

Coming clean on cleaning up

Coming clean is defined as: having no interior flaws visible; observing the rules; relatively free from error or blemish; characterized by clarity and precision.

I sometimes play tricks in my mind. Tricks that say if my house isn't clean, I'm not good enough.

Tricks that whisper if the piles aren't taken care of, I'm failing. Tricks that shout from a distance, be embarrassed because you're a mess. Seen and not hidden ... because that, friends, is what coming clean is really all about.

My eyes seem to give the message to my mind that if things don't appear "clean" then I'm not who I say am. I look at the muddy floor and the counters covered with school books, pens, a phone book, recipe cards, breadcrumbs, and something sticky that hasn't been wiped away for at least three days.

I glance at the couch with the folded clothes, and the table with the watercolors and thank you cards scattered about, and the floor with toy tractors and dozers, and realize that I don't even know where to

start.

Here's the thing though, I'm living proof that clean is relative. Clean is a nice thing, but when you're so consumed with clean, it's my guess you are missing a piece of truly living.

Our home is lived in. Our home is defined by its piles. Our home is "us" from the minute you walk in — a beautiful mess but totally "clean" at the same time.

Tonight I came home and found a pile of swept up dirt near the dustpan lying on the kitchen floor. The dishwasher was running with only a few glasses and bowls left in the sink. The mail was stacked on the counter, the TV was on, and Ian was sitting in his chair sound asleep. I felt like crying in the best sort of way.

We're trying to live in the cleanest sort of way through the mess we're in right now. Our lives are precise and clear one minute, and complete chaos the next. We are living in a way that is nowhere near free from errors or blemishes, and you know what, I think that's the best we can do. I know that's the best any of us should ever do.

Don't get me wrong. I've dreamed

of a day when my house would be clean for more than two days in a row. I'd love to have a housekeeper, but the reality is, she wouldn't know where to start and I wouldn't know where to even have her begin. She wouldn't see the love in the piles. She wouldn't see the life lived in the stacks of books, movies and bills. She'd see a mess. I see a mess, too, but for the first time in a long time (maybe ever) I'm starting to see more than the mess. I'm starting to see the mess for what it really is.

This mess is our life. This mess shows that we all piled on the couch and watched our favorite show instead of picking everything up. The piles of dishes and pots and pans show that we actually made dinner and didn't go out or run through the drive-through. The mud, the worn out broom, the broken vacuum cleaner and the washing machine that may or may not be on its last leg ... those are ours and we'll use them the best we can to stay as clean as we can for as long as we can.

More than anything, I hope that if you find yourself sitting at my kitchen counter or on the couch, and you notice the piles of this and that, I hope you'll feel the same way I do. That clean is something I am when I'm honest. It's something you are, too. Clean is a character trait that can shine through every sort of mess because it's



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FROM SUN UP TO SUN DOWN

truth. Clean is screaming from the depths of my soul that I am beautiful and the flaws that you see from the inside of me are worth sharing with the world.

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Governor's confusing decision to replace Lorenzen

By MIKE FORRESTER

Oregon Governor Kate Brown has run into criticism for several of her decisions since taking office a couple of years ago. It has seemed to me that she has not been in close enough touch with members of the Legislature, those in state agencies or members of the public. An example came recently on an Eastern Oregon appointment.

Gov. Brown named Ted Ferrioli, a member of the Oregon State Senate from Grant County, to the nonpartisan Northwest Power & Conservation Council to replace Henry Lorenzen of Pendleton. It was a head scratcher.

In his more than five years on the regional council and beyond that, Lorenzen had earned huge respect for his knowledge and his digging on natural resource issues in the Pacific Northwest. The council researches and is a sounding board on electric power and fish/wildlife matters in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana. Each state has two members on the council.

Lorenzen is, you might say, overqualified. He is a wheat rancher, a lawyer, a licensed electrical engineer, former chair of the Oregon Environmental Council and former member of the state Board of Higher Education. In this era of debate over renewable energy resources — hydro, wind, solar — it's great to have a Henry Lorenzen on your side. Oregon's other council member is former state Sen. Richard Devlin.

