

Outdoor Rec / Local

Serving aboard the Tamaroa



THE OUTDOOR COLUMN
By Todd Arriola

As I thumbed through the Rolodex of my mind for potential article outdoor topics this week, I realized that I already had one staring me in the face, which could use even further comment: the odd connection between former Baker County landlubber-turned-Coastie Shane Greenbank, and the U.S. Navy Zuni-turned-U.S. Coast Guard cutter Tamaroa.

Shane, an avid outdoorsman and former Ironside resident, who had lived together on a ranch with his late grandparents, Elmer and Pearl, and (still living) uncle, Lance, is someone I'd met first while in the 7th Grade. Somehow, we both had worn the same exact jacket—a Pittsburgh Steelers one—on the first day. An instant friendship.

Fast forward several years, and many buddy experiences later, and we both, as seniors, had little idea of what our futures might truly hold, not unlike

about every other senior I can think of, if they're being honest. Because we were teenagers and easily persuaded to do risky things without too much effort, Shane's cousin, Chuck, a Coastie, convinced us both to sign up to

serve our country, a move that we may have regretted upon first arriving at boot camp in Cape May, New Jersey. Boot camp and Cape May in August—it was hell.

Post-boot camp, we both arrived on the Tamaroa—the “Tam,” in the fall of 1990. We were billeted—appointed, ordered, threatened with death, what have you—to serve on that ship, because I noticed that there were two open slots during boot camp, and I happily filled them in with both of our names. What are buddies for? Asking Shane first might have been a good idea.

Arriving to the Tam (whose home port was Portsmouth, New Hampshire) via small boat from shore, we immediately received a lesson in the realities of the chain of command, as a new Quartermaster (QM) was allowed to board first, with

us directly behind. Upon boarding the Tam, we were immediately put to work, helping to stow the stores (put away the groceries).

I don't remember how Shane fared, but I was mostly okay topside (on deck, outside). The seas weren't rough, and I was in the initial stage of gaining my “sea legs,” which entailed basically getting used to the constant motion of the ship and bending and moving my legs, while remaining upright. This takes a while, but the really weird feeling is returning to and walking on land, which is not moving, and trying to look normal.

Once I ventured down below the main deck for the first time, I experienced another foreign concept—sea sickness.

We lived below deck, in the luxurious birthing area (an odd name, in my opinion), which provided very little room for each sailor to call his home, though, we did have around 80 aboard, so space was at a premium. I imagined it to be an advantage to have a bottom rack (bunk) until about the time the diesel tank “burped” one day, as it was checked for level (or whatever was going on), permanently saturating the training books I had.

Prior to the fall of 1991, I left the Tam, in order to attend Electronics Technician (ET) school, and Shane stayed aboard, later to become involved in the dangerous rescues in *The*

Perfect Storm, heroic acts which deserve even more recognition.

Keep in mind, around 80 sailors risked their lives, especially those on deck, knowing that the Tam, as tough and seaworthy as she was, and about the only ship up to the task, could still have gone down with more than one sailor thinking she might. Who would have saved them?

Shane said, “It was terrifying for me at the time, and also very fulfilling in the end, and at the same time, a feeling that this is why I offered my life up to do the job. I would still do it again ... I'd still go back in, if they'd have me, but they won't.” He's had to wade through a sea of red tape in his unsuccessful attempts to serve again, and he cites his service-connected disability rating (he broke his back) as the roadblock. As an experienced attorney, he feels he has much to offer.

The Perfect Storm book and film increased the public's awareness of both the heroism and the tragedies, and while accuracy can be debated, in the end I believe the message gets across. I'm proud to know and to write about people like my buddy and former shipmate, Shane. Strict subscribers of the old adage, “You have to go out, but you don't have to come back,” many of them didn't think they would return, but they still did the job.

Semper Paratus ...

Huntington's Halloween

BY EILEEN DRIVER
Eileen@TheBakerCountyPress.com

The annual Huntington Community Halloween Party was full of fun and games for all the costumed kids of all ages who live in this town. The party was held at the VFW Hall / Community Center on Friday, October 28th from 6 to 8 p.m. and was sponsored by the Huntington Senior & Youth Organization who served free hamburgers, hot gogs and french fries to the hungry crowd. Ghosts, goblins and cowboys were joined by an emu, a bear and Dorothy, with a dragon instead of toto, to play games for candy and prizes.

