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OPINION
WEDNESDAY

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125TH ANNIVERSARY FLASHBACK

1890 | THE WEST ❖ FLORENCE TIMES ❖ THE SIUSLAW OAR ❖ THE SIUSLAW NEWS ❖ SIUSLAW NEWS | 2015

This year marks Siuslaw News’ quasquicentennial, our 125th anniversary, a remarkable achievement for any business in a small community like Florence. To commemorate this milestone, throughout the year we’ll feature some of the town’s history as originally published in the newspaper, including historic articles and photos from more than a century ago.

Siuslaw to get jetty appropriation

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The following letter was received by the secretary of the Commercial Club Wednesday and makes it practically certain that the Siuslaw will get the amount asked for from the appropriation for rivers and harbors: Washington, D.C., March 5, 1915 Siuslaw Commercial Club, Florence, Ore., Gentlemen,

Referring to your telegram of February 25, concerning deepening of the Siuslaw channel, I beg to advise that, after the Rivers and Harbors bill was placed by the resolution which makes appropriation for such work next year in the lump sum of \$25,000,000, I consulted the engineer department with a view to learning what action would be taken

in regard to the proposal of the Port Commission for cooperative improvement. While no definite allotment for Siuslaw has yet been determined upon from the \$25,000,000, the department has promised Senator Chamberlain and I that the full amount of \$112,500 will be allowed, in as much as the State of Oregon, as well as

Siuslaw, has always contributed to this kind of work. I assure you I will follow the matter up with the department and endeavor to obtain definite action as early as possible, to give the Siuslaw project the full \$112,500. Yours very truly, Harry Lane

NEIGHBORS



BOB JACKSON
NEIGHBORHOOD CORRESPONDENT
For the Siuslaw News

Hawaiian adventure — Part X

We had never imagined that we would ever be staying in an expensive suite overlooking Waikiki beach. So this was how “people with money” lived. We were still standing transfixed and overwhelmed, our senses reeling from the royal opulence of our surroundings, when we were surprised by a gentle knock on the door. A nattily uniformed bellboy entered and presented us with a large, beautifully wrapped ice-cold fresh pineapple. It was cut into sections on

the inside; compliments of Sylvia from Bronson Travel in Eugene, Ore. — also a complimentary bottle of champagne from the hotel desk, complete with long-stemmed glasses. After toasting our good fortune with wine and fruit, we rushed down to the street and boarded a city bus that carried us to the huge Ala Moana shopping center (the world’s largest open-air mall). After all the rich, exotic gourmet food on the cruise ship, it was good to chow down on something we were familiar with — a big hamburger and fries in a simple

fast-food restaurant. That evening we enjoyed a couple MaiTai’s in the Captain Cook bar. We paid \$5.90 for two drinks (must have been “happy hour”). Then we took off our shoes and strolled in the moonlight on Waikiki beach. At around 10 p.m., we sat on the warm sand and watched our beautiful cruise ship Mariposa glide by, with all her lights ablaze, and disappear over the horizon, on her way to Bora Bora with all those happy people. It will be a long time before we forget the feel of her decks pulsating under our feet, and the sound of her bow swells crashing against the southern seas. At that time, of all the world’s people, somehow we came to be among the relatively few, who were fortunate enough to take a cruise on a luxury ship. Returning to our suite, we turned off all the lights, opened the glass doors onto the living room lanai and listened to the gentle surf hissing onto the beach below. Occasionally, there was the dramatic sight and sound of a giant passenger jet out of Honolulu International, pushing for altitude on its way back to the mainland with another load of sunburned tourists. Then, there was only the surf again, and the resounding rhythmic sound of drums from a nearby, beach-front Polynesian show. When we awakened on our first morning, and heard the tropical birds in the trees below our lanai, we at first thought it was piped-in sound effects for atmosphere. It wasn’t yet

daylight as I stood on our lanai and looked down through the palm fronds. Floodlights from the hotel were shining on a beach boy busily restoring the beach to a pristine appearance by raking footprints from the sand in front of our hotel. Further up the beach the same identical process was underway. Already a lone surfer was paddling out to sea, and a battleship from Pearl Harbor was halfway to the horizon. Every morning, two large tourist catamarans beached themselves in front of the hotels, their arrival announced by a sun bronzed giant standing on the bow and blowing through a big conch shell. It was hard to take it all in. More to come.

