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Inside this issue:

Year in Review	T
Employee Spotlight	2
New Employees	2
Business License Renewal	3
Holiday Safety Tips	4
Tree Recycling	5
Council Election Results	6
Volunteer Opportunities	6
Winter Weather Tips	7
Drinking Water	9
Outstanding Performer	•
Siuslaw Bridge Project	9
Santa Arrives in Florence	10
City Calendar	10

Focus on Florence

December 2014 www.www.



Year in Review with Mayor Xavier

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As I look back on 2014 preparing to write this Year in Review, I realized that we have finished or made significant progress on several long term projects. These are foundational projects that move our city forward. They require a great deal of faith, diligence, and patience to see them from start and to finish.

After several years of planning and researching we went digital. The council, staff, media, and citizens now have access to all the same information. City documents can be accessed through the website (including the budget, long range financial plan, prior resolutions and ordinances, city code, the comprehensive plan, and council packets for each meeting). You can access these items anytime at <u>www.ci.florence.or.us</u>. The City Council uses tablets for the meetings, which provides better information and flexibility in addition to saving us about 5,100 pieces of paper, 84 hours of staff time, and about \$5,500 dollars per year.

The Finance Department completed the software upgrade to Caselle Clarity. City facilities are connected by fiber we now have a secure connection for departments to be able to view financial data in real time. This ability for department managers to track their budgets is a huge benefit for good fiscal control. These upgrades have allowed the City to implement changes to enhance bill formats, service orders, and letters. We can now also accept online utility bill payments through Xpress Bill Pay to provide additional options to our customers.

The City has implemented a long range financial plan that has served the community well by allowing Florence to come through the recession in good financial shape. Through that process the City Council set goals for ending fund balances in each fund after over a year of careful study and planning. We have achieved all those goals, with the exception of the water fund. As we ended the Fiscal Year 2013-14 budget year on June 30, 2014, we actually had small surpluses in several areas. This conservative approach has worked well and we were recognized for these efforts when the City's bond rating was raised from A to AA this year.

We were able to complete the finishing touches to the Siuslaw River Bridge Interpretive Center with the installation of the interpretive signage in March. City staff researched content and designed the signs to focus on the story of the Siuslaw River Bridge construction and design, the history of the Siuslaw River and the Florence area, and the stormwater benefits of the Interpretive Center's rain garden. The interpretive signage was estimated to cost \$10,000, the City was able to utilize staff to do the content and design work to keep the actual costs under \$3,000.

See Year in Review, Page 3

Page 2



EMPLOYEE ____ **SPOTLIGHT**

Sandi Anderson **FEC Office Coordinator**

Sandi Anderson has been the Office Coordinator at the Florence Events Center (FEC) since April 2014. Prior to joining the staff at the FEC, Sandi was the Office Coordinator for the Umpqua Management Unit of Oregon State Parks and Recreation.

Sandi and her husband Dan have been married for 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ years and have four children-two of which attend Siuslaw High School. She lives on a small farm with her family and they spend a great deal of time outside. In her free time, Sandi and her step-daughter often attend rodeos and barrel races on the weekends. Horses are a huge part of their lives.

What are your main job functions?

"There are several different aspects of my job that keep me very busy! I manage the ticket office for the FEC as well as coordinate our volunteers. I also work closely with the City Finance Department to manage the fiscal components such as accounts receivable and payable."

Do you have any rewarding moments you would like to share?

"Working with my co-workers to plan the annual FEC volunteer appreciation luncheon. Watching the whole event come to fruition and the volunteers having a great afternoon was very rewarding!"

What do you enjoy most about your job?

"Right now – the best part of my job is meeting so many new people!"

What do you enjoy most about your job?

"Each event comes with its own energy and dynamics! Whether it is a meeting on the flat floor during the week or a performance in the theater on the weekend - they are all unique and exciting! I have to say so far my favorite event has been the Fresh Impressions youth art show currently on display in Gallery 1. This really does show the amazing talent we have in our high school aged students in the area."

What is the strangest request you have had working for the City?

"So far nothing **too** strange! I have had a few phone calls asking me what movies are playing, but that is about it!"

