

Siuslaw News
 P.O. Box 10
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Opinion

DISASTER PREP

BY DAVE ROBINSON
 Special to the Siuslaw News

5 essential items

Disaster preparedness doesn't have to be expensive. Many of the things we need can be incorporated into our weekly shopping routine without breaking the bank. Food supplies can be slowly increased without shredding your budget, and if you're watching carefully, other things can be gradually added as well.

There are, however, at least five items that you should have that aren't cheap, but necessary to survive a disaster.

1. A means to cook your food when the power goes out. Cooked food is more nutritious, a morale booster and just plain better to eat than cold food. If you don't own a camping stove, get one. A new Coleman (or similar brand) starts out somewhere in the neighborhood of \$50. There are more expensive, fancier models on the market, but if you just need a basic, heat-your-food stove, that will do the trick.

I picked up a near-new condition Coleman, propane stove at a citywide garage sale sometime back for \$15. Still in the box. Of course, there are solar ovens, rocket stoves and all manner of food-cooking devices, but the point remains: Get one!

2. Have the capability to purify your drinking water. If you live out in the country and normally get your water from a well or spring, this may not pertain to you. Either your water has been tested and meets health criteria or you already have a self-contained means for purification.

Although I live a ways out of town, my water comes from a municipal water source and is filtered and chlorinated by the city. If for some reason the city ever loses that capability, then many of us are on our own. If water still comes out of the tap, it may not be purified. I recommend a stand-alone filter such as the "Big Berkey" or a variation. These filters require no electricity and the impure water is simply poured in the top half, the water trickles down through a filtration sys-

tem into the lower half of the unit. The ceramic filters take out the smallest particles (down to .02 microns) of anything that will make a person ill.

Boiling and bleaching are also recommended method of purification. Boiling is the safest method, but filtering the water through a stack of coffee filters, or some cheesecloth, then adding a 1/8 teaspoon of chlorine bleach (unscented) to a gallon of water is an accepted method of purification.

I also recommend storing water, but it is impractical to think you can store enough water to get you through a prolonged period of time. Still, a stack of cases of bottled water in your back bedroom is good insurance and brings some peace of mind. Just remember to rotate your supply every few months.

3. Battery-powered radio. Keep in mind the three basic rules of disaster preparedness are: get a kit, make a plan and be informed. Keeping informed is made possible with a battery powered radio. There are some pretty cool radios on the market.

Some have built-in solar panels, hand cranks and also run off standard batteries. Most models have AM/FM bands and several channels capable of picking up the NOAA weather alerts. Cost will be in the \$50 range for a good quality radio.

4. A backup light source. Everybody knows about Coleman lanterns. (There are also other brands, but Coleman is the most popular.) They are propane (or liquid fuel) powered and put out not only a very bright light, but a significant amount of heat as well. The drawback is anything that puts out light requires either fuel or batteries. So be sure to include fuel or batteries in your plan.

Battery-powered devices come in either the rechargeable type or regular version. Either way, when the power goes out, it's pretty handy to be able to lay hands on a flashlight or lantern within minutes of the failure.

Another suggestion is to pick up a few of

those little flashlights you see at most check-out counters. Keep them together in a dresser drawer, and during a power failure, give one to each family member. That way if they need to leave the room, they don't have to take the primary light source with them.

A word on candles: I'm a big fan of candles, but they are an open flame so use appropriate caution. If you have propane or natural gas, don't be too hasty to light a candle. In an earthquake, those fuel lines can rupture, and if you strike a match, it could have disastrous consequences. Next trip to the store, pick up something that makes light, as well as batteries in a variety of sizes.

5. Cash. With widespread power outages comes widespread inconvenience. That debit card you carry in your wallet is worthless. Same with the money stored in your savings or checking account. When the power is off, ATMs aren't going to be working. Neither are credit card processing machines.

One day last week, I visited a local bank, or should I say I tried to visit. The doors were locked. A helpful employee directed me to the drive-through (I was on foot). It seems someone somewhere had inadvertently snipped a fiber-optic cable and their computers were all down. I was still able to transact my business, but if there is no electricity, you'll need some cold cash. How much you keep on hand is up to you and your budget. I recommend making it small bills and keeping it in a secure location.

