



OCC WAVES

Winter Edition
Covering the
Oregon coast

Photo by Tony Reed/Country Media



EXHIBIT OPENS FALL 2024

Cedar and Sea

THE MARITIME CULTURE OF THE INDIGENOUS COASTAL PEOPLE OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

COLUMBIA RIVER MARITIME MUSEUM

ON THE WATERFRONT IN DOWNTOWN ASTORIA • CRMM.ORG

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Chuck Blakeslee

Contributing Writers

Steve Card

Will Chappell

Roger Gitlin

Tony Reed

Jeremy C. Ruark

Nate Schwartz



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GAZETTE CANNON BEACH**Lincoln County Leader****The COTTAGE GROVE Sentinel****Polk County Itemizer-Observer****The World** North Coast **CITIZEN****SN Siuslaw News****Tillamook Headlight Herald****Del Norte**
TRIPLICATE**CURRY COASTAL PILOT**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SHOP SMALL SWEEPSTAKES

October through December

Tillamook Chamber of Commerce

Various locations in Tillamook

The Chamber hosts the Shop Small Sweepstakes, coordinating weekly giveaways and a grand prize drawing to encourage shoppers to come downtown.

FELTING WORKSHOP: FELTLAND

Nov. 8, 15, 22, 26, 4 - 5:30 p.m.

Tillamook County Library

1716 3rd St, Tillamook

A felt miniatures workshop.

YACHATS CELTIC MUSIC FESTIVAL

Friday, Nov. 8, 9 & 10

Twenty different artists will be performing solo and in bands during the Yachats Celtic Music Festival. Free and ticketed events offered. Learn more by going online at PollyPlumb.org and clicking on the tab for "Celtic Music Festival."

VETERANS DAY EVENT AT TILLAMOOK AIR MUSEUM

Nov. 11, 8 - 12:30 p.m.

Tillamook Air Museum

6030 Hangar Road, Tillamook

The largest Veterans Day Ceremony on the Oregon Coast. Featuring special guest speakers, food, and live music.

RAIN FEST

Nov. 16 - 17, all day

Tillamook Forest Center, 45500 Wilson River Hwy, Tillamook

Join the Tillamook Forest Center as they plunge into the world of surging rivers, spawning salmon, and the inner workings of watersheds to celebrate the ways in which rain transforms the forests.

SENIOR LUNCHES

**Ongoing Tuesdays and Wednesdays,
11:30 a.m.**

Kiawanda Community Center

34600 Cape Kiwanda Dr, Pacific City

Lunch for the whole family. \$3 for seniors, \$6 for family and friends. Meals are served at 11:30 a.m. on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

WHITE CHRISTMAS

Nov. 22 - Dec. 22

Coaster Theatre Playhouse, 108 North Hemlock St., Cannon Beach

Performances begin at 7:30 p.m. Sunday

shows start at 3:00 p.m. Tickets: \$30 and \$25.

SHORE ACRES HOLIDAY LIGHTS

Nov. 28-Dec. 31, 2024

Parking tickets are available now for the Holiday Lights show, which features thousands of lights and displays in the formal garden from 4:30-9 p.m. Timed entry and \$5 parking must be purchased before arrival. Onsite parking permits will not be sold. Parking permits are per vehicle, not per person. See our FAQ for more information or call our Park Information line at 800 551-6949. The line is open Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

HOLIDAY WREATH MAKING

Nov. 29 - Dec. 1, 11 a.m.

Tillamook Forest Center, 45500 Wilson

River Hwy, Tillamook

Bring the beauty of the forest home this winter by creating a winter wreath.

Registration required: \$40 wreath & \$10 cone bird feeders.

SEASIDE OUTLETS DAY AFTER THANKSGIVING SALE

Friday, November 29

1111 N Roosevelt Dr, Seaside

Day After Thanksgiving Sale

Open very early Friday after being closed on Thanksgiving. There will be snacks & coffee for early bird shoppers.

MIMOSA MADNESS WEEKEND

Nov. 29 - Dec. 1

Various locations Cannon Beach

Make a big impact while shopping small this Plaid Friday/Small Business Saturday weekend! Enjoy the charm of downtown Cannon Beach, with many shops offering extended hours, store-wide sales, and festive beverages.

CANDY CANE EXPRESS TRAIN

**Nov. 29 - Dec. 22, Friday, Saturday, &
Sunday & Monday, Nov. 23.**

Oregon Coast Scenic Railroad, 306 American Avenue, Garibaldi

Beautifully decorated both inside and out, this steam-powered train ride is complete with complementary hot cocoa and cookies. Write letters to Santa while awaiting a visit from the man in the red suit himself! This round-trip excursion departs Garibaldi and runs to Rockaway Beach for a one hour round trip ride.