Want to meet Sandi? Become an FEC volunteer. For more information on volunteer opportunities please contact Sandi by calling 541-997-1994.

Don't have time to volunteer? You can still attending one of the many events held at the FEC. See the City Calendar on page 10 for the December list of events or visit the FEC website for further details at <u>www.eventcenter.org</u>.

NEW **EMPLOYEES**

The City of Florence welcomes two new and congratulates promoted employees.

Danice Toyias Executive Assistant, Public Works Dept.

Florence from

Danice comes to Montana by way of San Diego, CA. Her

husband recently retired from the U.S. Navy and the family has been stationed in San Diego for the past four years. They decided to make Florence their home since their family is here. Moving to the area now brings four generations of family together. They are so excited to call Florence home and Danice is excited to serve her community!



Jennifer Connor Marketing Specialist, Florence Events Center

Jennifer serving as the marketing specialist since July and was appointed to

the permanent position at the November 17th Council meeting. Her experience includes organizing, promoting, and leading a multitude of theater productions, literacy programs, community events and weddings. Jennifer has been a Florence resident since 2010. You may have seen her at the FEC in the recent production of Les Misérables.

Glen Southerland Assistant Planner,



to Assistant Planner on November 17th after one year serving as the Planning Technician. You can read more about Glen in the July 2014 edition of Focus on Florence.



Jordan Walker Utility Clerk, Finance Department

Jordan was promoted to Utility Clerk on October 20th. He has worked for the

City since 2012. You can read more about Jordan in the May 2014 edition of Focus on Florence.

YEAR IN REVIEW, Page 1

Page 3

Flo Gro, our bio solids composting project started in 2010, passed all the required testing to receive approval and permits from the Department of Environmental Quality. We distributed the first batch of Flo Gro free on a first come, first served basis to local community members. This composting project was designed as an environmentally friendly way to reduce the amount of money spent on hauling the bio solids to the county land fill near Eugene. We were spending about \$80,000 a year in hauling and disposal fees. This program allows us to take care of both yard debris and bio solids while producing a sustainable soil additive.

An ongoing issue that we hear from the community is parking in Old Town. While many see this topic as one of visitors trying to park, merchants in Old Town were being limited in their business opportunities by the number of parking spaces that they were required to provide per City Code. In an effort to increase the economic viability of Old Town as a walkable, mixed use area the City Council initiated code amendments to the Old Town Area A zone. This relaxed the parking code requirements for businesses, which should stimulate economic growth and allow for new businesses as well as the expansion of a few current businesses. While we cannot solve all the issues associated with parking requirements and parking in Old Town, this is a step in the right direction to create a more business friendly community.

In writing this Year in Review I couldn't stop with just this past year but reflected on the 10 years it has been my privilege to serve the City as a City Councilor for 8 years and Mayor for the last 2 years. Mayors or councilors don't succeed in their jobs if they don't have great staff. We are so fortunate in Florence to have great staff. They are dedicated to their jobs, to the City, and the community. A great city also needs to have the participation of citizens who care about their community. A great city needs citizens who are talented, kind, and compassionate and willing to share those traits with the rest of us. Again, we are so fortunate to have citizens with those desired traits in Florence.

I wish there was some way to thank each and every one of you personally for all the things you have done and continue to do to make Florence the wonderful place it is. Thanks for the journey, it's been great!

~ Mayor Nola Xavier



Renew Your Business License by January 1st to Receive a \$10 Credit for Next Year's Renewal

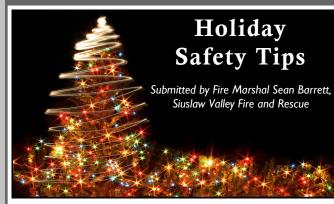
Check out a new release or see a classic at City Light's Cinema, check. Chomp into a $\frac{1}{2}$ Pound Pulled Pork Sandwich at Craig's BBQ, check. Buy your granddaughter a new doll at Funky Monkey Toys, check. The question is, what can you do with an additional \$10?

