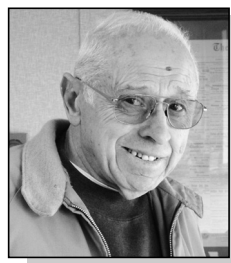


Siuslaw News
P.O. Box 10
Florence, OR 97439

Opinion



NEIGHBORS



Westlake crab feed

BOB JACKSON
 NEIGHBORHOOD CORRESPONDENT
 For the Siuslaw News

A big crab feed was dreamed up as a way to make some money to pay for the construction of the building — lumber, concrete, etc.

Unfortunately, I doubt that anyone involved in these ventures still exists to help in coming up with accurate dates and figures. However, fortunately for myself it is also doubtful there will be any challenges to what I can remember.

Many hours with no success have been spent trying to find a copy of the flyers I made up advertising the crab feeds. It may have been \$1.50 or perhaps even \$2.50 for the all-you-can-eat crab feed, which included coleslaw, potato salad, garlic bread, coffee, etc.

The Westlake men manned a crab cooker, which was set up just outside the kitchen door, also a crab cleaning station where the crabs were backed and cleaned, then delivered to the women inside the kitchen who were busy making coffee, potato salad, slaw and garlic bread, plus acting as waitresses at the long tables that were

always full of hungry customers.

It became a yearly event, popular beyond belief. Doctors and lawyers, merchants and chiefs came in droves. A dentist and a druggist might be seated alongside a choker setter just in from the woods, or a deckhand from an offshore fishing boat, or on rare occasion a tourist who may have in a rare case of serendipity just luckily stumbled onto the event. The crab feed was a great leveler of persons — an evangelical hellfire and brimstone pastor might be seen rubbing elbows and chatting with a lifelong incorrigible and openly iconoclastic town drunk.

The men outside the building were tireless, working far into the night. There were Harvey Hanson, Elmer Peterson, Glenn Puderbaugh, Bill Risenhuber, Art Roos and Bud Entgelmeir, to name just a few. Sometimes, men who had just eaten their dinner would pitch in at the back of the building and relieve the workers for a spell. Inside, there were always Zelpha Peterson, Gladys Entgelmeir, Maxine Risenhuber, Rita Hansen, Peggy Jackson and many others whom I cannot recall, including some teenage gals.

We were aided in many ways. One

year when we were running low on our supply of crabs, a miracle happened. Dave Holman, publisher of the Siuslaw News at the time, heard of our problem and offered to fly his little Piper tri-pacer down to someplace like Bandon or Gold Beach and bring back a plane load of live crabs — thus saving the day, and all just from the goodness of his heart.

One year I became the club president, and I remember with a deep sense of chagrin how in an overly zealous act I had advertised our feed on a radio program. I was probably proud of this brainstorm, but as it turned out, it was to become a disaster.

One of the club's most respected founding members was concerned that I had purchased way too many crabs and began selling jumbo crabs in the parking lot for 50 cents apiece. They were disappearing like grease on a hot skillet. The ladies in the kitchen informed me later that evening that we were about to run out of crab, and I should go out to the street and tell this to the people as they turned in.

It was a nightmarish scene that I will always remember. From where I stood in the middle of the street, I could see the headlights of the

bumper to bumper cars turning in off 101, and they were all headed for me. Would they never stop? And they were mad.

I made no attempt at adopting a suave, unctuous cover up. I had goofed up and had to grovel shamelessly, over and over again to these people who informed me that they had driven all the way from Corvallis, or Salem or Newport, and we were out of crab? It wasn't one of my best days — ever.

Eventually Dunes City was formed to thwart the national park services interest in the area. The new city needed a hall, the Sportsman's Club was unable to keep up with taxes and upkeep on the building, so it was decided to let our beloved community building become the new city hall.

I may be wrong, but I believe it had been a gift from the people of Westlake with the understanding that the club could continue to use the hall for occasional functions. However, because the years were taking their toll on Westlake's aging population, there was never to be another crab feed.

Peggy, my wife, tells me in retrospect, that despite being a lot of work, it had also been a lot of fun.