CHRISTMAS EVENTS IN TOLEDO

Saturday, Nov. 30

Toledo's annual Umbrella Parade, Tree Lighting, and Community Christmas Party take place from 5 to 7 p.m. Umbrella Parade is along Main Street, followed by the Tree Lighting in front of Cobblestone Pizza and then a Community Christmas Party at the Toledo Elks Lodge, 123 Alder St. Info: Toledo Chamber of Commerce, 541-336-3183.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

TAPA'S PRODUCTION OF OVER THE RIVER AND THROUGH THE WOODS

Dec. 6 - 22

1204 Ivy Ave, Tillamook

SEA OF LIGHTS AT AQUARIUM

Friday, Dec. 6-21

Visit the Sea of Lights at the Oregon Coast Aquarium, 2820 SE Ferry Slip Road, Newport, from 5 to 8 p.m. Admission: free for aquarium members, \$10 for non-members. This family-friendly event allows visitors to view aquarium galleries and exhibits in a new light, and includes Santa photo opportunities. Find more information, updates and tickets online at aquarium.org/sea-of-lights

YAQUINA BAY LIGHTED BOAT PARADE

Saturday, Dec. 7

Enjoy a parade of colors as boats of all shapes and sizes take part in the annual Yaquina Bay Lighted Boat Parade, beginning at 5 p.m. View from multiple locations along the Newport Bayfront.

LAMP LIGHTING CEREMONY

Dec. 7, 4 p.m.

Sandpiper Square, Cannon Beach
Beloved Cannon Beach holiday tradition! Kick off the season with performances, songs, a visit from Santa, lamp lighting, and more! Free to the public.

ANNUAL FLORENCE HOLIDAY FESTIVAL

First Saturday in December

Location: Historic Old Town Florence
Description: Enjoy live music, warm beverages, Santa's arrival, great holiday season sales, hayrides, caroling, and the Mayor's Tree Lighting Celebration.
For more information: FlorenceChamber.com 541-997-3128

WINTER WHALE WATCHING

**Height of migration is usually
between Christmas and
New Year's Day**

Location: Highway 101 turnouts between Sea Lion Caves and Heceta Head Lighthouse, at Cooks Chasm Turnout, and at Cape Perpetua Interpretive Center
Description: Volunteer "Whale Watching Spoken Here" experts are strategically located along the Oregon Coast to help you spot some of these 20,000 majestic, migrating mammals.

For more information: orwhalewatch.org/

CAROLING DOWNTOWN CANNON BEACH

Dec. 20, 4:30 p.m.

Cannon Beach Community Hall
207 N Spruce St., Cannon Beach
Continue the time-honored tradition of spreading yuletide cheer caroling downtown Cannon Beach! Printed song sheets will be available in both English and Spanish. After caroling, warm beverages will be offered in the Chamber Community Hall.

NEHALEM

RIVERBEND PLAYERS PRESENTS: IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE

Dec. 6 - 22

36155 9th St., Nehalem

LASAGNATHON

Dec. 7, 3:30 - 7 p.m.

Bay City Arts Center
5680 A St, Bay City
Annual fundraiser for Bay City Arts Center.

FLORENCE WINTER MUSIC FESTIVAL

Last Weekend in January

Location: Florence Events Center, 715 Quince St.
Description: FACE (Florence Arts, Culture & Entertainment) is your host for the biggest and best live music event on the Oregon Coast—the Florence Winter Music Festival. This eclectic, all-ages event pulls in music fans of Americana, bluegrass, folk, and a bit o' the blues from all over the Pacific Northwest for a weekend of good times; award-winning acclaimed musicians; and great memories. The weekend includes fun jams, helpful and inspirational workshops, great food, and fantastic nationally touring music. While you're in Florence, be sure to enjoy all that "Oregon's Coastal Playground" has to offer. Join us each year during the last and BEST weekend in January. For more information, artist profiles, overnight accommodation recommendations, and more visit: <https://wintermusicfestival.org/>. TICKETS: <https://www.eventcenter.org/>



LINCOLN CITY PHOTOGRAPHER DIVES INTO UNDERWATER ADVENTURES

JEREMY C. RUARK

Usually, you will find photographer **Bob Gibson** on land in Lincoln City taking various photos of events, such as the Siletz Bay Music Festival, or carefully framing photos at his Taft business, **Blue Water Photography**.

Gibson also takes his photography skills beneath ocean waters. The following conversation gains insight into Gibson's underwater adventures.

Lincoln County Leader: Where and when did you take the photos you have

shared with us photos?

Bob Gibson: These photographs were taken in Bonaire, located in the southern Caribbean Ocean, and the Solomon Islands, located in the South Pacific. The Solomon Island photographs are from a trip in 2007, and the Bonaire photographs are from a trip in 2008.

The Lincoln County Leader: What were you looking for as you took these photos?

Gibson: I have over 1300 logged dives, most of which were with a cam-

era. My goal was always to find marine life and scenes that expressed the nature and character of the undersea location. Sometimes it meant using a macro, up close, camera rig. Other times, it required a wide-angle set-up with my camera kit. It depended on the weather, water conditions and the expected marine life.