As a way of saying thank you to the City's responsible long term businesses, starting this year the City of Florence will be offering a \$10 credit for businesses that renew their 2015 business licenses on time (i.e. on or before January 1st). We would like to thank our local business owners, and their employees, for their continued support of the community. Without our local businesses, Florence could not survive and thrive. They not only provide employment for our citizens, but support the various community events that make Florence the wonderful place that it is.

So businesses, when you receive your business license renewal in the mail in late November or early December, don't forget to review the contact information contained and send it in with payment by January 1, 2015 to receive your \$10 credit toward your next year's business license renewal. Come December 2015, you'll be thankful that you did.

For more information on business licenses, or to make sure we have the correct mailing address for your business, please contact Kelli Weese, City Recorder, at 541-997-3437, or via email at <u>kelli.weese@ci.florence.or.us</u>.

Page 4



With the holiday season in full swing, Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue cautions everyone to keep fire safety in mind when decorating and entertaining. "This season is a busy and exciting time of year, but don't let that distract you from keeping your family and friends safe from fire," says Fire Marshal Sean Barrett. "By following a few important safety tips for Christmas trees, decorations, and candles, you can help ensure your holidays remain happy."

Tree Care & Decorating Safety

- > Choose a fresh, healthy tree with a deep-green color and flexible needles.
- When you get the tree home, cut off the bottom two inches of the trunk. This creates a fresh, raw cut for the tree to soak up water.
- > Water your tree daily. A tree may consume between a quart and a gallon of water per day.
- Place the tree at least three feet away from any heat source such as a fireplace, woodstove, space heater, heating vent, or radiator.
- Keep lighted candles away from the tree.
- > Use only noncombustible or flame resistant materials to trim a tree.
- > Always unplug tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.
- If using a woodstove or fireplace, keep it screened at all times. Keep ribbons, boughs, and other decorative materials at least three feet away.
- > Maintain your holiday lights. Inspect holiday lights each year for frayed wires, bare spots, and broken or cracked sockets.
- Do not overload electrical sockets. Do not link more than three light strands, unless the directions indicate it is safe.
- After the holiday season or whenever your tree dries out promptly dispose of it and other dry greenery. Burning a tree in a stove or fireplace is extremely dangerous; proper disposal includes recycling or pickup by a disposal service.

(See page 5 for more information on how you can dispose of you tree.)

Infographic courtesy of www.ESFi.org.



See Safety Tips, Page 5

SAFETY TIPS, Page 4

Candle Safety

- Consider using battery-operated flameless candles, which can look and smell like real candles. (Shown to the right.)
- Never leave a burning candle unattended. Extinguish candles when you go to bed, leave a room, or before leaving the house.
- > Keep candles at least 12 inches away from anything that can burn. Keep candles at least one foot from combustibles including clothing, curtains, upholstered furniture, greenery, and decorations.
- > Always use a sturdy non-combustible (metal, glass, or ceramic) candleholder. If a sturdy non-combustible candle holder is not available, the candle can be placed on a non-combustible plate.
- > Place candles out of reach of small children and pets.
- Avoid candles with items embedded in them such as twigs, flowers, or leaves. These items can ignite or even explode.
- Always use a flashlight not a candle for emergency lighting.

General Fire Safety

- Make sure you have working smoke alarms on every level of your home, outside each sleeping area, and in each bedroom.
- > Make a home fire escape plan and practice it with the whole family.
- > Keep escape routes clear of clutter so you can escape quickly in case of fire.



Siuslaw Valley Fire & Rescue

Annual Christmas Tree Pick-Up Fund Raiser

Be Fire Safe: To schedule your pick-up, call 541-997-3212.

Pick-up Dates: Saturday, December 27th Saturday, January 3rd

Minimum Donation: \$5

Tree Pick-Up Details:

The holiday tree proudly displayed lights glowing, icicles twinkling, and ornaments specially placed. Continue the life cycle of your holiday tree — call Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue to come pick it up once

your family has completed their enjoyment of it. Your holiday tree will then be converted and mulched into another important use. It will either be reused as coverage at the airport to protect pilots' visibility from blowing sand or mixed with the biosolids from the wastewater plant and turned into Flo-Gro compost mix which helps plants grow in our sandy environment.



Rich in plant essential nutrients, Flo-Gro is a combination of yard debris and biosolids.