There are many other items you will want to add to this list, but these are the starters. Get these on the shelf and you're on your way to being prepared for a disaster.

Dave Robinson is the postmaster in Bandon, Ore., and author of "Disaster Prep for the Rest of Us." He may be contacted at disasterprep.dave@gmail.com. Visit his website for more disaster preparedness tips, www.disasterprepdave.blogspot.com.

YESTERDAY'S NEWS

MOMENTS IN TIME The History Channel

- On Aug. 28, 1877, Charles Stewart Rolls, co-founder (with Henry Royce) of the Rolls-Royce automobile company, is born in London. In 1900, Rolls reportedly was responsible for changing the national speed limit from 4 mph to 12 mph.

- On Aug. 30, 1918, in Belfort, France, Colonel Arthur L. Conger plants a false operational order for an impending Allied attack in the wastebasket of a hotel where a German agent was on staff. As intended, the order was found and the Germans chose to withdraw from the area.

- On Aug. 26, 1939, the first televised Major League baseball game is broadcast between the Cincinnati Reds and the Brooklyn Dodgers at Ebbets Field. There were only two stationary camera angles: down the third base line, and above home plate.

- On Aug. 29, 1949, in Kazakhstan, the USSR successfully detonates its first atomic bomb. To measure the effects of the blast, the Soviets constructed buildings and bridges, and placed animals in cages nearby. The atomic explosion destroyed those structures and incinerated the animals.

- On Aug. 24, 1958, Maria Teresa de Filippis, the first woman ever to compete in Formula One racing, drives a Maserati in the Portuguese Grand Prix. Her racing career began after two of her brothers made a bet that she couldn't drive fast.

- On Aug. 27, 1967, Brian Epstein, age 32, manager of the Beatles, is found dead of a drug overdose in his Sussex, England, home.

- On Aug. 25, 1984, Truman Capote, author of the pioneering true-crime novel "In Cold Blood", dies at age 59 in Los Angeles. After reading about murders of a farm family, Capote traveled to Kansas to do research with his childhood friend, Harper Lee, who later wrote "To Kill a Mockingbird."

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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.

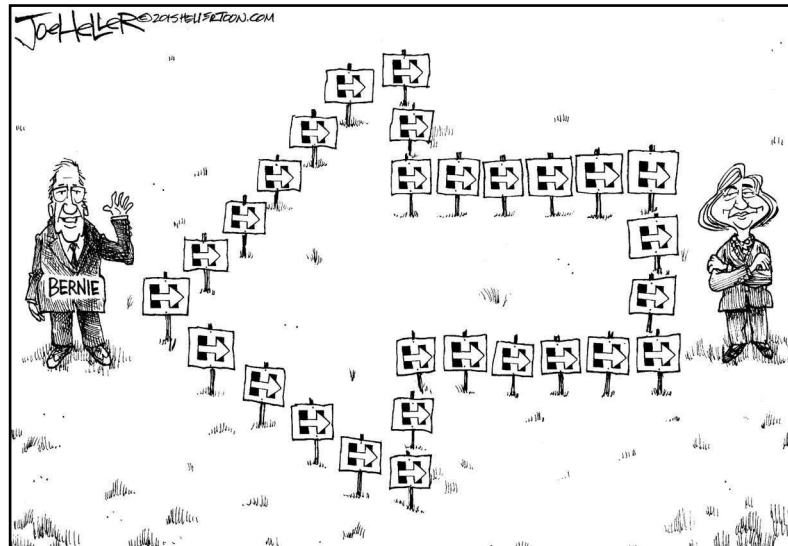
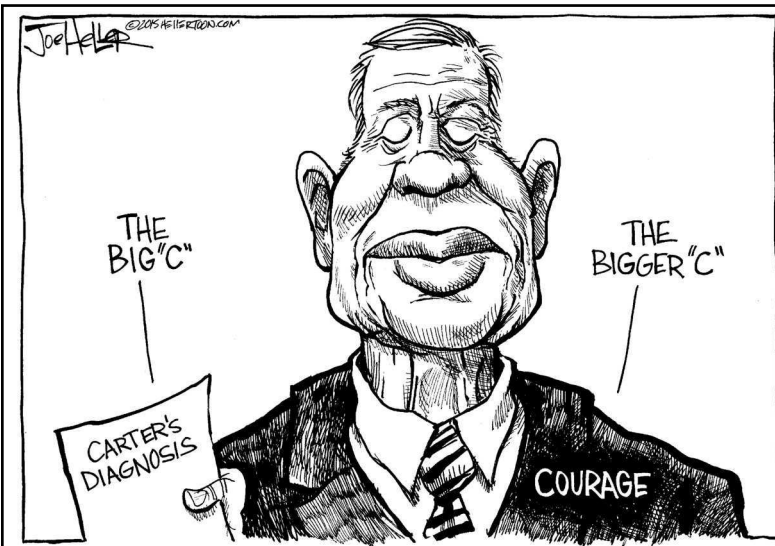
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Libelous and anonymous letters as well as poetry will not be published.