The point was to share the experience with others that might not other-

wise have an opportunity experience the underwater world. Every dive is an adventure.

Lincoln County Leader: What challenges did you face with such underwater photography?

Gibson: The most important skill for an underwater photographer is to be an accomplished diver.

Photography adds another task to manage

See **PHOTOGRAPHY**, page 7



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Seahorse – Bonaire. Courtesy from Bob Gibson



Southern Stingray – Bonaire (Top).
Anemone Fish – Solomon Islands (Left)
 Courtesy photos from Bob Gibson

PHOTOGRAPHER

From Page 6

underwater. It should not be attempted until the diver is confident and capable of handling the underwater environment. A skilled diver can position themselves to compose successful photographs. The skilled diver can concentrate on the demands of photography and maintain an awareness of the dive.

Managing the light is critical to successful underwater photography. This is actually not much different than photography on dry land. Light must be added to the photograph to bring out the vibrant colors of the reef. Most colors are filtered out as the diver descends.

Depending on water conditions most color is gone below 15 or 20

feet. Without adding light the photographs are a monochromatic blue, until they go to black.

Lincoln County Leader: What surprises did you encounter?

Gibson: As I said earlier, every dive is an adventure. I have been approached by a huge manta ray in open blue water. It circled twice and drifted off. I have had only one encounter with sharks when I thought I was the subject of their attention. In the Solomon Islands two bronze whaler sharks came close, swam away, and then returned. I was against the coral reef and they maintained their position about 30 feet away, facing me. They finally drifted away, and I continued my dive.

Diving on the Bonaire reef, Barbe and I were suddenly surrounded by

dolphins. The pod swam and played around us for a couple of minutes and then swam on.

These are the kinds of things that can happen anytime. It makes the diving experience so special.

Lincoln County Leader: What did you take away from your underwater photography experience?

Gibson: I feel so fortunate to have had the opportunity to witness, firsthand, the under-

water water world. It is humbling to realize that only 5% of the oceans' mass has ever been seen even once. The stresses of climate change and pollution have a profound impact on the coral reefs and surrounding marine life. It is an important ecosystem. It's protection is critical.

Blue Water Photography is located at 4846 Highway 101 in Taft. To reach the business, call 541-994-3405.



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PUMP TRACK ERA BEGINS IN CRESCENT CITY

BY ROGER GITLIN

The latest recreational innovation are pump tracks. American Ramp Company is the sole developer of this latest craze around the North State, Northwest, across America and around the globe.

Crescent City is the latest location for the asphalt track, a course for wheeled sports equipment, when ridden properly, does not require pedaling or pushing, but a “pumping” action to maintain momentum.

Crescent City opened its pump, early in October at the iconic Beachfront Park.

Novice to professionals, kids and adults of all ages have been flocking to Beachfront, honing their

skills with bikes, skateboards, in-line skates or any self-propelled equipment of choice on the high-grade asphalt banks.

All pump tracks are unique. The Crescent City Track sports the following characteristics:

1800 square feet course.

Track has a main circuit and alternate jump line.

A double-sided wall ride, one of a kind in the USA.

The Crescent City track meets the parameters of a Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) - sanctioned pump tracking course.

American Ramp of Joplin, Missouri is the developer of Pump Tracks and just finished the

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TRACK

From Page 8

Rocklin, California pump track course. Scores of pump tracks proliferate about the Golden State. Additional tracks have recently been completed in Redmond and Hood River, Oregon and Sun-cadia and Port Angeles Wahington.

The opportunities in Crescent City are

boundless. When timing devices are added to the track, vigorous competitions events can be staged for cyclists, skateboards, in-line roller skates and other self-propelled modes.

All tracks have reasonable track rules and conduct.

As you travel and check out the various pump tracks, be sure to wear your helmet, elbow and knee pads.



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OREGON COAST SCENIC RAILROAD OFFERS FULL HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

With the holidays fast approaching, the Oregon Coast Scenic Railroad has a schedule full of special train rides to celebrate the fall and winter seasons.

Fall Splendor Excursions have been taking place since late September, giving riders a chance to soak in the changing leaves, and after Thanksgiving will yield the rails to the Candy Cane Express, celebrating the magic of the holiday season.

Established in 2003, the Oregon Coast Scenic Railroad offers scenic rides along the Port of Tillamook Bay's rail line, usually between the cities of Garibaldi and Rockaway Beach, with occasional trips extending to Wheeler.

Though it is most busy in the summer as tourists flock to the coast, in recent years the railroad has been focusing on expanding its offerings into the fall and winter.

Since Labor Day this year, the railroad has already run its Moonlight Express, a nighttime ride geared at adults, Halloween Coast Train and Oktoberfest Excursion Train and will stay busy through the end of the year.

Fall Splendor Excur-





RAILROAD

From Page 10

sions began on September 28, and are running on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays through November 17. These two-hour-and-fifteen-minute excursions depart from Rockaway Beach and head north to Wheeler, giving riders a chance to take in the changing foliage. On Fridays, there is one departure at 2 p.m., while Saturdays and Sundays see departures at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Trains running the excursion include two open-air

cars and two enclosed cars and stop for 45 minutes in Wheeler for guests to explore the town.