Sen. Ferrioli's résumé lists him as co-founder of the Oregon Lands Coalition and says he has been an advocate for natural resource producers.

The appointment of Ferrioli must have come out in a news release, but without much detail. Lorenzen said he learned of the decision a few weeks before the change was announced from Gov. Brown's natural resource adviser, who told him a change was being made. Gov. Brown did not tell him of the change, Lorenzen said.

In the absence of an explanation from the governor's office on the replacement of Lorenzen, people have speculated. Some wonder if Democrats in the Legislature persuaded the governor to get Ferrioli, a formidable Republican, out of their hair in Salem.

One thing that is clear: Salary on the power council is \$120,000 a year, a good deal higher than a state legislator's pay. Because Ferrioli served in the Legislature, his salary on the power council will be added to his state PERS retirement.

We will see how Oregon's representation on the council turns out. Several people who follow the council's meetings say that in Ferrioli's first two meetings, he showed impressive knowledge of council issues. But Lorenzen is a tough person for anyone to replace on a board on electricity issues.

If you're going to replace Babe Ruth in the lineup, it's easy to see why you would shy away from giving the reasons.

Mike Forrester lives in Pendleton.

Good treaties make good neighbors

The United States and Canada will begin negotiations to modernize the Columbia River Treaty regime May 29-30. The 54-year-old treaty is an extremely important agreement with our best ally and partner in the hemisphere.

Established in 1964, the treaty's flood risk and hydropower operations have provided substantial benefits to millions of people on both sides of the border and facilitated additional benefits such as supporting the river's ecosystem, irrigation, municipal water use, industrial use, navigation and recreation. The United States deeply values our unique and essential relationship with Canada.

Around the world, this treaty serves as a model for transboundary water cooperation — and rightly so. Americans and Canadians alike should be proud of the invaluable cooperation that has contributed to the development of the regional economy on both sides of the border.

But we don't live in 1964. There is a whole swath of arrangements established under this durable yet flexible treaty that should be modernized. In both countries, our understanding of the river and the basin has changed since the development of



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Comment

the transboundary system with three treaty dams in British Columbia and one in Montana.

Last December we announced it is time to modernize the Columbia River Treaty regime. That's shorthand for the treaty and the myriad technical mechanisms and arrangements that translate the agreement into day-to-day realities.

It is in many of these details where the United States wants to see improvements. As the United States enters into bilateral negotiations with our Canadian counterparts, our objectives include continued, careful management of flood risk; ensuring a reliable and economical power supply; and better addressing ecosystem concerns.

The U.S. negotiating team set these objectives with input from the people most directly affected by the treaty. On the U.S. side, the starting point is the U.S. regional recommendation for the future of the Columbia River Treaty after 2024, a consensus document released in 2013 after five years of consultations among the Northwest's Tribes, states, stakeholders, public, and federal agencies. Since the submission of the regional recommendation, the Department of State has continued to meet with and hear from the

sovereigns, states, and stakeholders within the region.

The U.S. negotiating team deeply values the expertise and experience of the Tribes and will continue to consult with them on a regular basis as negotiations proceed. We are committed to keeping our American partners informed of our progress during the negotiations.

As we begin active negotiations with our Canadian neighbors, we will hold town halls throughout the region to hear views from the public on the process and the treaty. The first town hall took place in Spokane on April 24 on the margins of the Lake Roosevelt forum and included an open question and answer session for the public. We plan to hold the next town hall later this summer.

Good treaties make good neighbors. The United States and Canada have a long, positive history of engagement on the Columbia River. We expect to continue that cooperative spirit when we engage in negotiations starting May 29.

Francisco L. Palmieri is a career diplomat and currently serves as the acting assistant secretary for Western Hemisphere Affairs at the U.S. Department of State. He has spent more than 31 years representing the United States at home and on assignments abroad.



The Columbia River, the major waterway of the Pacific Northwest, empties into the Pacific Ocean near Astoria.

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