Don't let your holiday tree memories end up in the land fill. Keep them in Florence to provide new memories for other uses such as that special flight taken from the Florence Airport or amending the gardens that provide food for our needy at Florence Food Share.

Siuslaw Valley Fire & Rescue Holiday Tree Pick-Up will begin at 9am on December 27th & January 3rd. Call 541-997-3212 today to arrange pick-up or you can call early the day of and receive pick-up.

Page 5

New Faces at the City of Florence

With the first meeting in January 2015, the City of Florence will have three new faces on the Council and will see a new mayoral leader. On November 4, 2014, the citizens of Florence elected Joe Henry to the seat of Mayor. Joe Henry has served on the Florence City Council for 2 years after running a successful write-in campaign in 2012.



Mayor-Elect Henry comes to us after spending a long successful career of over 48 years in the financial services industry.

Also, on the ballot were three open positions to the City Council. The citizens elected Susy Lacer and George Lyddon to the two 4-year positions, and Ron Preisler to the one 2-year term. Susy Lacer became a successful grant writer after her work at the Port of Siuslaw and was recently appointed to the Siuslaw Public Library Board. George Lyddon comes to us after retiring as a small business owner and commercial pilot, and has spent his time since retirement serving as treasurer and president of his homeowners association. Ron Preisler spent his past life as a small business owner, but nowadays spends most of his time helping the community through his work as a hospice volunteer and board member, president of his homeowners association, and as treasurer of his church.

Thank you to the majority of registered voters in the City of Florence who came out in November to vote on the Florence Council / Mayor positions. Please come and meet your new representatives at the City at their first meeting on January 5, 2015. Watch for the January 2015 edition of Focus on Florence for more information on the new City Council.

Boards & Commissions Applications Due December 31st — Help Contribute to Florence by Serving on a City Committee

Would you like to see more public involvement in the City of Florence to make sure your voice is heard? Would you like to make a difference and help contribute to the goals and objectives of the City as a whole? Then consider applying for one of the open positions on one of the City's committees. The deadline for applications is fast approaching on December 31st so apply today!

These positions offer citizens an excellent opportunity to volunteer their services on significant matters. Committee member contributions are invaluable to the Mayor, the City Council, and the City.

The following boards and committees are currently filling vacancies for varying term lengths, with positions set to begin on February 1, 2015.

- Audit Committee I open position
- Budget Committee 2 open positions
- Environmental Management Advisory Committee (EMAC) –
 2 open positions
- Florence Events Center Advisory Committee 8 open positions
- Planning Commission 2 open positions
- Transit Advisory Committee 2 open positions (1 for high school student)
- Florence Urban Renewal Agency I possible open position

Applying for a position is easy. Applications are available at Florence City Hall and can be downloaded from the City's website at <u>www.ci.florence.or.us</u>. City Hall is open Monday thru Friday; 8 am to 12pm; 1pm to 5 pm. All qualified persons are encouraged to apply.

For details regarding the duties and responsibilities of these bodies, residency requirements of applicants, term lengths, or any other questions, please contact City Recorder Kelli Weese at 541-997-3437. Applicants will be interviewed by the City Council on January 14th and 15th, 2015.

Winter Weather Tips: Keep Your Water Flowing During Cold Spells

Even on the central Oregon coast, we do get several days each year that the temperatures dip below freezing. In order to be prepared for those cold temperatures, we have complied a number of ideas to help protect your homes plumbing before and during freezing weather, in addition to some ideas on how to thaw your pipes if they do freeze.

Inside your home:

Before Freezing Weather

• Wrap all pipes in unheated areas. Wrapping will protect pipes from freezing. Check your house for pipes in unheated areas such as the crawl space, attic, garage or basement.

Use insulating tape or molded pipe sleeves and wrap it over the entire length of exposed pipe. Cover all valves, pipe-fittings, etc. with insulating tape or fiberglass insulation.

• Shut off and drain your water system if you are leaving home for an extended period. Be sure to turn off the water heater before draining the system.



Turn off the main water shut-off valve, then go through the house and turn on all faucets, sinks, tubs, showers, etc., and flush the toilets. Set your thermostat to 55 degrees. Ask yourself what might happen if your source of heat goes off due to a storm when you're not home.

