

Whispers from the past... to market

By Sue Stafford
Correspondent

In the early days of Sisters, and Central Oregon in general, roads had a variety of origins, from Native American or immigration trails, to territorial roads, toll roads, or forest roads.

An important road in the settlement of Sisters was the Willamette Valley and Cascade Mountain Military Wagon Road built by a company of the same name in 1866. Covering 448 miles, it started in Albany, heading easterly to the Deschutes River, to Camp Harney, then to Crane Creek, and on to the eastern Oregon/Idaho boundary.

An inquiry was recently received in *The Nugget* office regarding the “market roads” in our area and how they came to be named.

The ones we are probably most familiar with are those which lie between Sisters and Bend – Couch (pronounced cooch, not cowch), Innes, and Gerking market roads. There’s also Reed Market and Butler Market in Bend and Deschutes Market between Bend and Redmond.

In the early days farmers had difficulty on rudimentary roads getting their agricultural products to town to sell them. According to the Oregon Department of Transportation, beginning in 1919, “the State Market Road Act was to provide State aid for the construction of a system of main county roads from the producing centers to the market centers.”

The 30th session of the Oregon Legislature passed the act, which went into effect in 1920. To finance the construction of the roads, a one-time state property tax levy was

enacted. From 1920-1931, Deschutes County spent \$368,238 for 51 market roads in the county.

The first market road in the county connected Bend to the Tumalo Fish Hatchery near what is now Shevlin Park and was called Shevlin Park Market Road. Then came the Central Oregon Highway and Northwest Redmond Market Road, now called Northwest Way in Redmond.

Market roads were named after the family who lived on the road, as in Butler and Couch, or for a farm or ranch such as Pilot Butte Ranch, or after geographical landmarks such as Deschutes or Camp Polk. The roads made it possible for ranchers, farmers, fishermen and lumber companies to get their goods to markets.

The Couch family raised beef cattle and milk cows, requiring a satisfactory road to get their animals and goods to Redmond markets. Therefore, Couch Market Road was built and still exists today.

Like Couch, Reed and Gerking are old family names from the early days of Central Oregon, just like Sisters’ Harrington Loop, Fryrear Road, George Cyrus Road, and Goodrich Road are named after Sisters’ early residents.

By the end of 1930, there was a total of 6,030 miles of market roads in the state made with a variety of surfaces: 266 miles of bituminous pavement; 125 miles of concrete pavement; 259 miles oiled; 3,033 graveled; and 1,826 miles unimproved.

By 1932 the County Market Roads funds were exhausted. Many of the market roads became secondary ODOT highways while others remained county roads.



Your Story
MATTERS
Audry Van Houweling, PMHNP
Columnist

The power of connection

The holiday season can be a mixed bag of emotions. In the best case, it is filled with joy and merriment; however, feelings of grief, stress, and loneliness are also common. In either case, what makes the season most meaningful for most of us is celebrating the connections we share with those we love.

In these digitalized times, establishing and maintaining social connections that allow for face-to-face contact has become more challenging. It has become the norm — especially in our younger generations — that social “connection” is most commonly mediated through a device or screen and “everyone is doing it” so it creates its own unique social pressure to follow suit.

While our digitalized social connections and tribes may have merit, they cannot substitute for genuine face-to-face human contact. Furthermore, the profiles of individuals we are “connected” to are most generally filtered and edited facades that often do not allow for authentic relationships. We too create facades for ourselves of which we may feel a pressure to live up to, which can limit our opportunities to let our guard down and display emotional vulnerability.

Altogether, the loss of

face-to-face contact can create a void of social isolation, which I believe is one of the great public health concerns of our time.

At our core we are social beings. Having a tribe or community has evolutionary roots in being central to our survival, defense, and welfare. Amid individualism and modernism, close connections have withered for many of us.

Social integration or the frequency of which we have face-to-face social contact with others — from the grocery clerk to our spouse — has in fact been found to be a major social determinant of health and longevity. In reviewing over 148 studies and 308,849 middle-age participants, researchers from Brigham Young University and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (2010) found that close interpersonal relationships in addition to social integration were the primary factors predicting longevity even superseding substance use, exercise, and diet.

Face-to-face contact has genuine neurochemical and physiological benefits that cannot be mimicked via social media, text messaging, or other forms of digitalized forms of communication. Eye contact, a good handshake, and high fives all release oxytocin otherwise known as the “bonding hormone.” Oxytocin can reduce cortisol — our primary stress hormone. Dopamine is also released, which promotes feelings of reward and pleasure. Additionally,

face-to-face contact provides opportunities for empathy far more than via social media or texting, where you are removed from the emotional consequences of your communication. In other words, you have more reign to be a schmuck without having to bear witness to the sadness, tears, fear, or anger you may inspire.

Our digital devices have also become great distractions, and might I say, time-suckers that allow us to procrastinate and postpone confronting emotional struggle. They have also in many ways become the modern-day pacifier for children (and adults), and the preferred solution for awkwardness and conversational pauses. Basically, they have thwarted emotional resilience and the art of conversing.

Given that social media and device addiction is, in my opinion, very legitimate, we all must be a bit more intentional about giving ourselves opportunities for face-to-face interactions. Schedule routine coffee visits with a friend, join a club, take a class, go on date nights with your spouse, or simply surround yourself with human energy at the gym, mall, or local park. And remember, your smartphone is not your best friend.

Wishing everyone a safe and healthy holiday season. Give yourself the gift of connection, allow yourself a digital detox, and soak in the beauty of the human spirit.

Happy holidays!

This ad sponsored by The Nugget Newspaper