LETTERS

Voters punished

Was anyone else surprised by Lane County Commissioner Jay Bozievich's interview on TV after the defeat of his road use fee by the voters?

Instead of saying that he regretted not being able to increase the funding for the roads, he announced that they were going to punish the voters by taking away over a million dollars from the road funds.

Who does he think he represents? It certainly does not appear to be the voters and road users in Lane County.

Maybe we should look into resurrecting the "State of Jefferson" movement.

Robert Miller
 Florence

School district that cares

The Siuslaw Volleyball Club would like to thank the Siuslaw School District and the Siuslaw Middle School for once again opening up their gym for our girls to practice volleyball.

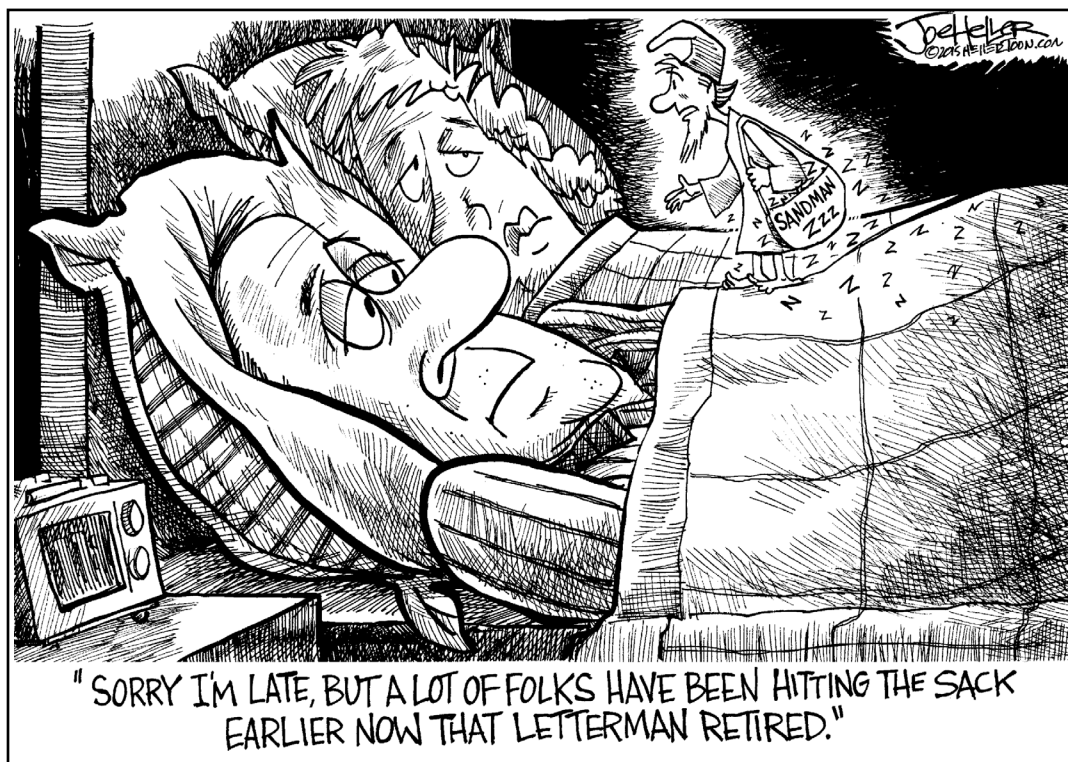
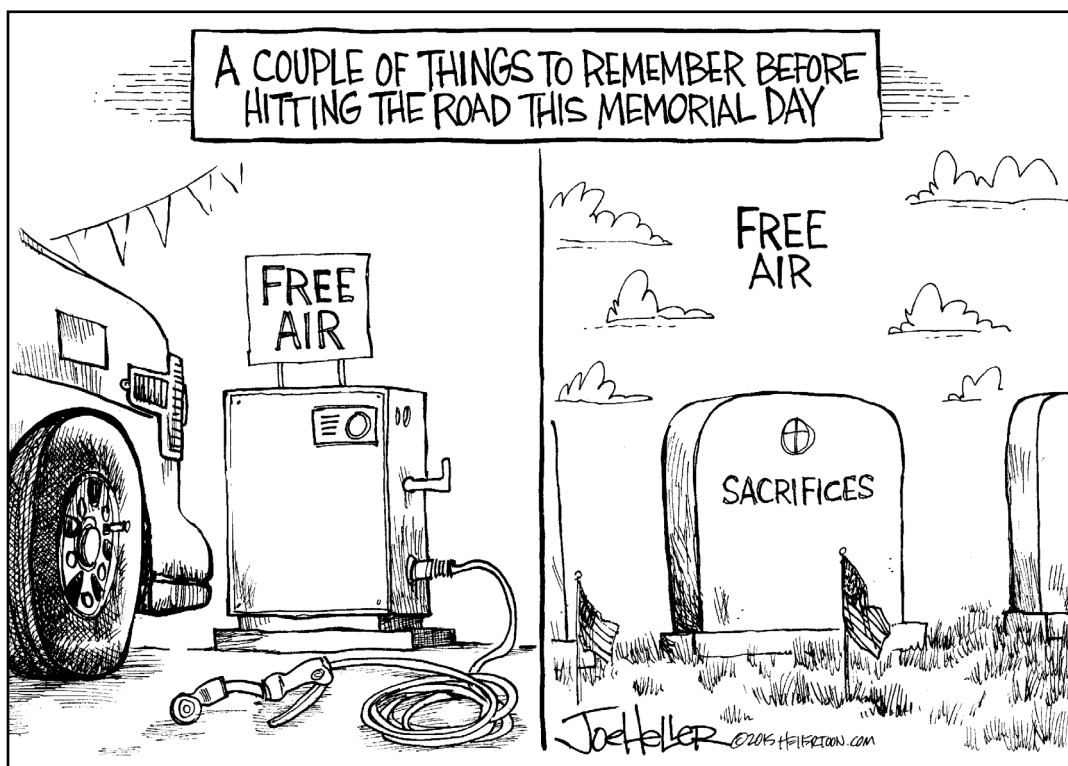
This is the 12th consecutive year that they have let us use the gym so the teams can practice for the season.

