

Changing Lanes

Should Lane County find a new namesake?

Ever wonder why the residents of this county spend so much time celebrating heroes like Wayne Morse and Martin Luther King Jr., without ever mentioning the man after whom our county was named? It turns out that Joseph Lane was a poor choice for a namesake. In the antebellum period, he was an ardent defender of slavery. In 1860, he ran for vice president of the U.S., losing to the ticket headed by Abraham Lincoln. So it's true: Our county is named after a bigoted loser. Joseph Lane was the antithesis of the ideals that our county now stands for. Luke Skywalker had more in common with his dad, Darth Vader, than Lane County has in common with its founding father.



It was only a matter of time before someone in Lane County asked the Board of County Commissioners to find a new namesake. At our board meeting last week, we considered a letter from Peter Roberts, who suggested that the board should name our county after a different person with the surname "Lane," so we could disassociate our county from Joseph Lane's sordid history without causing too many administrative headaches. Mr. Roberts cited the example of King County, Washington, which discarded its old namesake William Rufus DeVane King (dubbed "a gentle slave monger" by John Quincy Adams) in favor of Martin Luther King Jr.

At our Board meeting last week, a few commissioners expressed support for dropping Joseph Lane as the county's namesake. Bobby Green, who recently championed the effort to name a street after Martin Luther King Jr., made us laugh when he said he'd probably sit this one out, because he's had his share of naming controversies for the year.

The trick is to find another namesake with the surname "Lane." Mr. Roberts suggested Franklin Knight Lane, who lived from 1864-1921 and helped to establish the National Park Service. One big drawback: He was a Californian. That might be a tough sell with my colleague Bill Dwyer, who has protested the "Californication" of Oregon.

I did some research of my own, and I came up with 11 other candidates named "Lane."

1) Nathan Lane. He's an actor whose résumé includes the roles of Timon the Meerkat in *The Lion King*, and the role of "Mysterious Disco Man" in the latest Austin Powers film

2) Diane Lane. She portrayed an adulterous wife in *Unfaithful*, and she played a cop/judge/executioner alongside Sylvester Stallone in *Judge Dredd*. Infidelity and summary executions – now there are some marketing themes that CVALCO can work with!

3) Jennifer Lane. She's a rhythm and blues singer. Her songs include this hit: *Ben is the Man (Doin' our Septic Tank)*.

4) Charles Lane. He played a tight-fisted business manager on *I Love Lucy*. Maybe his selection as our namesake might restore the voters' confidence in our county's frugality, so we could finally pass a ballot measure around here.

5) Roumelia Lane. She writes Harlequin Romance novels such as *Tempest in the Tropics* and *Night of the Beguine*. We'd pick up some tourist business if she would set one of her novels in Lane County (*The Covered Bridges of Passion? The Tree-Sitter's Wife?*).

6) Lane Shetterly. We need at least one Oregonian on the list! He's a state representative from Polk County – a nice, smart guy. The only problem is that he's a political moderate, and there's nothing moderate about Lane County.

7) The other Joseph Lane. Besides our current namesake, the most famous Joseph Lane in history is the self-described "anarchist communist" who lived in England during the 1800s and wrote *An Anti-Statist Communist Manifesto*. The national press would have a field day if we picked this guy.

8) Carpool Lane. Who says our county has to be named after a human being? This choice would celebrate our conservationist values.

9) Penny Lane. This classic Beatles song features the following four words back-to-back: "pouring rain/very strange." If that's not Lane County, I don't know what is.

10) Lois Lane. In later versions of the Superman saga, Clark's journalist girlfriend was a tough crime-fighter rather than a damsel in distress. Picking Lois could draw attention to the fact that Lane County boasts one of the best journalism schools in the U.S.

11) Memory Lane. There's no better choice for a county where half the population thinks that the 1960s never ended.

Tom Lininger is the county commissioner for the East Lane District.

the events to date: *The War on Freedom*, by British scholar Nafeez Ahmed. If Americans only read chapter 5, "The Collapse of Standard Operating Procedures on 9-11", they would be shocked. For example, October 1999: Pro golfer Payne Stewart's chartered Learjet lost radio contact with the FAA and deviated from its flight path. Within 21 minutes his jet had an escort of two F-16s ready and able to destroy the plane. On 9/11/2001, 25 minutes before the first tower was struck, the FAA, NORAD, and military were aware that the first two jumbo jets had been hijacked simultaneously, but did NOT scramble fighters for 80 minutes, and then only *after* the Pentagon strike. Fearless grade-schoolers will be asking why not.

Last week's news: The White House is stalling the independent investigation into 9/11. Again, grade-schoolers will be asking why. While the world is demanding answers from George II for those 16 nasty words that shouldn't have been in a speech, I want him to explain those 80 tortuous minutes when our military machine was made to "stand down" and not follow standard operating procedures.

God forbid, American citizens should ask protection from the multi-trillion dollar military monster the U.S. has built. If you doubt, just put down your flag, pick up the book and prepare for the ride.

Ron Roggensack
Cottage Grove

Tony would have been a great commissioner, I also know that many people in my district are glad Tony will continue to represent Lane County in the Legislature.

Tony has been a champion for programs that prevent child abuse, particularly the South Lane Family Relief Nursery, which could not have withstood its financial difficulties a few years ago without Tony's help. There are probably hundreds of high-risk families in rural Lane County who are free of abuse due to Tony's leadership.

On the issue of school funding, Tony has been a great advocate. Throughout his five sessions in the House and Senate, he has always insisted on stable and adequate funding for public schools, while other legislators were acquiescing in drastic cuts.

Tax fairness is another issue that has been high on Tony's agenda. If you ask Bill Sizemore which legislator has caused him the most grief, he'd probably say Tony Corcoran. Tony understands that our tax system should distribute the burden fairly across all economic groups, and that we need to correct some of the inequity in our present system.

The 2003 session has posed some difficult challenges for our Legislature, and I don't think these challenges will go away in the future. I'm glad that Tony will continue to represent Lane County in Salem during these challenging times.

Tom Lininger
East Lane County Commissioner

THANKS TO TONY

State Sen. Tony Corcoran recently announced that he will remain in the Legislature and will not seek appointment to the Board of County Commissioners. While I believe that

FALSE SECURITY

Nine months ago, I was talking to my son and told him he could have a bike if he could get some kind of insurance on it. He agreed



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