If you wanted to fill your goodie bag you could go bowling, cast the line on a fishing pole, throw a dart and pop a balloon, play the bean bag toss or get the ball in the basket. For even more of a challenge you could toss a ring around a two-liter bottle of pop and win the bottle or if dessert is what you were craving a jaunt around the cakewalk to creepy Halloween music was a big hit.

The Huntington Senior & Youth Organization, which was in danger of closing it's doors, due to several of its board members planning to move away, has been given a revival with an influx of new volunteers who showed up at a meeting held on Halloween day with a determination of keeping the organization going.

Senior meals, which are usually served at the VFW Hall, and delivered to shut ins on Monday, Wednesday and Friday will be serving only on Fridays for about a month while the transition occurs. But they hope to be back up to full capacity soon and are proud to say that the Halloween Party is a sign of a new beginning instead of it's swan song, which is what was feared.

Hatch opens in Baker City

Baker City is the home of a new community innovation and entrepreneurship lab in Northeast Oregon. HatchLab Baker is located on 2021 Main Street A. If you have any questions, please contact the HatchLab Baker Manager, Bryan Tweit at bryan@hatchthefuture.org. According to a press release the center will, “help to elevate the work that locals are doing in Baker to help small business.”

County gets weed, legislative updates, visit from Bentz

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Citizen Participation included Chase, who asked about the negotiations between the City and the County, regarding 911 Consolidated Dispatch. Harvey said that topic would be discussed more fully, and there would be more detail available, at the next Commission work session, scheduled for Wednesday, November 9, 2016, 9 a.m.

The minutes from the Wednesday, October 19, 2016 regular session were approved, with no noted changes, with a motion from Bennett, and a second from Kerns.

Grammon provided a Weed Department update, which included the topic of the County Weed Levy, passed by voters in May. “One of the things that I'm actually very proud of is, the Weed Levy was passed with the highest percentage that it ever has been passed with--73%--which is a good deal...”

Grammon emphasized that the Department uses any and every approach possible, in order to minimize the impacts of noxious weeds throughout the County, and it's a multi-angle attack, not just with herbicides. He had forms of bio-control planned, but due to issues with regulations, this plan was halted. He explained the term bio-control: “Bio-control, in the focused sense, is using some sort of agent, whether it's a small

bug--generally, it's a small bug--or...some fungus... that attacks the plant, and then, either reduces the plant, through seed reduction, or, maybe attacking the roots...”

He said that Spotted Knapweed, in primarily three places in the County, can get out of control quickly, if it's not addressed. Grammon said that the best bio-control methods have been observed, and that *Larinus* and *Cyphocleonus* (both bug-based bio-control) have been released recently in Halfway, in order to help address the Knapweed issue, as an example. He said that Leafy Spurge is one of the more difficult invasive species to eradicate, and without bio-control, the task would be about impossible. Whitetop will be targeted with bio-control, too, but regulations on approving that stalled the progress (he said that any perceived threats to Threatened & Endangered species affects that decision).

Particularly challenging this year were Russian Thistle and Kochia, because they tend to exploit areas with prior weed control efforts. The best solution, Grammon said, is robust perennial grasses, but there are issues when attempting to eradicate Russian Thistle and Kochia, in paved areas.

He said that proposed future actions include: expanding the boundary of Mandatory Whitetop Control, to include the

watershed below Burnt River Canyon, by Spring 2017; adopting a timetable for the rest of the County; to bring the proposal before the Commission this winter; and to hold a public comment meeting. In defining Mandatory Control, Grammon said that it doesn't require a land owner to eradicate every single noxious weed on the property, but rather, it encourages land owners to minimize the spread of seeds. He said the County has a cost-share program available (this doesn't include the hiring of contractors), and there are herbicide giveaways, and he'd like to see land owners to address weed issues in a more proactive way.