After the end of Fall Splendor Excursions, the railroad will take a one-week break for Thanksgiving before launching the Candy Cane Express on November 29. Trains will run Friday through Sunday that week and the first three weeks of December, as well as Monday, December 23. Departure times vary depending on the day and a full schedule is available on the railroad's website.

The Candy Cane Express

is a one-hour trip, departing from Garibaldi and making its way to Rockaway Beach before returning. Steam engines will pull three enclosed cars and one open-air, with complementary hot cocoa

and cookies available and a visit from Santa Claus on each trip.

Check out oregoncoastscenic.org for more details, a full schedule for the Candy Cane Express and to purchase tickets.



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24-1510..... \$2,500,000

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24-1948.....\$750,000

ESCAPE TO COASTAL SERENITY:



Old World charm captivating home tucked into private oceanview sanctuary w/2 add'l tax lots = .65ac. Enclosed deck, wood & pellet stove. Separate oceanview studio & garage. West shed has elec.& is finished inside. Studio has heat pump. Meticulously maintained by its sole owner & ready for new chapter.



24-1621.....\$825,000

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24-1672\$888,888

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24-917\$895,000

2BR/1.5BA ON SCENIC ALSEA RIVER



in Tidewater offering tranquility & waterfront access. Ideal for kayaking, fishing, or simply enjoying outdoors. Extensive 2020 remodel included new roof, plumbing, elect., insulation, windows & more. Includes boathouse on river, w/new alum. ramp. Fully furnished, just bring your suitcase & fishing pole!



24-1520\$449,000

PACKAGE DEAL!



Wonderful 3BD/BA home plus adjacent triplex w/3, 2BD/1BA Units. Great rental history w/long term tenants. Home on over half acre, & triplex is on roughly a third of an acre. Combined .87ac. Within city limits. Properties sold together, however triplex/separate tax lot could be sold separately in the future if new owner desires.

24-1792\$825,000



'SEA OF LIGHTS' MAKES WAVES AT OREGON COAST AQUARIUM



The Oregon Coast Aquarium will once again be transformed into a Sea of Lights, giving guests the chance to celebrate the season like never before.

On the first three Friday and Saturday evenings in December, the aquarium will host an ocean of holiday-themed fun after the regular visitor hours. A much-anticipated annual tradition, Sea of Lights is one of the most unique holiday light displays on the Oregon coast. Throughout the aquarium, larger-than-life rockfish, puffins, jellies and other sea creatures stand illuminated, inviting visitors to view their living counterparts.

Drink hot cocoa, get photos with Santa, and see the aquarium in an



entirely new light during this after-hours event.

Find more information, updates and tickets online at [aquarium.org/sea-](http://aquarium.org/sea-of-lights)

[of-lights](http://aquarium.org/sea-of-lights).

The Oregon Coast Aquarium is located at 2820 SE Ferry Slip Road in Newport. Learn more

online at aquarium.org, or call 541-867-3474. Follow the aquarium on Facebook or Instagram for the latest updates.

ENJOY CELTIC MUSIC IN YACHATS

The 2024 Yachats Celtic Music Festival is happening Nov. 8, 9 and 10, offering 20 different artists performing solo and in bands. The festival atmosphere invites rare unique collaborations among the musicians. Tickets are available at purplepass.com. The event is sponsored by Polly Plumb Productions, a Yachats-based nonprofit.

Headlining the festival this year is Kevin Burke, an Irish master fiddler considered one of the finest living Irish fiddlers. For nearly five decades, he has been at the forefront of Irish traditional music and Celtic music, performing and recording with the groups The Bothy Band, Patrick Street, and the Celtic Fiddle Festival. He is a 2002 recipient of a National Heritage Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts.

The festival is continuing the popular daytime “pub style” format at the Yachats Commons. The



Courtesy photo

Mick McAuley and John Doyle will be among the musicians playing during this year's Yachats Celtic Music Festival.

doors open Friday at noon with free entertainment in the commons. Three days of free, and ticket-required concerts, workshops, jamming, dancing, vendors and whisky tasting takes place in various venues around town. Celtic-inspired food and beverages will be available in the commons during the festivities. Five concerts will take place

in the beautiful Yachats Community Presbyterian Church.

The “Church of the Agate Windows,” at 360 West Seventh Street, is a short walk from the commons. The village embraces the festival, and many Yachats shops and restaurants show their Celtic enthusiasm during the weekend.

Experience the magic

of watching the sunset at the edge of the Earth while listening to the 2024 “Piper on the Point.” The always popular, free Ceili dance, with lessons, returns again along with our Sunday closing concerts.

Learn more by going online at PollyPlumb.org and clicking on the tab for “Celtic Music Festival.”



