

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Address Opinion Pieces and Letters to the Editor to:
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Inspirational article

Dear Editor:

I just finished reading Greeley Wells' "Polio, An awakening: Personal Story." Very inspirational! Should be required reading for all who feel sorry for themselves.

My godmother (my mom's sister) is about 80 or 82 now. She had polio in her early 20s. She recovered enough to go on and have seven kids. Then, in her late 60s she had a recurrence of the polio. She gradually went from crutches to a

wheelchair. She always remained in good spirits though, a good influence on friends and family.

Ed Snyder

Editor note: To view the article referred to above, visit our online paper www.applegater.org Go to the Winter 2011 issue and find the article "Polio, An Awakening: A personal Story" by Greeley Wells. This article appears only in the online Applegater.

Hydroelectric power not "green"

Dear Editor:

There is nothing "green" about hydroelectric power generated from large dams such as Applegate Dam. Dams are massive atrocities which wreck havoc on the healthy functioning of rivers. How can people be satisfied by the fact that high-power transmission lines won't be constructed for the proposed Applegate Dam hydroelectric project, while wild salmon and steelhead remain blocked from

their best spawning habitat above the dam?

I am a resident of the Upper Applegate and I am vehemently opposed to this project; they won't even construct a fish ladder. I am appalled that the main discussion around the hydro project has been that of transmission lines and not the environmental impacts of the dam itself.

Suzanne Savoie, Jacksonville, OR

Applegate Dam "payback"

Dear Editor:

Concern about the environmental impact of both the Applegate Dam and the impending hydroelectric project is understandable. However, let's not confuse the existing dam with the proposed hydroelectric project.

It is true that the dam has significant negative environmental impacts (such as preventing fish from reaching their natural spawning habitat). While the proposed hydroelectric power plant will not remove the inherently negative impacts of the dam, it also will not increase the dam's negative impact. In fact, by using the existing dam to produce electric power without burning fossil fuels, the dam will "pay back" a bit of its debt to the environment. Had the new high-voltage transmission lines been installed overhead, however, the increased negative impact on the environment would have been significant. As it grew increas-

ingly clear that the dam would receive final approval from the State Water Board, many people were concerned that whereas environmental impacts had been addressed in detail, residents' concerns about the safety and aesthetics of adding high-voltage transmission lines (that would have extended the existing power poles upwards by 15 feet), had not been addressed. This is why many people were thrilled with Symbiotics' decision to bury the high-voltage transmission lines for the entire 15 miles between the dam and the Ruch sub-station.

While the hydroelectric project will not "fix" the negative environmental impact of the existing dam, it will make the dam more environmentally responsible, and will not further intrude on the environment with taller transmission poles.

Margaret della Santina, Ruch, OR

Fire Department to the rescue

Dear Editor:

On October 21, 2010, we had a chimney fire that quickly spread to the attic. The Applegate fire department responded to my call in less than twenty minutes, sending one truck from the Applegate Fire station. The two "firemen" on that first truck were a man and a young woman who both got the hoses out to attack the fire. Some ten minutes later, two more fire trucks arrived and attacked the fire. As it turned out, we lost the roof but saved the rest of the house and no furnishings were damaged. I feel sure that given another twenty minutes, we would have lost everything. After the fire was "out," we had to call 911 one more time as burning embers continued to drop from the

roof into the second story of the house. The fire chief, Brett Fillis came to the house for that call and had a fireman extinguish any lingering burning coals. He then arranged for another fire woman to visit twice more during the night to confirm that the fire was indeed out.

We are extremely grateful to the firemen and women who came to assist us in this scary event. The fire chief exhibited the utmost professionalism and deserves our sincere gratitude. We are indeed fortunate to have him as the chief and the volunteer staff who worked so hard on our behalf. Thank you all!

Paul Hamilton, Applegate, OR

Blister rust control

Dear Editor:

Thank you for a very informative and interesting newspaper. I have lived here 17 years and a short time back you had an article about Blister Rust Control. When I was 16 years old (1943) my best friend and I traveled from Los Angeles to Chico to do Blister Rust Control work.

I talked my friend into taking the train because I had never ridden on a train. We took the train from Los Angeles to Sacramento. Got off and had breakfast. We took another train to Marysville. This was World War II era. North of Sacramento were many army camps. The train to Marysville had a lot of soldiers. Before my friend and I left home we had purchased khaki colored pants and shirts to wear for our work. When M.P.'s came through the train asking the soldiers for their papers they saw our khaki outfits and asked us for our papers. So without a word I handed him my employment papers. He read, reread and finally threw them at me saying "You guys are not in the army!"

When the train arrived in Marysville we needed to take a bus to Chico. Our luggage was put in the bus but when the bus was too full we were told to get off and get a refund on our tickets. We were told to go see the sheriff and explain our situation. He recommended that we hitchhike to Chico and told us where to go to get a ride. After waiting just a couple of minutes we got a ride to our destination. Several trucks picked up our group of 40 boys and took us to a camp just below Ragdump. We lived all summer in large tents with wood floors. Six to eight boys shared a tent.

Monday through Friday trucks took us to our wilderness work sites. We worked in groups of three between strings

30 feet apart and a mile long. We dug out gooseberries and currants as they carried a disease that killed White Pine trees.

When needed we were sent to work on forest fires. The first fire we were sent to was northeast of Paradise and there were Conscientious Objectors operating the kitchen for the firefighters. Another fire we were sent to was near Nevada and some of the men working on the fire lines were Italian Prisoners of War that were captured in North Africa. They were a happy bunch as no one was shooting at them. We learned an Italian swear word. They raised their fists up in the air as they said it.

In our regular camp we had several ladies that cooked for us and lived in a separate tent. One of the cooks, an elderly lady was from Corning. When she went home on the weekends she would invite one of us boys to go with her. I was invited to drive home with her once and she got a flat tire. Tires were very poor during the war so I guess that's why she invited us to go so that she would have a strong kid to change the tire if necessary.

About once a month trucks took half of us to Chico and would turn us loose for half the day. Occasionally on Saturdays a truck would take us to a swimming hole that had a nice waterfall. This was a great place to swim.

Several boys were sent home due to misbehavior but for 40 boys there was very little trouble. All good things end so eventually my friend and I took the Greyhound bus home and we are still good friends after knowing each other since kindergarten and sharing our Blister Rust Control experience.

William Crooks, Grants Pass, OR

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