

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

# Opinion

## DISASTER PREP

BY DAVE ROBINSON  
 Special to the Siuslaw News

## Generators

The best thing about generators is they give us the ability to function with some normalcy when the electricity fails. Generator owners exude a certain smugness knowing they can still function, to a degree, when all others have just been relegated to the stone age. The generator owners I know don't realize they're being smug, nor do they purposely conduct themselves with an air of superiority, but it's there. Trust me.

If you have been considering joining this exclusive club of generator owners, first ask yourself some questions. What do I plan to do with it? Am I going to just power up my travel trailer when I'm camping or do I intend to provide electricity for my home when the power goes out?

The power company does an amazing job of keeping the electricity flowing, especially during our winter wind and rain storms. How those lines stay attached to their poles and keep the juice running is a marvel of engineering. But we all know there are still times when things happen and service is interrupted. Sometimes things get fixed right away and sometimes it's days before the lights come back on.

It's those times when it takes more than a day or so that you need a generator. You may need to pump water out of your well, keep your refrigerator and freezer cold, or

in some cases open your garage door. Here are some things to keep in mind. Unless you're in the position to spend upwards of \$15,000 for a permanently mounted unit, don't plan to energize your whole house. A smaller, portable unit of 3,500-watt capacity will handle your fridge, freezer, a few lights and your TV. The going cost for a unit like that will be in the \$500 range. The bigger the wattage output, the more the unit will handle. Like everything else, you get what you pay for. Avoid the \$99 2-cycle unit. It will probably do more damage (like to your computer or to your flat-screen TV) than it does good. A high quality surge suppressor is a really good bit of insurance for your delicate electronics.

There are some nice features offered on today's units. Electric start will save your back, muscle strain and a whole lot of physical energy. Some generators are designed to run on two different fuels. The ones I've seen will use either gasoline or propane. Very handy since propane will store longer than gasoline. Some are diesel powered and yet some will run off natural gas. The natural gas version must be plumbed into the natural gas supply, which could become interrupted during an earthquake or other disaster.

And finally, the wheel kit. The wheel was invented to avoid all the lugging and dragging when it comes to putting your genera-

tor in its place. Get wheels. The main drawback with generators: they require fuel. Don't plan on using your generator as a long-term solution. Even running the unit only a few hours a day for more than a week, you would need to store more stabilized fuel than most budgets allow. Not to mention the inherent dangers of storing gasoline. Speaking of gasoline, today's ethanol-infused product presents its own problem. Ethanol naturally attracts water, thus dramatically shortening the storage life of gasoline. A generator sitting idle for months on end will almost surely fail to start because of bad gasoline. The solution is to purchase non-ethanol gas (at a much higher price) or using a product such as Sta-Bil to keep fuel fresh for 12 months or longer.

A very good resource for information is the Generator Buyer's Guide at Northern Tool and Equipment's website. They've got answers for your generator questions. They also offer a huge inventory of brand-name generators.

*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 Feb. 22, 1732, George Washington is born in Westmoreland County, Virginia, the second son of a plantation owner. Initially a loyal British subject, Washington eventually led the Continental Army in the American Revolution and became known as the father of the United States.

- On Feb. 27, 1827, a group of masked and costumed students dance through the streets of New Orleans, marking the beginning of the city's Mardi Gras celebrations. Though early French settlers had brought the tradition of Mardi Gras, Spanish governors later banned the celebrations.

- On Feb. 25, 1870, Hiram Rhoades Revels, a Republican from Natchez, Mississippi, is sworn into the U.S. Senate, becoming the first black American ever to sit in Congress. During the Civil War, Revels, a college-educated minister, served as a chaplain for the Union army.

- On Feb. 26, 1935, Nazi leader Adolf Hitler signs a secret decree authorizing the founding of the Reich Luftwaffe as a third German military service. The Versailles Treaty that ended World War I had prohibited military aviation in Germany.

- On Feb. 23, 1958, five-time Formula One champion Juan Manuel Fangio of Argentina is kidnapped in Cuba by a group of Fidel Castro's rebels. Fangio was released the next day after the Cuba Grand Prix ended.

- On Feb. 28, 1964, Thelonious Monk makes the cover of Time magazine. Beatlemania was at its peak, but contemporary jazz music had captured the imagination of a significant number of American music fans.

- On Feb. 24, 1988, the U.S. Supreme Court votes 8-0 to overturn the \$200,000 settlement awarded to the Reverend Jerry Falwell for his emotional distress at being parodied in Hustler magazine. The court ruled that Hustler's parody, although in poor taste, fell within the First Amendment's protection of freedom of speech and the press.

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## LETTERS

### A very happy birthday

My 100th birthday celebration was a huge success thanks to the more than 100 people who joined me Saturday afternoon, Feb. 13, at the Florence Senior Center.

I appreciate each and every one of the people who attended and brought hugs, well-wishes, cards and gifts.

