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OPINION

WEDNESDAY

FEBRUARY 11 • 2015

125TH ANNIVERSARY FLASHBACK

1890 | THE WEST ❖ FLORENCE TIMES ❖ THE SIUSLAW OAR ❖ THE SIUSLAW NEWS ❖ SIUSLAW NEWS | 2015

This year marks Siuslaw News' quasiquicentennial, our 125th anniversary, a remarkable achievement for any business in a small community like Florence. To commemorate this milestone, throughout the year we'll feature some of the town's history as originally published in the newspaper, including historic articles and photos from more than a century ago.

First days of local history recalled in kindly little chat

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED FEB. 7, 1941 ❖ THE SIUSLAW OAR, VOL. 8, No. 3

It was a year ago when the Oar offered a prize to the boy or girl in high school who would write a good story of George Prescott, the first man who drove a span of mules in Florence.

That man has been pacing the streets every day since this paper asked for a

story. Nobody made a response.

Prescott is unassuming as he strolls down the walks where his mules pulled the sloping "Vs" of sand away and dumped most of it into the 30-foot depth of the Siuslaw.

The sand peaked by what is now the Kyle store and the Florence Hotel, a

sand-spit from the Hurd home.

The harbor for Prescott's mules was just back of where the Odd Fellow's buildings stand.

And in the little cottage facing Washington Street, a stone's throw from where his miles were harbored back there in 1892, Prescott and his

wife are living now.

Those mules smoothed the first spits that checked the passageway on the streets of Florence. A span of mules, a common scraper and George Prescott made the first clearance of Florence streets, save that which was made by hand.

NEIGHBORS



Hawaiian Adventure — Part IV

BOB JACKSON
NEIGHBORHOOD CORRESPONDENT
For the Siuslaw News

After our Matson Line cruise ship docked at Wilmington, which cannot be distinguished from any other part of Los Angeles, we hired a taxi that took us to where the ocean liner Queen Mary is moored permanently as a tourist attraction. A full day could easily be spent here. There is even a large Jacques Cousteau sea life museum in a portion of one of the engine rooms. A film titled "The Poseidon Adventure" was shot in another section of these enormous rooms.

We were overwhelmed by the immense superstructure of this majestic old luxury liner; more than 1,000 feet long, her three stacks

tower 181 feet above the keel. We were awed by the elegance of a bygone era as we explored her cavernous interior that is still haunted by the ghosts of kings and queens, movie stars and millionaire passengers, whose presence in my imagination is still almost palpable.

The rich wood paneling in the master ballroom, foyers, passageways, etc., were particularly impressive, as was the information that she made one foot of progress for each gallon of fuel that was consumed.

The wheelhouse is, of course, as everything else on this ship, huge. I recall standing there trying to imagine what it would have been like to be

in command of this ship and be responsible for all the crew and passengers relying on your knowledge and decisions.

After strolling the decks and ogling the palatial staterooms, we had an expensive lunch in the dining room of this regal atmosphere, before reluctantly returning to the pier, where we entered a huge open dome that housed Howard Hughes H-4 Hercules flying boat, nicknamed the "spruce goose," much to Hughes disgust (it is currently displayed in an air museum in McMinnville, Ore.).

The sight of this aircraft is breathtaking, with eight, 3,000 horsepower Pratt and Whitney radial engines and a wing span of 319 feet, which is a hundred feet longer than the big PBM flying boats I flew in during World War II.

Built entirely of birch plywood and intended as a troop carrier during the

second world war, she was launched too late to compete with the development of jet aircraft. As part of the display, films are shown about Hughes and his movie producer days — "Hell's Angels," "The Outlaw," etc., and dating stars such as Ginger Rogers and Katharine Hepburn. Also the air-racing exploits, winning the Harmon trophy and being honored by President Franklin Roosevelt.

We returned to the ship too late for lunch, so we called our room steward and had turkey sandwiches delivered to our stateroom. Amazing! He is on call round the clock. Tips to him and our waiters were given in special envelopes upon leaving the ship.

As the sun set in the west, mooring lines were cast off and the Mariposa was eased away from the pier, and another grand departure began, complete with band music, paper streamers and the same poignant mix of sad-

ness and gaiety experienced at San Francisco.