Outside your home:

- Caulk around pipes where they enter the house and close all foundation vents. This will stop cold winter air from blowing into your house. Open foundation vents are probably the greatest cause of frozen or split water pipes. You will not only protect your pipes, but you may also reduce your winter heating needs. Remember to open the foundation vents again in the spring to prevent dry rot from occurring.
- Protect outside pipes and faucets. For most newer homes the outside hose bibs are frost free, meaning that the shut off valve is actually located deep inside the insulated wall. If you are not sure if the hose bib is frost free,



when you turn it off and water continues to drain for a few seconds, this is a good indication that the hose bib is frost-free. If you are not sure or if you do not have a frost-free hose bib, then you will need to wrap the hose bib with newspapers or rags covered with plastic, fiberglass, or molded foaminsulating covers to wrap the faucet. Molded foam insulating covers are available at most plumbing and hardware stores. In some homes, the outside faucet may have a separate shut-off in the basement, garage, or crawl space. If you do have a separate valve for outside faucets, shut it off. Then go outside and turn on the faucets to drain water from the line. *Disconnect garden hoses from the faucets*.

• Shut-off and drain in-ground sprinkler systems including the backflow prevention device. Some irrigation systems require blowing the system out with a large air compressor. We highly recommend that you contact a landscape professional with the proper equipment and training. Hiring a landscape professional for this service is inexpensive and can avoid potential damage to both your irrigation system and the public water system.

Page 7

See Winter Weather Tips, Page 8

Page 8

WINTER WEATHER TIPS, Page 7

- Know where your main water shut-off valve is outside of your home. Typically they are located 18-inches from the foundation wall where the water line enters the building. It is very important to know where this valve is located because if a pipe bursts anywhere in the house kitchen, bath, basement, or crawl space *this valve will turn it off.* Be sure everyone in the family knows where it is and what it does.
- If there is a leak and you cannot find the shut-off valve, call utility billing at 997-3436 or public works at 997-4106 during regular business hours. After hours call the police department at 997-3515 and they will contact a public works employee.

During Freezing Weather

• Open cupboard doors in the kitchen and bathrooms. Water lines supplying the kitchen or bathrooms are frequently located next to outside walls. Any air leaks in the siding or insulation can cause these pipes to freeze. Leaving the cupboard doors open when the temperature is below freezing allows pipes behind the cupboards to get more heat.

If Your Pipes Freeze

- Thaw the lines safely. If you know where the lines are frozen, you can attempt to thaw them with a hair dryer set on low heat. Wave the dryer back and forth along the frozen area. Thawing won't be fast, but it will be safe. DO NOT LEAVE THE PIPES UNATTENDED.
- <u>DO NOT</u> USE AN OPEN FLAME TO THAW FROZEN WATER LINES. It may be fast, but could catch the house on fire.
- <u>DO NOT</u> USE AN ELECTRIC ARC WELDER TO THAW FROZEN WATER LINES. This also causes fire!
- When home plumbing is frozen, there is often water available at one faucet. Please check to see if water is available at one of the faucets. If there is no water at all, the problem may be in the street. For assistance, please call utility billing at 997-3436 or public works at 997-4106 during regular business hours. After hours call the police department at 997-3515 and they will contact a public works employee.

If Your Pipes Break

- SHUT OFF THE WATER AND WATER HEATER.
- If you are unable to find the shut-off valve, or have water leaking in the house from a broken pipe, we can help you shut off the water. Please call utility billing at 997-3436 or public works at 997-4106 during regular business hours. After hours call the police department at 997-3515 and they will contact a public works employee.



• To repair the broken pipe, you may want to call a plumber.

Remember, the best tip of all is to protect your home before the winter weather hits. By winterizing your home now, you can prevent your home from the damage and inconvenience of frozen water pipes.





City of Florence Recognized as an Outstanding Performer by Oregon Health Authority's Drinking Water Program

Oregon Health Authority recently recognized the City of Florence's public water system as an Outstanding Performer based on a Water System Survey conducted by the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) Drinking Water Program. The survey is designed to evaluate the total water system in terms of supplying safe drinking water to the public. The water system survey is an on-site review of our 12 dunal wells, the water treatment processes, storage facilities, distribution system, operation and maintenance procedures, monitoring, and management of the system for the purpose of evaluating the system's capability of providing safe water to the public.

