

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

# Opinion

## DISASTER PREP

By DAVE ROBINSON  
 Special to the Siuslaw News

## C.O.O.P.

Everybody likes to poke fun at the government, especially the post office. I have worked for the Postal Service for over 30 years and have heard all the horror stories, complaints and “suggestions.” And yes, I admit, we do make mistakes, but we also do lots of things right. One of the things we do well in keeping the mail moving when nothing else seems to be.

When Hurricane Katrina simply wiped some post offices off their foundations and filled others with water and debris, the Postal Service was one of the very first agencies to respond quickly and get the mail moving in areas where other government services were paralyzed for days, and in some cases, weeks.

Each year every postmaster is required to complete a Continuation Of Operations Plan (C.O.O.P.). This plan lists the personnel who are capable of providing leadership in an emergency, establishes an alternate post office in the area if your local office is somehow rendered unusable and forges a

plan to keep the mail flowing as much as possible.

For those of us on the south coast of Oregon, keeping the mail moving to and from the region will depend on the bridges remaining in service and the roads being open, which in the event of an earthquake may or may not be realistic. The experts tell us a major quake will isolate us for several weeks due to closed roads and bridges. That will affect the trucks, which transport our mail as well. Limited mail service could possibly be handled by airplane or helicopter until the roads are again made passable.

While I’m on the topic, your grocer’s trucks won’t be able to get through either. Experience in other areas has taught us that grocery store shelves empty out within hours of a major event. I’m not here to scare you, but you really do need to be putting aside some groceries.

For those who receive medication by mail, this is another matter to consider. Connecting with your doctor to arrange an extra supply of needed prescriptions would

be something you may want to discuss on your next visit.

Back to C.O.O.P., if you own a business, do you have a plan to continue operations without power? If an event happens during mid-workday and your employees can’t get home, is your workplace set up to provide for their needs until they can get home? I realize this is taking the conversation to a higher level, but if you’re serious about being ready, these are questions you need to ask yourself. This would be a good topic of discussion for your next staff meeting.

Asking, and finding answers for, the hard questions now will lessen some of the hard decisions you may have to make when the time comes.

*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 July 14, 1881, Sheriff Pat Garrett shoots Henry McCarty, known as Billy the Kid, to death at the Maxwell Ranch in New Mexico. Garrett had been tracking the Kid for three months after the gunslinger escaped from prison only days before his scheduled execution.

- On July 15, 1903, the newly formed Ford Motor Company takes its first order: an \$850 two-cylinder Model A automobile with a back-seat. The car was delivered a week later. The Model A could accommodate two people side-by-side on a bench; it had no top, and was painted red.

- On July 12, 1933, the first three-wheeled, multi-directional Dymaxion car designed by Buckminster Fuller is manufactured in Connecticut. It had a steel chassis and a body made of ash wood, covered with an aluminum skin and topped with a painted canvas roof.

- On July 11, 1945, the Soviet Union promises to hand over power to British and U.S. forces in West Berlin. Although the division of Berlin into zones of occupation was seen as temporary, the dividing lines quickly became permanent.

- On July 13, 1955, nightclub owner Ruth Ellis is convicted of murdering her boyfriend, playboy race-car driver David Blakely. Ellis was later executed by hanging, becoming the last woman in Great Britain to be put to death.

- On July 17, 1967, Jimi Hendrix drops out as the opening act for teenybopper sensations The Monkees. The booking of psychedelic rock god with the made-for-television Monkees was the brainchild of Hendrix’s manager, Mike Jeffery.

- On July 16, 1995, Amazon officially opens for business as an online bookseller. Within a month, the fledgling retailer had shipped books to all 50 states and 45 countries. Amazon eventually morphed into an e-commerce colossus, selling everything from groceries and furniture to live ladybugs.

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## LETTERS

### Spectacular show

Wings and Wheels: Wow, what a great event! We really enjoyed this biggest and best show ever. Besides the outstanding collection of collector cars, we had 28 out-of-town aircraft fly in to visit the event, including the West Coast Ravens Formation Flying Team.

