

## Another reason to live in Oregon

BY SANDY SHAFFER

Late this October found us Shaffers up on the most northernly shore of Washington state for a vacation. Hubby, Maggie (our dog), and I all piled into the car and did the eight-hour drive in a one-day stretch. Our target was a VRBO (vacation rental by owner) home on the outskirts of the town of Mo clips, right above the beach.

An ice chest with fresh fruits and veggies, a crockpot, and supplies for a couple of stews and other homey, warming meals would keep us fed. And, of course, a few favorite Applegate wines to complete the meals.

We were prepared for the rain (boots, two raincoats each, a bag of towels to dry Maggie off after each walk, etc.). With no TV, we each had books and crossword puzzles and such to pass the time when it was raining. And it rained every day. So we watched the waves, the sea birds, and the folks walking on the beach every day.

We also watched the cars and trucks going back and forth on the beach. High tide, low tide, and in-between tides, folks drove up and back daily. We got to know which vehicle we could see early in the morning, mid-day, or later in the afternoon. I got to wondering whether this was their daily route to work and back, because the traffic was not as consistent on the weekend. Hmmm....

Having arrived back home in our Applegate Valley after another eight-hour drive, I have done some research on Oregon's and Washington's rules and regs on driving on our Pacific coast beaches. I wanted to see just how different the regulations are for each state.

The short answer to "Can you drive your car on the beach in Oregon?" is "Yes." Beach drivers must have a valid driver's

license in their possession at all times. Driving is permitted on certain beaches during specific seasons, months, and times of the day; however, some beaches have limited driving access. Also, several Oregon counties have specific regulations on driving on their beaches, while other counties on our coast do not permit driving vehicles *at all* on their beaches. So, in other words, always know the local laws before you go.

When I googled the same question for Washington beaches, the first response was from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) that stated, "Many ocean beaches are open to motor vehicles, but drivers are required to follow the rules of the road."

As well: "Only licensed street-legal vehicles are allowed on Washington beaches, and drivers should give pedestrians the right of way."

Another point that I read from a biologist for the WDFW *really* made me feel a little better: "Under state law, all vehicles and horses are required to travel along the extreme upper limit of the hard sand" and to limit their speed limit to 25 mph! (*What?? 25 miles an hour on the beach!?*)

The next was to have a valid driver's license in tow (*Now, that one makes sense!*), and also, no "reckless driving"! And to finish this great example of "following the rules of the road," drivers should give pedestrians the right of way—and no reckless driving!

Oh, wait! I left the best for last: "Please, stay in your lane" on Washington beaches. This last one I didn't quite get. I'd not seen any solid or dotted lane lines on any of the walks I took.

Sandy Shaffer  
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Pioneer Bridge at Applegate, Oregon

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## Food Pantry is here to help

The Ruch Food Pantry, one of 22 pantries operated by ACCESS throughout Jackson County, is open 11:30 am to 1 pm Mondays (closed holidays) on the backside of Ruch Elementary School at 156 Upper Applegate Road.

These pantries provide a variety of fresh and shelf-stable groceries to low-income families and individuals. Each food box contains a three-to-five day supply of food.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

Deborah Price, Manager  
541-899-6980

Michelle Bollinger, Assistant Manager  
541-218-6471

### CHRISTMAS TREE

*Continued from page 1*

within 200 feet of a highway or 300 feet of a stream.

You might have to tromp through the woods for a long time before you find the tree you want. Perfect is hard to come by. This one is too spindly, this one too squat, this one lopsided. You might have to settle for less than perfect but still beautiful.

Thank the tree before cutting it down.

When you get your tree home, cut the bottom at a slant, place the tree in a bucket of water, and leave it in a wind-protected

place until you're ready to take it into the house and turn this sacrificed forest tree into your family's joyous Christmas tree.

If you don't want to cut a wild tree, you can still have fun with the kids picking out the perfect Christmas tree on a lot. Driving home with a tree on top of your car is joyful whether the

tree came from the woods or from town. Or you can buy a living tree and plant it in your yard after Christmas. Either way, the Christmas tree in your house, with those ornaments your kids made 40 years ago in school or special people have given you over the years—the painted sand dollar from your mother, the ceramic Santa Claus from your college roommate, the origami and paper chains—is the bearer of Christmas joy and evergreen memories.

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