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FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS DISPLAYS AT AZALEA PARK

BY NATE SCHWARTZ

Brookings' full slate of Holiday events are already being prepared for a festive 2024 season, with multiple annual events returning. Azalea Park's famous Festival of Lights, put on by Nature's Coastal Holiday (NCH), kicked off with the String the Joy volunteer event. Festivities will continue throughout the season, with the light show proper starting Friday, November 29th.

Starting in 1997, the Festival of Lights is an important aspect of keeping the town in business during Oregon's otherwise grey period. With the first displays beginning at around 30,000 lights, the Festival has grown to over 3 million throughout various complicated scenes.

We spoke with Susan Dunn, the Head Decorator for the Nature's Coastal Holiday about the history, the impact, and the hard work that goes into the display every year, with this being the 27th year of fulfilling local festivities.

"We always start October 15th. That's when we start bringing things down from storage. We get it all into the park, and placing



See **LIGHTS**, page 17



LIGHTS

From Page 16

it into the spots they will go. Then we're out there every day, 6 days a week, putting stuff up," said Dunn, about the long set-up process.

And it is a process. Though, with the support of the community, it doesn't have to be an arduous one. Volunteers are always needed beyond the String the Joy event and throughout the season. When we asked whether a volunteer push was still needed, Dunn gave a non-profit's expected response.

"Always, always. Saturday is our String the Joy event, which is our community 'cry for help'," Dunn said with a laugh, "We couldn't do it without our volunteers. Last year we had about 75 people show up. It started off raining and slow, but we got the entire park covered in about 3 hours."

It's this emphasis on community that makes the event such a fixture every year. Dunn says that though there will always be roll-over, that the current NCH team has been together for 8 or so years, and everyone understands their role. That goes for volunteers too, as the same passionate community members are usually ready to lend their hand.

"What really helps, is so many volunteers have done it so long, that they can be left alone. We can say, 'here's a bucket of lights and a stick, go knock yourself out'... I think that's what really sets us apart, its us and volunteers. It's more of a community thing. People can walk through the show and say, 'I did that', and we love that," said Dunn.

NCH also makes a huge charitable donation to the City with every iteration of the Festival of

Lights. Past projects have included \$50,000 to pave and install lights in the Capella's by the Sea parking lot. Last year was a \$30,000 contribution to help facelift the Kid-town playground.

"We contributed \$20,000 to improving the Snack Shack in Azalea. It was in so much need of new appliances, new flooring, a new roll up door. That was the City's need... Every year we donate back to the City. We're a non-profit, so after the bills are paid and we budget for new lights and displays. With what's left, its always 'What can we do?'" said Dunn.

The Festival of Lights starts off officially on November 29th and runs through December 29th, 2024, in Azalea park every night from 5 to 9 p.m.. Tickets are available for cash only on entrance. Weather is always being monitored, and updates on weath-

er-based closure will always be posted ahead of time on the official Facebook page.

Be sure not to miss Mr. and Ms. Clause, who will appear every Friday and Saturday night from 6 to 8 p.m.. And keep your eyes peeled for new lights and displays, as the folks from NCH are always innovating and growing the show.

"It changes every year. It gets bigger and there's always new stuff. We definitely have some surprised for this year," concluded Dunn.

To find more information visit the Natures Coastal Holiday official Facebook page. In addition to the never-ending search for volunteers, the organization is also looking for new members. But whether you are helping to put them up, or just coming to enjoy the show, you can't miss the lights in Azalea Park this holiday season.