As we slowly made our way seaward, the Ports of Call and Princess Louise waterfront restaurants gave us a big send-off over their loudspeakers, and we were momentary celebrities. The sun had already disappeared below the horizon as we cleared the Long Beach breakwater, and as darkness descended upon us, the brilliant, sparkling lights of the sprawling metropolis behind our wake appeared like some overdone Hollywood extravaganza.

Reluctantly, we went below to our stateroom and dressed formally for dinner; all the while mentally pinching ourselves in an ongoing attempt to believe that all this could be really happening to ordinary working stiff's such as us.

To be continued.

LETTERS

Reefer madness

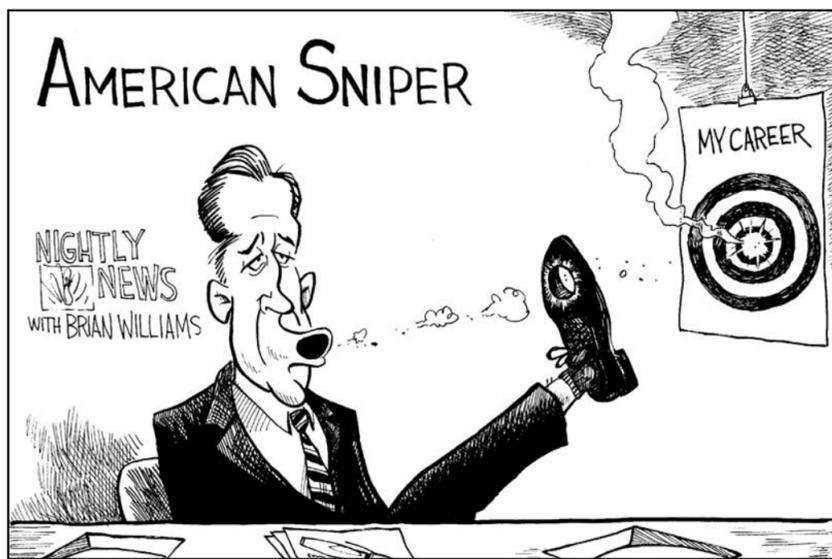
I was interested to read that Mayor Joe Henry is against a medical marijuana facility in town, and when it was suggested that the council look at a facility or video tape it, he was not interested ("March Marks End of Marijuana Moratorium," Feb. 7, page A1).

We've all heard of people who say, "I've made up my mind and don't try to bother me with the facts." It's a shame that we have a mayor who is too set in his ways to find out the true facts. He also equates a medical marijuana facility and a recreational facility.

I guess he doesn't know that to get a medical marijuana card, the patient has to pay \$250 to the state, unless there is proved financial hardship. They need a signed certificate from their doctor that says what medical problem it addresses. They can only get it from licensed growers, who must pay a licensing fee, and the growers are limited in how much they can grow, according to their patient load.

So the state regulates this health aid for individuals, the doctors sign off on it, but I guess Henry knows better.

If he had the power, would he take away the morphine that cancer sufferers also use, besides the medical marijuana they use?



The people of Florence deserve respect and effort from elected officials, and if he doesn't want to find out the facts, let him resign and get someone who is willing to learn.

Henry seems to have that 1936 movie, "Reefer Madness," as

his "facts" on marijuana, and nothing is going to change his mind.

James A. O'Connell
Florence

Not so nutty

In response to Martin Cable's letter ("Nutty Ideas," Feb. 4), he does have nutty ideas.

Two years of community college for everyone willing to learn job skills needed for the future is not a nutty idea. Most D- and F-grade students probably would not be interested in this opportunity (though they should be). But many without the money or a 3.5 grade point average would.

I, personally, have the most cost-effective health care in America and I am very satisfied with it. VA Health Care is the only totally socialist health care in America. Socialism is useful in certain situations.

Climate change and global warming are real. I care about the future of the planet. Those who don't only care about their wallet.

A billion Muslims want to take over the world is overstated — by about 999 million.

Hate is distasteful.

Gary Brock
Florence

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