conditions that can cause a similar appearance on a chest CT. Some of these infections are serious (including tuberculosis), but people generally have symptoms. So, I think this is unlikely. Exposure to lung

toxins, especially silicosis and asbestosis, are generally occupational, but they are another potential cause.

Some cancers can spread to the lungs. While the appearance of nodules on a CT scan in a person with no known cancer would be unusual, if the CT scan in four weeks shows that the nodules are enlarging, then this would be concerning. Getting another scan in less than four weeks might not be enough time to see a change.

I am sorry about the unavoidable anxiety in waiting for the scan, but it's likely that the scan won't show a change and you will be able to stop worrying.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I was experiencing hoarseness while taking ibuprofen. A friend got intestinal bleeding due to taking it. My doctor gave me 7.5 mg of meloxicam daily, but I'm not sure it's OK for long periods of time. I'm 73 with osteoarthritis and osteopenia. I exercise daily and eat a healthy diet, and I have high blood pressure that is controlled with losartan and amlodipine. —T.M.H.

ANSWER: Ibuprofen is generally a safe drug, but it does have the potential for side effects — some of them being serious. Gastrointestinal bleeding is a serious one, and it is most common in older women. I would not try a second nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) like meloxicam in a person who has a history of serious bleeding with any other similar drug.

Hoarseness could be due to an allergy, due to direct irritation of ibuprofen on the throat, or from the worsening of acid reflux, which can cause hoarseness if acid gets all the way into the throat.

Meloxicam is also an NSAID but is chemically in a different class from ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil and others) or naproxen (Aleve and others), which are closely related. It's reasonable to give it a try, but if it causes hoarseness again, then an NSAID probably isn't a good choice for your arthritis. You could consider acetaminophen (Tylenol) or topical NSAIDs, which do not get absorbed enough to cause an increased bleeding risk.

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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