Many local Florence pilots also took to the air. Sam Spayd’s Aero Legends provided bi-plane rides and Apex Helicopter provided scenic flights as well.

A real treat was the Erickson Aircraft Collection North American P-51D Mustang Fighter that took to the skies to demonstrate outstanding aerodynamics, power and maneuverability; the reason this aircraft was so successful in World War II U.S. Air Force operations.

Besides live music and dancing, there were great displays by the Florence RC Model Aircraft Association, British Car Club, Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue, Florence Police Department, Western Lane Ambulance, the Military Vehicle Club, the Oregon Coast Military Museum and Reach Helicopter Air Medical Transport.

Special thanks to the City of Florence for sponsoring this event at our Florence Municipal Airport and to the Florence-Siuslaw Lions Club, which organized the event.

Events like this give us an opportunity to see beautiful cars and airplanes and to also learn about many of the great assets that serve our community.

Larry and Crystal Farnsworth  
 Florence

### Defunding SHIP

Faced with the decline of good-paying middle class jobs, politicians call for retraining programs to enable workers whose skills have been outpaced to find a place in the new, global economy.

At the same time, the baby boomer generation, at the rate of 10,000 a day, is faced with the challenge of finding the Medicare options best suited for them. They have been able to look to SHIPs, the federally funded State Health Insurance Assistance Programs, (in Oregon, the Senior Health Insurance Benefits Assistance Program), for retraining in how to navigate their new healthcare world.

SHIP is the only source of free, unbiased, one-on-one Medicare coverage and benefits counseling. Nationwide, SHIPs last year, in effect, “retrained” 7 million Americans.



The medical insurance provided by Medicare would be beyond the reach of many if left to the private insurance market. To many, Medicare is often a Rubic’s Cube of options, regulations and instructions that are beyond the grasp of many seniors.

SHIP state-based offices are staffed mostly with volunteers trained to offer free advice about subsidies for premium costs, deductibles, co-pays and about how to choose among drug and coverage plans, how Medicare coordinates with other insurance and how to appeal benefit denials.

They do this through confidential in-person or telephone counseling, developing and distributing written materials and conducting group seminars and presentations.

And it works. For example, Ohio’s SHIP program received \$1.84 million in federal funding in 2015 and saved Ohio seniors \$20.8 million; \$11 saved by seniors for every federal \$1 spent. California’s SHIP program helping 1,247 beneficiaries in Orange County alone saved an estimated \$1.17 million last year when SHIP counselors showed them, among other things, how to switch to drug plans that covered their medications. An average savings of \$935 per senior.

For those with no friend or family able to help, the challenge can be daunting. Yet, the cost-cutting Senate Appropriations Committee, deeming SHIP to be an “unnecessary federal program,” sent to the full Senate a proposed budget bill eliminating SHIP’s entire

\$52 million funding.

Guesstimating from the Ohio and California experience, last year SHIP probably saved seniors upwards of \$1 billion. It’s time to tell Sens. Wyden and Merkley to reject this penny-wise, pound-foolish decision and continue the SHIP program for “retraining” seniors to cope with their new Medicare world.

Arnold Buchman  
 Florence

### Wonderful weekend

I sit here in total amazement. This has been a wonderful weekend. An air and car show second to none.

I’ll bet I told my wife 20 times that “that car was the love of my life.”

The P-51 in the paint of one of the greatest flying squadrons in history, which I have never had the opportunity nor now the ability to fly.

The crowd at our new Military Museum.

The throng of people for the music.

The RC aircraft.

The fireworks, the flags, the fellowship. It gets no better.

At this point, I had a lot of other items to bring up, but I really think it is far better to relish what I have. I do have a lot to be thankful for. Many thanks. I hope you had a happy and safe Fourth of July.

Charles Pennington  
 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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