

Siuslaw News
P.O. Box 10
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Opinion

VIEW FROM UPRIVER



Joint tenancy

WESLEY VOTH
 For the Siuslaw News

“This land is your land, this land is my land” — the thought-provoking words of Woody Guthrie, who knew this country better than most of the rest of us ever will. In addition to land we jointly own and manage as citizens of the United States, or of the state of Oregon, there is the 4,623 acres we own and/or manage in the form of parks as Lane County residents. Common space for our own use, and also for the purpose of attracting visitors and the economic and other benefits they bring.

The folks we have hired to oversee these parks would like our feedback on their draft of a 20-year master plan for the 70 parks’ upkeep and development. Copies of the draft can be found at the Siuslaw Library and the Mapleton Branch in the form of a notebook. I have been through the whole thing, and it is fascinating. Each park has its own page and you can see what is planned, and not planned, for each one. Maps at the end of the notebook are especially revealing, showing where the parks are and their contexts.

There is a lot of discussion of how our parks are funded and the challenges that lie

ahead, and I learned a lot of other things as well. A graph on page 115 shows the very low amount of money we spend on our county parks in every category compared to other counties nationwide. And there is a very telling number: the average number of park acres per full-time equivalent parks employee is 312; the national average is 60. One way of stating that is: our employees are stretched five times thinner.

I was happy to see Archie Knowles Campground included, and the ambitious plans there. The parks are listed alphabetically, so this one is at the beginning with Ada and Austa, two other western Lane parks. I was also glad to see that a restroom is eventually planned for Tiernan Boat Landing. But the state of many of the county parks in our area (Deadwood Landing, Farnum Landing, Tide Wayside, Linslaw, Schindler’s Landing, Tiernan and Mapleton Landing) — especially right now as the salmon season and boating really gets underway — is terrible, without much change envisioned. Others, like the wayside at Triangle Lake or the Rock Dock (the crabbing dock near the South Jetty) were better the last times I was there.

A Mapleton resident forwarded me a copy of an email exchange with county personnel over the current state of the Mapleton Landing boat ramp there by the gas station, and it did not look like anything is about to change soon. It is the public ramp furthest up the tidal sec-

tion of river. She said that there is a log obstructing part of the ramp when the tide is lower, and too much mud to be able to effectively use it except at the highest tides.

For us in Mapleton it means we don’t have a place here to launch our boats, and just at the beginning of the time when salmon and blueback move into our part of the river. For people coming from elsewhere, they now have no reason to spend any time (or money) here. Maybe more Mapleton or other interested voices need to be raised.

I was also surprised to learn of some other Lane County park acreage in our area: Linslaw is actually much bigger than it appears — 27 acres and both sides of the highway — with its own timber management plan; 300-acre South Beach is the strip along the river by the South Jetty; there is no public access to 156-acre Clear Lake Dunes; and Ocean Woods is 40 acres the county wants to sell at the end of Heceta Park Way.

By the end of reading this draft, which shows a lot of thought and work, I am happy to continue to buy an annual park pass; as it turns out, this is surprisingly a significant portion of what can be counted on as a funding source. I find that by carrying that pass with me rather than keeping it in just one of our vehicles, I have it whenever I want to stop in at one of these fee areas, making me both more likely to stop and less irritated that something that used to be free no longer is.

The report also can be viewed online, and the first of the open meetings will be on Thursday, Sept. 10, from 6 to 8 p.m., in the council chambers at Florence City Hall, 250 Highway 101.

YESTERDAY’S NEWS

MOMENTS IN TIME The History Channel

- On Sept. 6, 1522, the Vittoria, one of Ferdinand Magellan’s five ships, arrives in Spain, thus completing the first circumnavigation of the world. The Vittoria was commanded by Juan Sebastian de Elcano, who took charge after the murder of Magellan in the Philippines.
- On Sept. 2, 1666, the Great Fire of London breaks out in the house of King Charles II’s baker. When the fire was finally extinguished four days later, more than four-fifths of London was destroyed.
- On Sept. 4, 1886, Geronimo, the wildest and most dangerous Apache warrior of his time, finally surrenders in Arizona. A brilliant strategist, Geronimo never learned to use a gun, yet he armed his men with the best modern rifles he could obtain.
- On Aug. 31, 1955, William G. Cobb of the General Motors Corp. demonstrates his 15-inch-long “Sunmobile,” the world’s first solar-powered automobile. When sunlight hit 12 photoelectric cells made of selenium, an electric current was produced that powered a tiny motor.
- On Sept. 5, 1969, Lt. William Calley is charged with six specifications of premeditated murder in the death of 109 Vietnamese civilians at My Lai in March 1968. Reportedly, the massacre was stopped only when a pilot landed his helicopter between Calley’s troops and the fleeing South Vietnamese.
- On Sept. 3, 1977, Sadaharu Oh of Japan’s Yomiuri Giants hits the 756th home run of his career, breaking Hank Aaron’s record for career home runs. Oh retired in 1980 with 868 home runs, still a professional record.
- On Sept. 1, 1985, a joint U.S.-French expedition locates the wreck of the RMS Titanic, 73 years after it sank after being struck by an iceberg in the North Atlantic. An experimental, unmanned submersible found the ocean liner at a depth of 13,000 feet.

