



RAILINGS FROM AN OLD ART DECO BRIDGE GET NEW LIFE AT OLD NICK'S PUB

# REUSABLE RAILINGS

AN ART DECO BRIDGE IS FINDING NEW LIFE BY CAMILLA MORTENSEN

**B**ridges aren't just transportation structures; they can be iconic parts of the landscape. Picture the Golden Gate or any of Lane County's covered bridges. But what happens when the structure is no longer usable?

Rather than simply demolish the 1930s art deco railings of Hwy. 101 Siuslaw River Bridge as the bridge is retrofitted by the Oregon Department of Transportation, BRING Recycling is finding new homes for the decorative railings, which span 24 feet and weigh 4 to 5 tons.

The Siuslaw Bridge was designed by renowned State Bridge Engineer Conde McCullough and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, says Carolyn Stein, BRING's executive director. Many of the deck railings from this bridge are being reused in the Florence area, she says, and railings from the very similar and recently retrofit Cape Creek Bridge near Heceta Head and the Lee Patterson Bridge in Gold Beach have come to Eugene where they can be found at Old Nick's Pub, Abbelone Vineyard and at BRING's own Planet Improvement Center.

Concrete often gets ground up and used in road construction, but reusing the railings preserves the history of that era, she says, and the embodied energy (carbon) is kept intact. There's a benefit to keeping that, even if it's decorative.

The railings are "strictly decorative," she says, as they are not up to code for seismic standards. They are being replaced on the bridge with replicas.

BRING is working with Hamilton Construction on the project, and Stein cautions that the size and heft of the railings mean "you can't just throw them in the back of your pickup truck." However, you can contact BRING to arrange for pickup if you want to purchase a piece of Oregon transportation history.

Interested Lane County residents can check out the railings at BRING and see if they might be a welcome addition to their yard at BRING's Earth Day birthday celebration. For the civic as well as eco-minded, every donation BRING receives by Earth Day, BRING will give SquareOne Villages 10 percent of the value in building materials for the Emerald Village tiny homes.

"Giving Back to the Planet" is 11 am to 4 pm Saturday, April 23, at 4446 Franklin Blvd., in Glenwood. EWEB, the city of Eugene, Lane Regional Air Protection Agency (LRAPA), the city of Springfield and more will join BRING at the celebration, which began last year after Eugene ceased its Earth Day bash at EWEB. ■

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