"This is great news for the city and our residents," said Mike Miller, Public Works Director. "I am very proud of our city staff that has worked hard to help the city earn this recognition. Being an outstanding performer allows the city to reduce our water system survey frequency from every three years to every five years," Miller said. "Our reviewer noted that Florence's water system facilities are well operated and maintained by a knowledgeable and competent staff."

To be recognized as an Outstanding Performer, a water system must not have any contamination violations in the last five years; no more than one monitoring or reporting violation in the past three years (we had none); no significant deficiencies or rule violations during the current water system survey; and no waterborne disease outbreak to the water system in the last five years.

Florence's Dunal Aquifer System

Water systems that have met the criteria to be recognized as an Outstanding Performer have their survey frequency (and fee) reduced. Instead of testing every three years, the water survey is reduced to five. OHA Drinking Water

Program monitors and enforces drinking water standards for 3,600 public water systems in the state of Oregon. They ensure public water meets or exceeds state and federal standards. "The designation as an 'Outstanding Performer' is due to the hard work and dedication of the water treatment and distribution operators, and utility workers who strive to provide high quality water to residents, businesses, and visitors to the city," Miller said.

The City of Florence's water systems are part of the Public Works Department. Florence has over 3,700 water connections. The Public Works Department is more than just water delivery and distribution. Our Public Works department provides water, wastewater, stormwater, streets, parks, airport, and project management services to the community. The Public Works Department can be reached at 541-997-4106.



Siuslaw Bridge Protection Project

The Oregon Department of Transportation will begin protecting, restoring, and improving the safety of the Historic Siuslaw Bridge on Highway 101 in Florence. A cathodic protection system and structural repairs are needed to protect the bridge, which opened to traffic in 1936, from deterioration due to age and the harsh coastal

environment; these repairs will allow the structure to remain in service for many years to come. For more information on the project, please visit <u>www.siuslawbridge.com</u>.

Florence City Council



From left to right: Councilor Joe Henry, Councilor Brian Jagoe, Mayor Nola Xavier, Councilor Suzanne Roberts, Councilor Joshua Greene

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Focus on Florence

Mayor Xavier (pictured bottom left) helped Santa and local children light the Christmas tree in Old Town Florence on November 22nd. Santa and Mrs. Clause arrived via fire truck (bottom right) just in time for dusk thanks to Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue volunteers.

Once the tree was lit. Santa. Mrs. Clause. and Mayor Xavier led the children and parents in singing Christmas Carols before the children had a chance to visit one on one with Santa.

The event was coordinated by the Florence Area Chamber of Commerce.

City Calendar For more information about meetings contact City Hall at 541-997-3437. For information on events & concerts contact the Florence Events Center at 541-997-1994.

December 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Gingerbread Village Opens FEC Lobby City Council Meeting 7 pm @ City Hall	2	3	4	5 Empty Bowls 5—7pm, FEC Holiday Arts Festival 5—7:30pm, FEC Holly Jolly Follies 7 pm, FEC	6 Empty Bowls 10am—3pm, FEC Holiday Arts Festival 10am—4pm, FEC Holly Jolly Follies 2 pm, FEC 7 pm, FEC
7 Empty Bowls 12—3pm, FEC Holly Jolly Follies 2 pm, FEC	8 Siuslaw Bands & Choir Concert 7 pm, FEC	9 Popovich Comedy Pet Theater Planning Commission 7 pm @ City Hall	10	11	12	13 Peace Harbor Hospice "Light Up a Life" 2 pm, FEC
14	15	16	17 Jazz Kings Christmas Concert 7:30 pm, FEC	18	Ballet Fantastique: An American Christmas Carol 7:30 pm, FEC	20 Breakfast with Santa 9 am, FEC
21	22	23 Planning Commission 7 pm @ City Hall	24	25 & FEC Closed	26	27
28	29	30	January 1 A HAPPY NEW YEAR City Hall & FEC Closed			

Page 10