

Siuslaw News
P.O. Box 10
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Opinion

EXTRAORDINARY PEOPLE

CATHERINE J. ROURKE
 For the Siuslaw News

Jo Beaudreau



If a life can be described as “a work of art,” then Jo Beaudreau’s fits the bill. As a professional photographer and fine-arts supplies entrepreneur, she has focused her viewfinder on the arts for most of her life. In fact, she sees the world much like a camera: in frames.

This unique vision now inspires her to serve an active role in the future of Florence — for the arts as well as its quality of life.

“Art is so important in our everyday lives,” Jo said. “It is hugely important in culture and allows people to thrive, connecting people from all backgrounds and walks of life.”

For Jo, a California native raised in Nevada City, art showed up at an early age in the form of a point-and-shoot camera in the first grade. Jo became enamored with photography and by fifth grade she had “kidnapped” her dad’s SLR 35 mm camera. Focusing her lens on nature and abandoned buildings, she developed “a fascination with the beauty and value in deteriorating things left behind by society.”

Jo immersed herself in black-and-white photography, mastering advanced darkroom techniques prior

to the emergence of PhotoShop.

“I really enjoyed taking an image outside and working it into an art form inside the darkroom,” she said.

That passion inspired her to pursue a BFA degree in photography at San Jose State University. Shortly after graduation, she accompanied her beau, Dan, to his native Chicago, where she took a job as an administrator for the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine. While managing academic publications and event planning, she shot weddings and other photos in her spare time.

Despite a great job at a prestigious institution, Jo’s artistic soul and viewfinder yearned for nature. Then, in 2014, an opportunity to leave the Windy City and manage a fine-art supplies enterprise with her mother in Florence fulfilled her creative impulse plus a desire to help other people discover theirs.

“I moved here when the tides were turning and every day I see new things happening with art and people,” she said. “I frequently hear how something I did with the arts or art supplies made a huge difference in someone’s life. Having conversations with people about their ideas



CHANTELLE MEYER/SIUSLAW NEWS

Jo Beaudreau enjoys serving on the city’s Public Art Committee and “helping people discover their creativity.”

and the possibilities is so rewarding.”

Jo explains how some art supplies she helped a customer select for a gift made a significant impact on the recipient’s life. The customer reported to Jo how working with the art tools inspired the recipient to finish school and go on to pursue a higher education.

“I believe that every day something extraordinary happens,” she

said. “Art initiates conversations, through which ideas and actions are inspired and help get people’s creative juices flowing. The adult coloring book craze is one good example. Digital technology and PhotoShop have revolutionized the arts and made creative photography an art form accessible to everyone.”

For Jo, supporting the arts transcends the day-to-day operation of BeauxArts Fine Art Materials. She also serves on the city’s Public Art Committee (PAC), working with other members to establish an arts policy and develop several “high-impact” arts projects.

“Florence is such a wonderful community where you can really make a difference,” Jo said. “The arts are so strong here and their future will only continue to grow. I love being on PAC because we are setting a foundation for the arts to flourish, which is a reflection on how our city is evolving. We have several projects that will give our community and region a boost.”

October’s designation as Art Appreciation Month is just one example. Jo also serves as co-chair of the Siuslaw Vision Keepers, a community outreach group currently working on a 10-year plan for the future of Florence.

“I see how vibrant this community has become in just two years,” she said. “We have a great influx of new

faces and ideas. But we still have a lot of work to do to keep things moving forward. We need more doctors, housing, jobs, IT and educational resources for a growing community.”

Jo still loves “hunting for images” with her collection of DSLR cameras and nature still remains her favorite subject. Dan, now her fiancé, works for the postal service and the couple often spend their leisure time agate hunting — and chasing the light for photos, of course.

Jo may not be shooting images every day as she would like, but her focus on the big picture remains in sharp focus.

“I feel so lucky to live in Florence and the Pacific Northwest,” she said. “Everywhere you look is so gorgeous. I could not live without creativity and freedom of expression. My family, friends and community inspire me to keep being creative and supporting it in others. Fostering and cultivating the arts and providing the community with the tools and inspiration for creativity will always be my top priority.”

Catherine J. Rourke is an award-winning journalist, author and book editor who teaches creative writing at the Florence Regional Arts Alliance. Email CJRditor@gmail.com.

LETTERS

Small price to pay

I support Measure 20-266, which, if passed, will renew and extend the 2012 levy for the Western Lane Ambulance District for another five years.

A mailer was sent out recently to everyone in the district describing what the levy has been used for these last four years and why it is imperative that voters allow it to continue.

Having personally seen our emergency medical service teams in action, I can say with conviction how important it is to keep these services going at their best possible level. That will not be possible without this levy renewal.

