

Silverton handles new smoking bans

Council approves one, while at the same time shooting down another

Justin Much Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Silverton City Council had two smoking bans to address: one was approved, the other was not. During its Jan. 8 meeting, the council unanimously approved a ban on smoking in city parks, similar to restrictions enacted in many Oregon municipalities, including Salem, Eugene, Portland and Pendleton. But a second ban – one that would have banned smoking downtown – elicited considerable discussion and ultimately failed to get traction as a split panel leaned toward finding other, more “creative” approaches. During the public hearing on the proposed downtown ban, several non-smoking community members,

as well as one downtown watering-hole owner, urged the council to examine the issue at depth. Among them was Silverton Chamber of Commerce Director Stacy Palmer who spoke about additional signs affecting the downtown’s character and how the ban would affect businesses, such as bars, where smokers often frequent. “My concern is the additional signage downtown,” Palmer said. “We have such an abundance of clutter in what is traditionally or supposed to be such a charming downtown.” She said sign requirements stipulated in the ordinance could result in a sign in every parking lot, creating a cluttering collage. She also advised that while it may be that only 30 percent of the population smokes, that 30 percent could be the difference in a downtown pub owner’s ability to make rent.

See **SMOKING**, Page 2A



Silverton City Council banned smoking in the city’s parks, but passed on a similar ban downtown. JUSTIN MUCH/APPEAL TRIBUNE

Detroit Lake dry?

Project could empty location for months or years



Detroit Lake Marina owner Scott Lunski stands at the end of his dock on Jan. 12. If the proposed project advances, with such little water held in the lake, there would be almost no water recreation. MOLLY J. SMITH/STATESMAN JOURNAL

Zach Urness Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

A project intended to improve conditions for endangered fish could mean essentially emptying Detroit Lake for one or two years. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is planning to build a 300-foot tower and floating screen at Detroit Dam to improve water temperature and fish passage for salmon and steelhead in the North Santiam River. But the \$100 to \$250 million project has sparked alarm over the potential impact to water supply in Salem and Stayton, for farmland irrigation, and to the economies of Detroit and the Santiam Canyon from the loss of recreation at the popular reservoir. “In the long-term, this project has a lot of positives, from a healthier environment for fish to better operation of the dam,” Marion County commissioner Kevin Cameron said. “But there is a huge risk in the short-term.” At its core, the project represents the latest chapter in the struggle to preserve native fish while maintaining the benefits of dams and reservoirs. The Corps is taking public comment on the project until January 23. A meeting on the topic is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Jan. 17 at Gates Fire Hall.

How to comment

Comments can be emailed to: detroit.fish.pas-sage@usace.army.mil.

It can be mailed to:

Kelly Janes, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Attn: PM-E, PO Box 2946 Portland, OR 97208-2946

Meeting on project

Corps officials will be in attendance at a meeting scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Jan. 17 at Gates Fire Hall.

The project still needs to go through multiple planning phases — including additional public comment periods — before construction is scheduled for 2021. “The big decisions have not yet been determined — this is a first step,” Corps spokesman Tom Conning

See **LAKE**, Page 3A

Oregon wildfire cost skyrockets

Zach Urness Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

The cost of fighting wildfires in Oregon skyrocketed to \$454 million in 2017, the most so far this century, according to data from Northwest Interagency Coordination Center. The high cost was fueled by multiple large wildfires — and more than 2,000 total fires — that burned 665,000 acres statewide. Between 2010 and 2015, federal and state agencies spent an average of \$146 million on Oregon wildfires. That number more than tripled in 2017.

“At one point, we had more than 10,300 firefighting resources assigned in the Pacific Northwest. Many of the regional air tanker bases also had record-breaking seasons.”

Stephen Baker, U.S. Forest Service spokesman

“The 2017 fire season was particularly long and arduous in the Pacific Northwest,” U.S. Forest Service spokesman Stephen Baker said. “Many of the large fires this year were long-duration fires that required a

See **FIRES**, Page 2A

Silverton remembers volunteer firefighter

Christena Brooks Special to Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

With lights flashing but sirens silenced, a 1935 Chevrolet pumper and other fire vehicles led a procession through town on Saturday, honoring Silverton’s longest-serving volunteer firefighter one last time. Capt. Bob Klaus served the Silverton Fire District for 55 years, only withdrawing from service 14 months before his death from brain cancer on Jan. 6. He was 75. In thanks, firefighters took him on one final ride from Unger Funeral Chapel to Valley View Cemetery on Jan. 13 and spoke warmly about him at a following memorial service. “At the fire district, he was a teacher, an adviser and the voice of reason,” said Chief Bill Miles. “He is going to be sorely missed.” Klaus was captain of Silverton’s tender division, a job entailing the oversight of three tanker-style trucks, related water transportation issues, and the training of new drivers. While his job as a dump truck driver for Silverton Sand & Gravel made it harder to respond to calls over the last decade, he went whenever possible, attended weekly drills and trained younger firefighters, Miles said. He was a faithful volunteer who even scheduled his vacations around fire district business, called ahead if he couldn’t attend drill, and helped solve an untold number of mechanical problems over the years. Somehow he always managed to slip a funny story or joke into every occasion, from meetings to interview panels. “He was a great storyteller and a hard worker,” said Bob Qualey, his friend, boss, and former owner of Silverton Sand & Gravel. “He liked to do things right. When he worked for me, he took care of everything.” Silverton Sand & Gravel’s new owners, Ivan Schmidgall and Dan Schächer, said they’ve met scores of customers who just assumed Klaus was both driver and owner because of the high-quality level of service he gave them. “He was an amazing guy,” Schmidgall said. “You would not believe how many people thought he owned the company because of how he took care of them. You can’t find employees like that anymore.” Klaus’ service to Silverton Fire began in 1962, two years after he graduated from Silverton High School. His friends couldn’t say exactly what attracted him to the work, but they suspect it had to do with the company he was keeping.

See **KLAUS**, Page 2A



Capt. Bob Klaus served the Silverton Fire District for 55 years. PHOTO COURTESY OF SILVERTON FIRE DISTRICT

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