This year the club had two teams with over 25 girls, ages 9 to 14, playing. These young ladies practice two to three times per week from mid-November through April.

Through the generosity of Siuslaw School District, the club uses the middle school to practice. They played in one to two tournaments per month competing against teams from all over Oregon and Southern Washington. These tournaments are usually one-day tournaments that start at 8 a.m. and continue into the early evening. Each team plays an average of five matches per day.

These young athletes, the volunteer coaches and families have come to embrace these times, have fun and have had great success. This year the teams finished in the top half of the leagues, each taking second place in their bracket at the yearend regional tournament.

All this would not have been possible if it was not for the school district and the middle school letting us use the gym. We would especially like to thank Principal Andy Grzeskowiak



for allowing us to use the gym, Vonnie McClellan and Jessica Rowbotham for helping coordinate the use and the wonderful team from the facilities department that let us in.

We live in a great community with a caring school district.

Michael G. Rose
 Club Director
 Siuslaw Volleyball Club

Saving Palmyra

So ISIS now has control of the historic ancient city of Palmyra in Syria. Where is the moderate Syrian opposition when we need it?

To paraphrase what FDR once said about the dictator Somoza in Nicaragua, Assad may be a sociopathic mass murderer, but he's our sociopathic mass murderer.

We should have danced with the one who brought us.

Rob Spooner
 Florence

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The Siuslaw News welcomes letters to the editor concerning issues affecting the Florence area and Lane County.

Emailed letters are preferred. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed. All letters should be limited to about 300 words and must include the writer's full name, address and phone number for verification.

Letters are subject to editing for length, grammar and clarity. Publication of any letter is not guaranteed and depends on space available and the volume of letters received.

Libelous and anonymous letters and poetry will not be published.

All submissions become the property of Siuslaw News and will not be returned.

Write to:
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