LETTERS

Recycle art

I just read the art article in the paper (“Tourists Urged to ‘Linger Longer,’” March 14, A1). I was a tourist in 1965 who came back to Florence in later years. The first time I was 11-1/2 years old. For 40 years, my drawings were kept in a Seal-a-Meal bag in my parents’ home. I found them in awesome condition four years ago when I went to Minneapolis, Minn., to take care of my mother for two years. Now, I’m recycling them with reusable things I find on the beach and some on the roadways. I saw the signs “Keep Oregon Green,” and I’ve kept that awareness. Because of the beauty of Oregon, I still carry a photo of my mother with the lake and dunes. I have lived in Oregon since 1976 and recently moved to Florence because of my drawings and the artists here. I have great photos of the West Coast because of my uncle and my grandmother’s love of nature and the beauty of birds and fish, which my artwork is mostly of. I use paper receipts from grocery stores, restaurants and walkways where people have forgotten to pick up plastic bags, cans, bottles and cardboard from packs of soda. I have made art donations all up and down the coast — Depoe Bay, Newport, Coos Bay, Lincoln City and Florence. I have also recently donated to the Siuslaw Public Library. I’m ready to be an involved artist in the community, but I’m disabled and don’t have membership fees. We need a low-income or free program for those who don’t have the funds who are in this community. We could really use a Washed Ashore program here to keep Florence clean and to keep our Oregon green.

Catherine Beckstrom
Florence



Hidden health costs

Health-care provider companies use their local market dominance to drive up costs, and not just a little, but as much as 2,000 percent. Unfortunately for consumers, neither the patient nor the doctor is entitled to know how much a test or treatment costs until after they decide to buy it. Of the 2 million-per-year bankruptcy filings, most — 62 percent — are for medical bills, and 8 percent of those people had medical insurance. Short of bankruptcy, one in five American adults will struggle to pay medical bills this year. Around 40 percent of Americans owe collectors money for illness. Even small medical debts can ruin a person’s credit rating. Enough with secret pricing! Oregon’s legislature has two bills aiming to give consumers the information they need. Senate bills 891 and 900 would require hospitals and clinics to make bill estimates available in real time, and would require the Oregon Health Authority to publish average prices on the state’s public website. The bills would not completely fix our broken health-care system, but they would help savvy consumers. Hospitals and insurance companies are lobbying hard to stop this legislation. We need to speak out or continue to be fleeced.

Tom Payn
Florence

Repair voting rights

The march from Selma to Montgomery, Ala., in March 1965 contributed to enactment of the historic Voter Rights Act of 1965 that prohibited racial discrimination in voting. A profound setback in progress toward voter equality occurred in 2013 when the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a key enforcement provision of the voter rights act requiring some states attempting to impose limits on the right to vote, to submit them for federal pre-clearance. (Shelby County v. Holder) Subsequently a number of states have enacted legislation designed to restrict black citizens from the right to vote. It is possible to repair the damage to the voting rights act. The Voting Rights Amendment Act of 2015 (HR 855) assigned to the House Judiciary Committee on Feb. 11 would do so. The Senate could also craft its own bill to restore our ability to assure the fundamental right to vote to citizens regardless of race. President Johnson said, “It is all of us who must overcome the crippling legacy of bigotry and injustice.” It could help if each of us would urge our representatives in Congress to act to repair the damage from Shelby v. Holder. Bob and Peg Peters
Florence

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