NEW DIGITAL HIKING TRAILS PASSPORT REVEALED

JEREMY C. RUARK

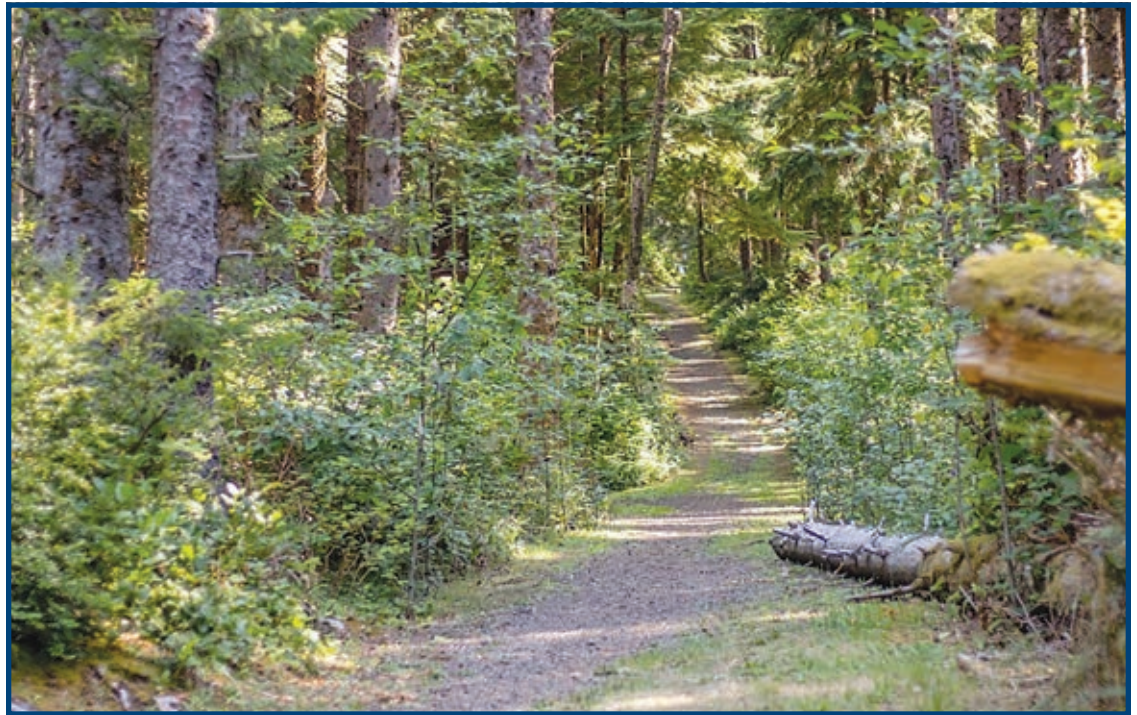
Explore Lincoln City, in partnership with Lincoln City Parks and Recreation, has launched its new Lincoln City Hiking Trails Passport.

This latest addition to the Adventure Passports collection invites visitors and locals alike to explore nine of Lincoln City's most scenic and diverse hiking trails through self-guided adventures to discover the natural beauty of the Oregon Coast.

The Adventure Passports currently include digital passports for the Lincoln City Art Trail, Lincoln City Tap & Brew Trail, and Exploriences Passport. These digital interactive guides offer a curated selection of experiences, from scenic hiking trails to local craft breweries, each revealing hidden treasures and insider tips, according to a release from Explore Lincoln City.

By blending technology with exploration, the passports provide immersive and educational journeys, enabling visitors to explore Lincoln City's natural wonders, cultural hotspots and local favorites at their own pace, the release states.

"We're thrilled to intro-



Courtesy photo from Explore Lincoln City

This is a view of the Spyglass hiking trail as part of the Trails Passport offerings.

duce yet another great way visitors can discover the hidden gems of Lincoln City's trail system," Explore Lincoln City Director Kim Cooper Findling said. "The Lincoln City Hiking Trails Passport encourages outdoor adventure while helping people connect with the unique ecosystems and landscapes that make our region so unique. We can't wait for people to explore our trails and find their own favorite scenic overlook, forest path, wetlands area, or birding spot."

"Hiking on the Oregon coast continues to be

a favorite among our visitors and locals alike," Lincoln City Parks & Recreation Department Director Jeanne Sprague said. "Lincoln City has some of the best views with lush trails, stunning landscapes that are great for all levels of experience. This self-guided passport will encourage people to connect with nature and explore our town's nine most beautiful trails."

Highlights of the Lincoln City Hiking Trails Passport include:

Nine diverse trails ranging from easy walks to moderately challeng-

ing hikes

Family-friendly options suitable for all ages and skill levels

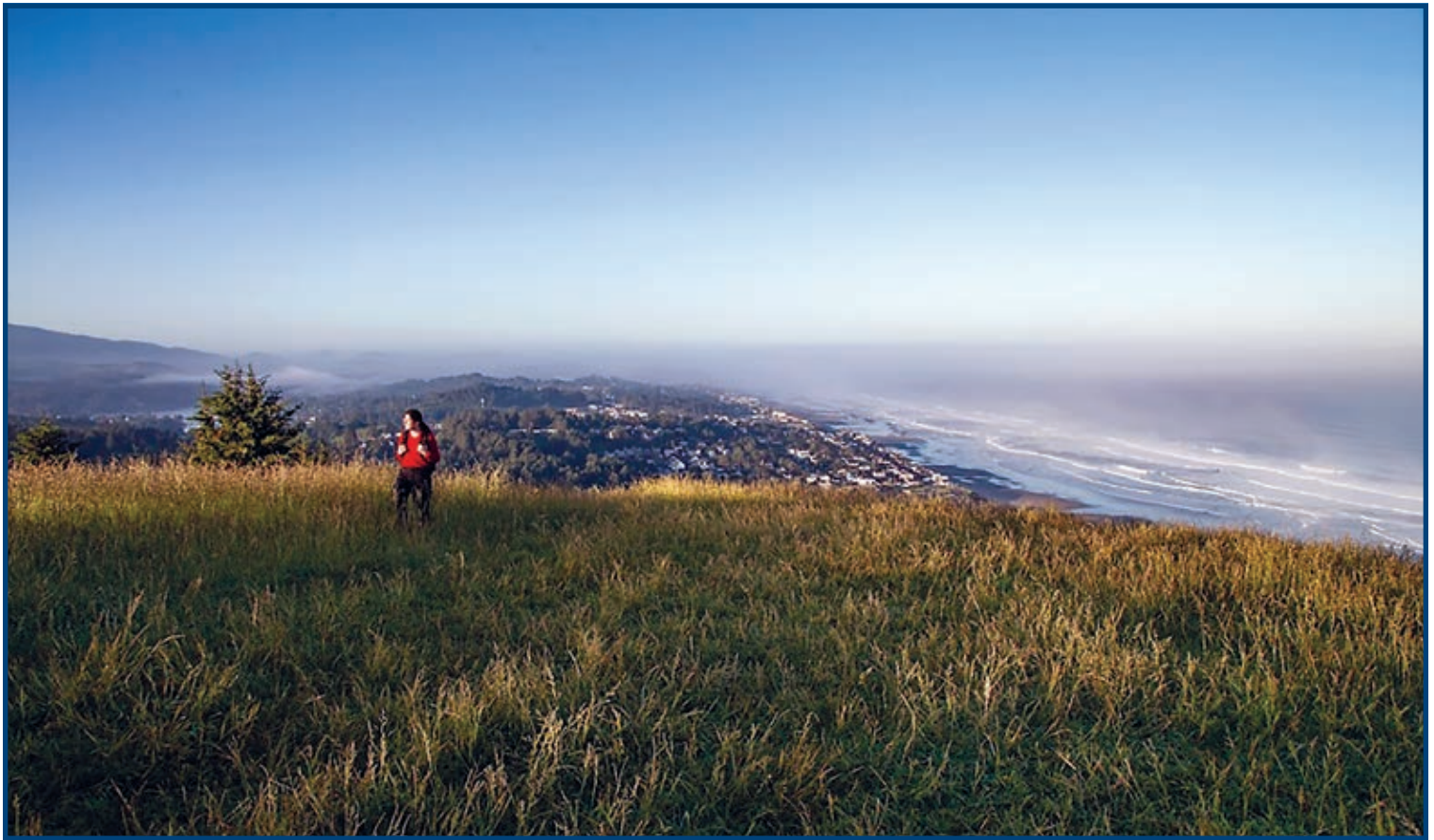
Unique features like the world's shortest trail and Oregon's 79th Heritage Tree (Sitka Spruce)

Opportunities to spot native plant species such as chanterelles, as well as local wildlife such as black-tailed deer, Blue Heron, and Northern Flickers

Breathtaking views of the Pacific Ocean, Devils Lake and Lincoln City

The Lincoln City Hiking Trails Passport is de-

See **HIKING**, page 19



Courtesy photo from Explore Lincoln City

The Knoll is one of Lincoln City's premier hiking area.

HIKING

From Page 18

signed to be user-friendly and accessible. After completing a hike, participants can easily check in at each trail head location on their passport using their mobile devices, earning points towards fun prizes. Passport users who complete all nine trails will receive a free 12-ounce aluminum water bottle with attached carabiner, perfect for future hiking adventures, according to Cooper Findling. Prizes are available for pick-up at the Lincoln City Community Center, located at 2150 NE Oar Placed in Lincoln City.

Here's how the Lincoln City Hiking Trails Passport works:

Sign up online: Use the online link here to sign up for this free passport. No app download necessary.

Explore the trails: Use the mobile-exclusive passport as a guide for your hiking adventures.

Check in and Earn: Use the digital passport to check in at each trailhead to accumulate points towards prizes.

Explore Lincoln City Marketing Manager Cole Finley said the hiking ad-



ventures can be refreshing, calming, and inspirational. "Lincoln City offers many opportunities for hiking, taking adventures through unique and diverse ecosystems within the city limits," Finley said. "With trails taking hikers through towering Sitka spruces, a wetlands area, spots with views of the coastline, and even the world's shortest hiking trail."

According to Finley, the Trail Passports are designed to offer a connec-

tion back to nature.

"The Hiking Trails passport spotlights all nine of Lincoln City's public hiking trails, which include family-friendly options suitable for all ages and skill levels," he said. "We can't wait for people to explore our trails and find their favorite scenic overlook, forest path, wetlands area, or birding spot. The team at Lincoln City Parks and Recreation does an amazing job maintaining Lincoln City's hiking trails. This passport could not work without their support."

For more information about the Lincoln City's Hiking Trails Digital Passport, visit <https://www.explorelincolncity.com/hikingtrailspassport/>

EXPLODING WHALE FESTIVAL IN FLORENCE

BY TONY REED

It would be impossible to guess how many Americans have not heard the story of Florence's exploding whale and/or how many would find it odd that Florence continues to celebrate that morbidly amusing moment in November, 1970.

To recap, a dead sperm whale washed ashore and it fell on the Oregon Highway Division to remove it. Their solution was to place a half-ton of dynamite under it and try to reduce it to a size where shorebirds and waves could take it away. The result of the explosion was that everyone in the area was covered in a mist of whale juice as they dodged falling whale chunks, one of which was large enough to flatten a near-by car.