The Board discussed a list of foreclosed property, which included: 2130 9th Street, Baker City, with a total value of \$21,420, and a judgment amount of \$1,549.25; 1440 13th Street, Baker City, with a total value of \$33,540, and a judgment amount of \$2,369.37; 75x60 bare lot, Sumpter, Oregon, with a total value of \$10,870, and a judgment amount of \$605.74; 33801 Bald Mountain Road, Baker County (structure sits on U.S. Forest Service property), with a total value of \$26,580, and a judgment of \$430.66; 90 West Washington Street, Huntington, with a total value of \$10,150, and a judgment of \$905.18; 25.7x100 bare lot, Huntington, with a total value of \$3,260, and a judgment of \$182.80;

and 1244 3rd Street, Baker City, with a total value of \$56,680, and a judgment of \$4,836.05.

The Baker School District 5J had shown interest in the last property, 1244 3rd Street, but that is no longer the case, due to necessary additional work, and costs, Harvey said. Martin said that the U.S. Forest Service is evaluating the Bald Mountain Road property, and will contact the County when that evaluation is completed. The Board expressed a desire to sell the properties (an actual motion was not made at the session), and this process will move forward, including adjustment of the values, at a future session.

Bentz provided a Legislative update, which included a ballot measure list and a discussion: No. 94, Senate Joint Resolution (SJR) 4, he voted YES; No. 96, House Joint Resolution (HJR) 202, he voted YES; No. 97, he voted NO; No. 98, he voted NO; No. 99, he voted NO; and No. 100, he voted NO.

The majority of Bentz's presentation included an analysis of the worsening road conditions throughout the State, and rising costs associate with, and the lack of funding needed to address those issues. “Our roads are failing,” he said. Emphasis included the following two quotes (combined) from Malheur County Roadmaster, Richard Moulton: “When a paved road reaches ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’ condition, it must be either replaced or

reverted back to gravel... When I started working for the Malheur Road Department 13 years ago, the cost of emulsified oil was \$180/ton, today it costs \$570/ton,” a 270% increase.

Bentz presented road condition ratings in the District 60 counties, including Baker: 38 roads rated as GOOD, 34 as FAIR, 96 as POOR, and 15 as VERY POOR. The statewide costs to address road issues is around \$3 billion, Bentz said, and he suggested support for a fuel tax increase, because of the dire situation, which includes Eastern Oregon roads.

He's taken heat for the suggestion and support, but he explained that he's trying to address the worsening road issues in District 60, and a tax increase, which he said would not be “huge,” would be one solution, which could help to accomplish that. He presented a hypothetical scenario, and he asked, “How much does an Oregon who drives 10,000 miles a year pay (at 20 miles per gallon), in State gas tax?” Harvey guessed \$2,500. Bentz answered \$153.51 per year, or about \$12.79 per month, using his calculations, at the current tax rate of 30 cents per gallon. He said that's about a penny per mile of road to use it, whereas a mile of freeway costs about \$1 million.

Order No. 2016-158, Re-appointing A Member To The Baker County Development Corporation

(BCDC), was approved, with a motion from Bennett, and a second from Kerns. Brent Kerns was re-appointed, his term set to expire on October 1, 2019.

Order No. 2016-159, Appointing Members To The Local Public Safety Coordinating Council Committee (LPSCC), was approved, with a motion from Bennett, and a second from Kerns.

The following were appointed, their terms set to expire on November 1, 2018, and noting their area of expertise: Mark Bennett (Baker County Commissioner), Marilyn Jones (DHS), Shari Selander (Baker County Mental Health Director), Sandy Woods (Lay Citizen), Ed Pierson (Lay Citizen), Matt Shirtcliff (Baker County District Attorney), Travis Ash (Baker County Sheriff), Staci Erickson (Baker County Juvenile Department), Will Benson (Baker County Parole & Probation), Nancy Staten (Interim Public Health Manager), and Wyn Lohner (Baker City Police Chief).

Amendment No. 1, to Agreement No. 148056, State of Oregon Intergovernmental Agreement For The Financing Of Community Developmental Disability Services, was ratified, with a motion from Bennett, and a second from Kerns.

The amendment includes some exhibit and language changes.