

DEBORAH NOBLE OF THE BE NOBLE FOUNDATION



CITY, BE NOBLE FOUNDATION TO BUY AMAZON HEADWATERS

The Eugene City Council this week gave advocates for preserving the headwaters of Amazon Creek something to be thankful for over the holidays. The council agreed Nov. 24 to acquire two lots of property in the Martin Street area to add to the Ridgeline Trail system. The Be Noble Foundation will acquire a contiguous third lot. The three lots, totaling about 26 acres, contain two main branches of the Amazon Creek headwaters as well as lush habitat for both plant and animal wildlife.

The city of Eugene will pay \$1.125 million, funded by \$1.1 million from the parks bond measure passed by the voters in 2006, and a \$25,000 donation from the Lane County Audubon Society. Be Noble Foundation will pay \$625,000 and maintain ownership of one lot with a conservation easement in memory of the Erin Noble who died in a private plane crash in 2012.

The newly acquired natural area will supplement existing public park and natural areas in the vicinity of the Amazon headwaters, including Frank Kinney Park on the north side of Martin Street and more than 100 acres along a main tributary of Amazon Creek to the east and south of the newly acquired area. Amazon Creek, which drains about 60 percent of the city of Eugene, “flows through a diverse mix of land uses including forested headwaters, highly urbanized lands, parks, natural areas and farmland on its 22-mile westward journey to the Long Tom River,” reads a prepared statement from Craig Carnagey, director of the city’s Parks and Open Space Division, and Charlie Tebbutt, spokesperson for Be Noble Foundation.

This land provides a valuable ecological corridor between the Amazon greenway and the headwaters of Amazon Creek, according to the Be Noble website. The website also notes that this site was identified by the Army Corps of Engineers in its Metro Waterways study as a priority open space acquisition area for the protection and restoration of Amazon Creek.

“For over a decade many people in the community have wanted to see this property come into public ownership,” Carnagey says. “This parkland acquisition will both enhance natural resource protections in the headwaters of Amazon Creek, and provide more recreational opportunities for all Eugene residents to enjoy.”

“Erin Noble, a beloved member of the community, had committed to assist in the efforts to preserve this important ecological area before he tragically died,” Tebbutt says. “He was, among his many talents and interests, an avid hiker who frequently trekked through the headwaters area to the Ridgeline Trail and Spencer’s Butte summit. Erin’s parents set up Be Noble Foundation to carry on Erin’s commitments to preserve Eugene’s vision of the Amazon headwaters.” Tebbutt says the foundation will ask that the area be named in Erin Noble’s memory.

Heather Sielecki, president of Southeast Neighbors Neighborhood Association, is quoted in the statement saying, “after so many years of uncertainty, to have this area added to the Ridgeline Trail system for all Eugeneans, present and future, to enjoy, is remarkable. We thank the Nobles and the city for this important legacy.” — Ted Taylor



BY RICK LEVIN

THE ROAD TO THE TITLE

Can the Ducks finish on top?

What a difference a weekend makes in the fickle, fanatical world of college football, where the panic and pandemonium of winning and losing wreck havoc with all cool reckonings. It’s all so hard to grasp, much less parse and parlay. A single game can overthrow the whole shebang, sending the number-crunchers scrambling for a new paradigm.

Not all that far back, for instance, the wily bookmakers in Vegas suddenly scooted the Oregon Ducks to odds-on favorites for a national title, deeming UO’s chances at 9-2 (22 percent), just above Alabama’s 5-1 (20 percent).

A week later, on Nov. 10, *Sporting News* reported that the linemakers had given the edge back to Alabama, putting the Tide at 3-1 to the Ducks’ 4-1. If such voodoo economics make your head hurt, you’re not alone; this quackhead hates math. In the swoon of competition, where that bouncing oblong ball creates chaos of bodies acting on muscle-memory alone, numbers don’t mean jack. Intuition is everything.

Intuitively, Ducks fans are always waiting for the other shoe to drop. Behind the triumphalism of immediate victory hides a suspicion of impending defeat — a sense that, when we get to that final red-zone run, something will go disastrously wrong. Quackheads are a nervous lot, reared on a history of almost but not quite.

Marcus Mariota, UO’s preternaturally gifted quarterback and current Heisman frontrunner, has put forth a glorious season thus far, breaking team records left and right in just his junior year. During several games this season it seems he’s taken the whole team on his back and carried the Ducks to victory. The guy is a marvel.

And therein, perhaps, lies the rub. Because Mariota’s Christ-like shine and the salvational glory he basks in tends to obscure a handful of gridiron sins: A porous offensive line, decimated by injuries and addled by inexperience; a defense with a weak pass rush that lacks a big stopper in the middle; and, finally, a team-wide tendency to idle until the second half.

That won’t fly in a title game. Recall Super Bowl XLII, when the Giants defensive line endlessly harangued quarterback Tom Brady, thereby upsetting the undefeated Patriots. Make no mistake that going after Mariota, early and often, will be the game plan of any team the Ducks take on for the title, should they make it to Texas on Jan. 12. And if that team is Alabama, watch out.

Of course, any talk of national titles is irrelevant until the Ducks make it through their Civil War with the Beavers, which, despite being on OSU’s home turf at Reser Stadium, they probably will. Then it’s on to the PAC-12 championship game Dec. 5 at Levi’s Stadium in Santa Clara, most likely against UCLA.

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