Part of what made the event an immortal sensation was the newscast that broke the story, covered by reporter Paul Linnman and Camera-man Doug Brazil.

Linnman makes occasional trips back to Florence and attended the Exploding Whale Festival in 2023.

He said hardly a day goes by in his life that someone doesn't mention the whale to him. He and Brazil have done many interviews about it and requests keep coming in now, over 50 years later.

Linnman explained that the report has become what he's now known for, and it's been a part of his daily life since. He said that while attending a Eugene Emeralds/Exploding Whales game, he was able to catch up with relatives of the man whose car was smashed by a slab of falling whale blubber.

"It was interesting to hear how the grandson of the engineer, and the son of Walter Umenhaufer, who got his car smashed... have also lived with the story for all these years. Some didn't mind it and some did



Mermaid Luna sits on a sparkly throne at the Exploding Whale festival celebration.

and I had a period in my life where I'd just as soon never have it mentioned to me again, but that passed. It's just a bizarre thing."

While it may seem obvious why the fascination lingers, Linnman said at the time, it was just another story he covered.

"I honestly don't understand why this thing has lived on" he said. "I really, really don't. It's so unusual and it hasn't happened before. To me, as a former reporter, you're covering a story that day and the story's over and you do something else the next day. This one has just never left me."

Asked for his feelings about the idea that residents of Florence are still commemorating the anniversary of the incident, Linnman said he likes the idea.

"I remember a time when I was in Florence doing an anniversary story, maybe the 10th [anniversary] and I kept bumping into people

who didn't want to talk about it, or thought it was making the town look silly or making fun, so I ran into some negativity about it," he said. "I just am always surprised if I am in the grocery store and someone says 'Hey, there's the whale guy.' I had a guy tell me last week, 'Most of us won't be remembered for anything, but you'll be remembered for something.' Well, I'll buy that."

A CONNECTION MADE

"I have great feelings about the City of Florence, not necessarily having to do with the whale," he said. "My wife and I have four grown sons and we used to camp at Huntington Park a lot, so we've been to Florence a lot."

Linnman noted that he almost became a resident of Florence as a child, because his father was offered the Florence City Manager position when he was in the 8th grade. After making plans to move, his mom decided she wanted to stay in Portland, so his dad turned down the job.

"I have good feelings about the town and I always appreciate that people get in touch with me when they are having something going on," he said. "I've always felt bad that I have not had more direct contact with people who like to remember it and have these celebrations. And I'm glad that the few people who, when we did the 10th anniversary and thought we shouldn't be doing that and were making fun of the town, I haven't heard from any of those people for a long time, so that's a good thing."

The Exploding Whale Festival happens Nov. 12 in Florence and is a fun community celebration with whale-related activities around the city. Find more information at xplodingwhale.com

GET A LOOK BEHIND THE CHEESE AT THE TILLAMOOK COUNTY CREAMERY ASSOCIATION

Drawing more than one million visitors annually, the Tillamook County Creamery Association's visitor's center is Oregon's most popular tourist destination, giving guests a look at the association's history and production.

Founded in 1909 by a group of creamery owners in the Tillamook Valley, the association has since expanded to include 80 farmers that supply cheese, ice cream and other dairy products to consumers across the world.

The association's visitor's center is located on the east side of Highway 101 on the far north end of Tillamook and is open daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Upon arrival, guests are greeted by a portrait of Flower, a dairy cow, above the doors to the visitor center, which was built to resemble a dairy barn and opened to the public in 2018. The center's exterior also features a replica of Morning Star, the ship that originally transported Tillamook dairy products to Portland in the 19th century.

Entrance for self-guided tours through the 42,800-square-foot facility, with displays on the association's history, a farm exhibit hall with information about the member dairies, a viewing



gallery for a look at the cheese making process and cheese samples are free. There is also a large gift shop with souvenirs, ice cream, cheese and other dairy products available for purchase.

The visitors' center is also home to a dining hall, with a menu featuring American classics, with an emphasis on cheese. There is also a large ice cream counter where visitors can sample the creamery's frozen products.

The center also offers two paid experiences for visitors. The tour and tasting option gives guests a chance to visit the viewing gallery with a brand ambassador before a cheese tasting featuring products from the association's Maker's Reserve line of aged cheeses.

The Honorary Til-

lamook Taste Bud Ice Cream Experience educates visitors on the ice cream making process before letting them loose

to test their tasting skills.

More information about the creamery and experiences can be found at Tillamook.com.

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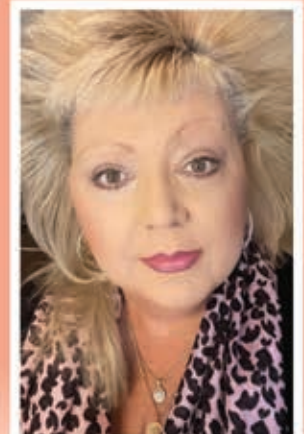
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