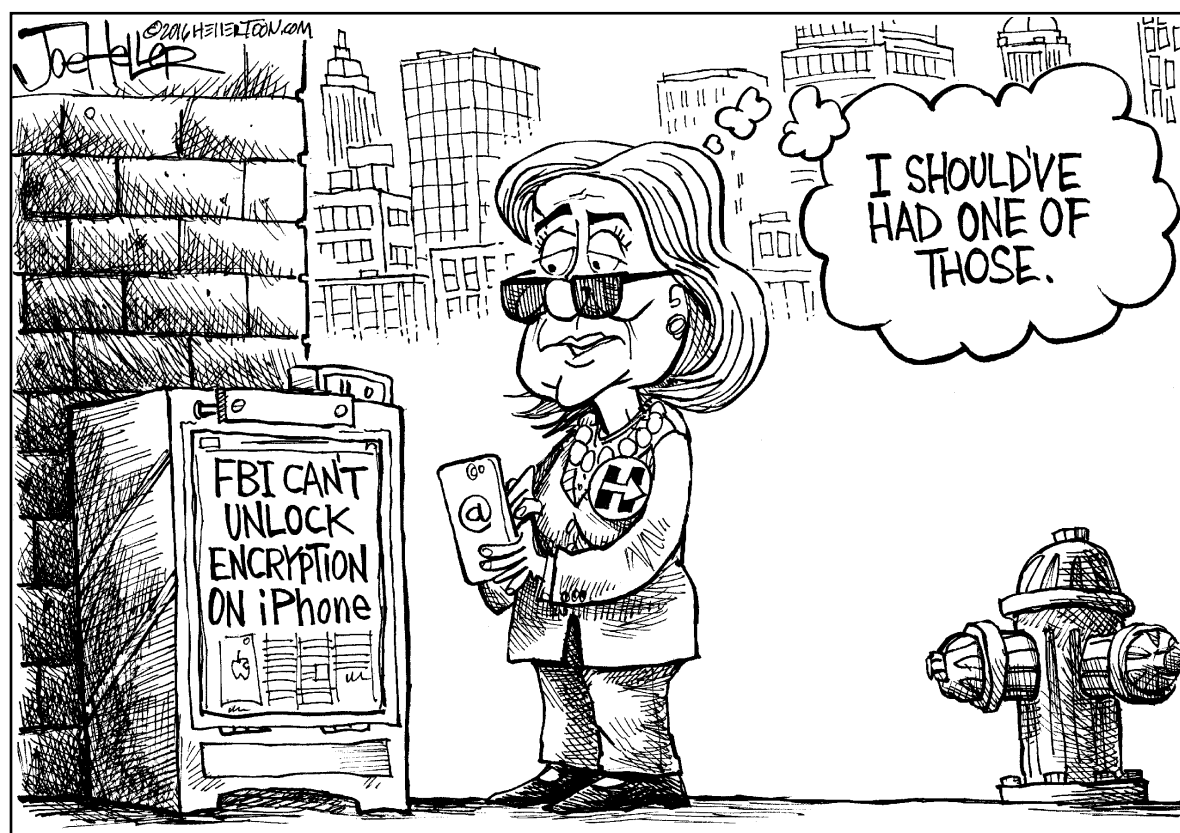
You all made my day!  
 Harold Nusbaum  
 Florence

### Fewer entry-level jobs in Oregon

It is said socialism is like drug addiction; the person will continue increasing the consumption of poison until either dying of it or running out of money/crime. Many feel the quickest and least painful method for a society to get past this condition is by encouraging its destructive addictions.

I applaud Oregon's latest to further destroy entry-level jobs and increase the need for welfare. By restricting the peoples' right to contract, the cost of living will increase, the quality of life will decrease and more creative ways will be forced on businesses to reduce the workforce.

The typical response to stay competitive in business is to: not start, quit, not expand, reduce, out-source, relocate, employ machines, and/or do without. Example of the last is when businesses convert green landscaping to rock lawns eliminating yardmen. Home size is now shrinking since labor costs for every 1,000 square feet is increasing through social engineering like minimum wages.



To pay someone \$15 an hour, businesses must pay \$5 to \$10 extra in taxes, insurances, compliances and so on. It is hard to justify hiring someone without useful skills or providing basic manual labor for \$20 to \$25.

Labor is a pyramid; very skilled and in-demand few at the top and many unskilled or without useful skills forming the wide base. Each increase in labor costs raises the hireable line across the bottom. Those below are excluded from work and any means of self-support, becoming society's expanding welfare and/or homeless population.

What is the sense of forcing a "living wage" figure if it results in more people becoming too expensive to hire?

Keith Stanton  
 Florence

### New political rules

New rules that Bill Maher has my permission to utilize:

TV political campaign reporters must not use the word "resonate" more than three times in one report.

Fox News must not be allowed to polygraph its political commentators. Doing so would break its budget. At any time it would need at least 100 spare machines. Each week Sean Hannity would blow up half of them.

Chris Matthews needs to stop having man-crushes. First, it was George W. Bush in 2003: "He's like Eisenhower. He looks great in a military uniform. He looks great in that cowboy costume he wears when he goes West." Then there was GOP primaries presidential candidate Fred Thompson in 2007:

"Can you smell the English leather on this guy, the Aqua Velva, the sort of mature man's shaving cream ... after he shaved?"

Barack Obama's speech-making inspired Chris to say, "My, I felt this thrill going up my leg." Now, Chris is pals with John Kasich.

If Hillary Clinton wants to have Democrats and Independents believe that she is a truthful person, she needs to stop her GOP-style, fact-exaggerated smears of Bernie Sanders, who wants a single-payer medical insurance system.

"We had enough of a fight to get to the Affordable Care Act. So I don't want to rip it up and start over." You don't have to cancel the ACA, Hillary, before you set about trying to legislate single payer.

Harold Titus  
 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.

Write to:  
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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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