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

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LETTERS

Deport Trump

As inconceivable as it seems, if Donald Trump were to become the next U.S. President, the first person he should deport is himself. If that didn't happen, he wouldn't need to worry about immigration because many of us would voluntarily deport ourselves.

Julie M. MacFarlane
 Florence

House that jazz built

In its 15 years the Florence chapter of Habitat for Humanity has built 26 houses supported by

generous donations of money, time and talent.

The Habitat benefit concert on Aug. 16 was sponsored and hosted by exceptional musician Robin DeVour and featured his brand new delightful Pacific Jazz Septet.

When it comes to the psychology of music, DeVour, a retired psychologist, is an encyclopedia of arcane information he loves to share.

Before the millennium, DeVour played piano at Lovejoy's restaurant located in the Pier Point Inn Best Western. He produced a gorgeous CD titled "Love Songs and All That Jazz," with standards like "The

Nearness of You" and "Here's That Rainy Day."

DeVour created Coastal Steamer, a jazz combo that played Florence and Eugene, and in the classical genre, the Oregon Coast Chamber Orchestra, still a vibrant ensemble.

DeVour and the Pacific Jazz Septet devoured the stage in the FEC concert hall with the swinging sounds of composers like Jimmy VanHeusen, Thelonious Monk, Hoagy Carmichael, Luis Bonfa, Irving Berlin and DeVour himself.

"Jett Black and Blue" is a lively blues tune written for Jetter, one of his guide dogs and perhaps the only canine honored with a

community wake. In addition to DeVour, seasoned septet musicians are: Chris Rowbotham, trumpet; Lou Invernon, saxophone; Virgil Walkely, trombone; Ed Petry, guitar; BSRK, acoustic bass; Mike Swain, drums; and Denise Dee, vocals.

Florence Habitat's annual BeachWalk is set for Saturday, Sept. 12, from 9 a.m. to 1p.m., from the North Jetty to Driftwood Shores, where the Pacific Jazz Septet will swing with the tides and the sands of time.

Everyone is invited to join the fun, hike the beach, and help build more houses with jazz.

Burney Garelick
 Florence

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Siuslaw News

Published every Wednesday and Saturday at 148 Maple St. in Florence, Lane County, Oregon. A member of the National Newspaper Association and Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association. Periodicals postage paid at Florence, Ore. Postmaster, send address changes to: Siuslaw News, P.O. Box 10, Florence, OR 97439; phone 541-997-3441; fax 541-997-7979. All press releases may be sent to PressReleases@TheSiuslawNews.com.

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 Saturday Issue—General news, Thursday noon; Budgets, two days prior to publication; Regular classified ads, Thursday 1 p.m.; Display ads, Thursday noon; Boxed and display classified ads, Wednesday 5 p.m. Soundings, Tuesday 5 p.m.

NEWSPAPER SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

In Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$71; 10-weeks subscription, \$18; Out of Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$94; 10-weeks subscription, \$24; Out of State — 1-year subscription, \$120; Out of United States — 1-year subscription, \$200; E-Edition Online Only (Anywhere) — 1-year subscription, \$65.

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