LETTERS

Feed the hungry

Tonight in Oregon over 12,000 people will be homeless. Many tens of thousands more will be hungry. We see them every day when we stand in line with them at the grocery stores. Or, they linger outside, because they don’t have the money to go inside and buy what their bodies crave.

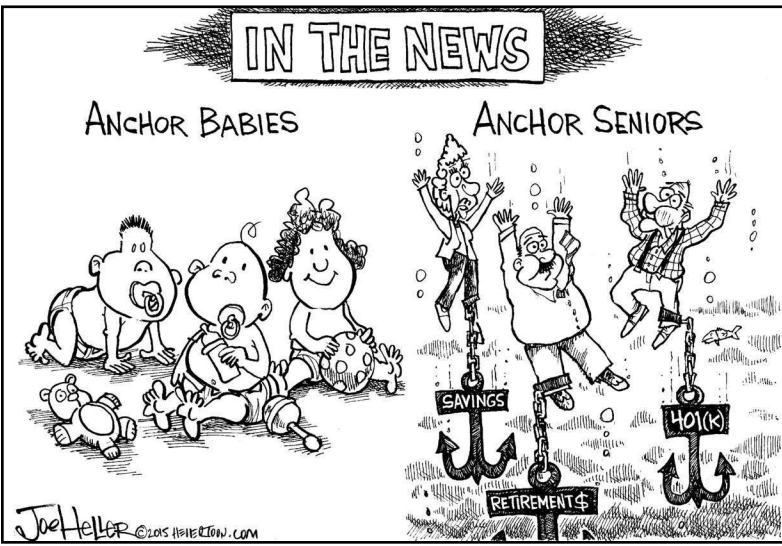
Food. Calories. Yes, sometimes booze and cigarettes are craved for, too. Alcohol and nicotine are more powerful than sugar in many ways, creating real cravings for real substances. But food is necessary.

Being hungry is a problem. It’s a problem for all of us. Not because their hunger belongs to us tonight. It is a problem because their desperate need for food can lead to desperate actions. To survive, they will get what they need, and that may involve a police report you will be reading about on another page of this newspaper.

“Well, then, lock them up!” Then, they’ll get food. And that night in jail will cost us all so much more than what I am suggesting to you now.

Go get all the canned foods in your home and donate them to a local food exchange or pantry that serves the hungry and homeless in western Lane County. Visit and see for yourself what they do there.

They provide more than needed calories to single moms, wandering souls and broken families. They provide a kind of love and sharing that says to every one served: have some faith; you can get through this; you can be



restored to safety and security; you are cared for by this community.

Who, then, is the greater sinner? The one who hungers because of a broken life made from the cruelty and abandonment of others or their own bad decisions, or the one who can read this and say, “It’s not my problem. I don’t care!”

Bill Olson
 Florence

Affordable bus service

I would like to urge the City of Florence and Lane Transit District to work together to facilitate affordable bus service between the Eugene area and Florence.

I am unable to drive due to a disability, and having a bus to Florence would allow me to visit the coast, shop and dine in Old Town and other locations. I believe that this service has been needed for some time, and I am

quite sure I am not alone in this belief.

Having bus service a couple times a day to and from Florence would not only help folks like me get over there, but I’m sure many residents of Florence would like to be able to visit Eugene once in a while as well. A one-year pilot project would gauge the popularity and use of this service. My guess is that it will be wildly popular and very well utilized.

The current service provided by TAC Transportation costs \$25 one way, or \$50 for a round trip, which is not affordable to many. And, the schedule only allows for less than two hours in Florence on a day trip.

I believe that the City of Florence would benefit greatly from having frequent and direct service from Eugene that is convenient and affordable to bring more folks over from the valley for recreation, shopping, dining, lodging and camping.

Additionally, I believe a lot of folks from Florence would use

the service to access the Eugene area. A side benefit would be a reduction of traffic on Highway 126 between Eugene and Florence.

Paul Blaylock
 Eugene

Restore sanity

The political media seems to be all about Donald Trump. Should we be afraid of this man or should we assume that someday soon the hot air will all escape from the balloon and we can get on with a sane election? I for one am afraid.

Do we not remember the rounding up of all the Japanese into concentration camps? Do we not remember a man by the name of Adolf Hitler who profited by making the Jews what was wrong with Germany? We dismiss Trump as assuming he can do impossible things. This is America and it couldn’t happen here. Well, it could because nations dismissed Hitler and history shows us the result.

I pray to God that Trump is not elected as the Republican nominee or, even worse, president. This man is what is wrong right now and people are praising him and encouraging him to get rid of the illegals. This is not rational, this is mob thinking.

Who then is next? What then is the next step?

I cannot stop Trump, but I sure am not going to vote for him, and I do pray that a Higher Power will somehow restore sanity to our nation.

Don Frerichs
 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 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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WHERE TO WRITE

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