The cost is .45 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value per year, or an average of about \$7 a month. This is not a new tax, only a renewal of the current local option levy.

It is a small price to pay for peace of mind, knowing that you will be skillfully and appropriately cared for in an emergency.

Vote “yes” on Measure 20-266.

*Crystal Farnsworth
 Florence*

We deserve better

I recently saw a video posted by Dick Anderson, the former Mayor of Lincoln City. Mr. Anderson is currently running against Sen. Arnie Roblan to represent District 5 in the Oregon Senate. As someone who’s worked hard to improve our coastal communities, I was dismayed at Mr. Anderson’s attempts to take sole credit for the hard work of many community members.

People on the Oregon coast deserve better. We deserve an elected official who will stand up for the coast and work with Oregonians across the state to help make our communities stronger; that person is our Sen. Arnie Roblan.

For the last 10 years, I have worked with former representative, co-speaker and now Sen. Roblan and his Legislative Coastal Caucus col-

leagues on critical priorities for Lincoln County. Sen. Roblan gets things done for us by bringing people together.

Working with our communities and with his colleagues in the Legislature, Sen. Roblan secured funding to build the new OSU Marine Sciences building and continuing the work he began with former State Rep. Jean Cowan on Project Independence and other senior programs.

And each year, Sen. Roblan leads the annual Oregon Coastal Caucus Economic Summit, which brings together legislators, interested citizens, business leaders and representatives of government agencies to hash out ideas about how to make things better on the coast.

*Terry Thompson
 Newport*

\$25 million isn’t ‘small business’

The only true words in the deceptive ads against Proposition 97 are, “it taxes sales, not profits.”

If a corporation, in Oregon or out of state, does business in Oregon and its sales are more than \$25 million, then they must pay more tax to do business in our state.

It does not affect small businesses unless their annual sales exceed \$25 million a year. The money collected will go to education, healthcare and senior services.

I don’t know too many “small businesses” in Oregon that sell more than 25 Million in “inventory.”

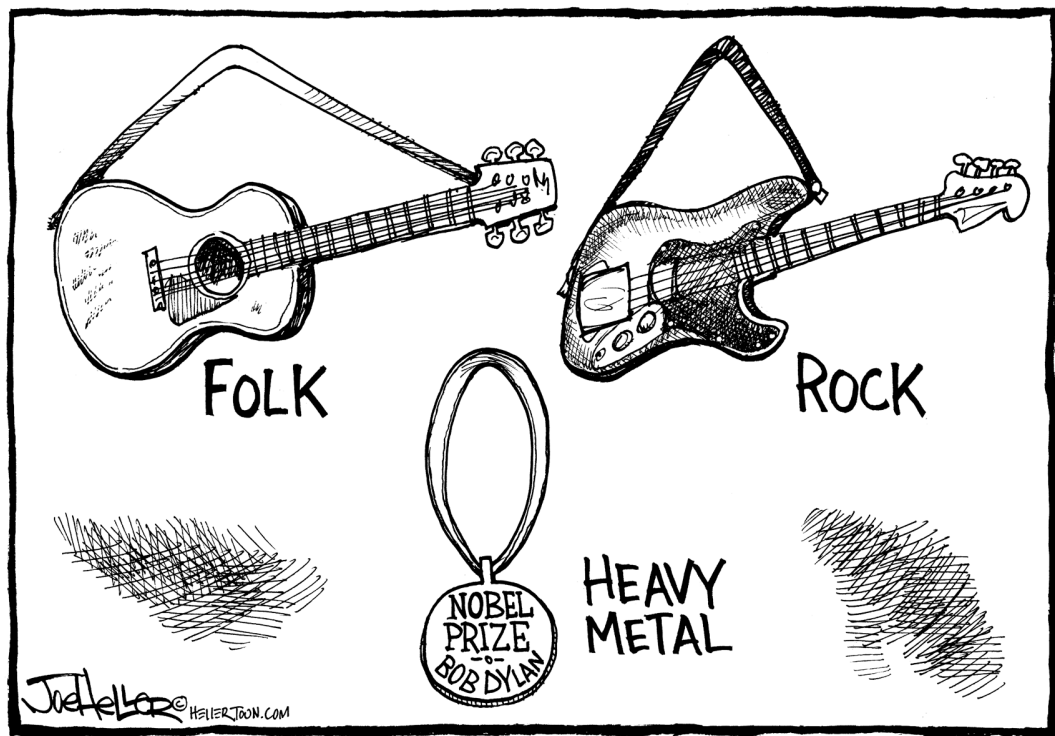
Do you?

*Patricia Smith Olmstead
 Florence*

Strength of character

In response to the letter by Dianna Allison (Oct. 5), I have to write in defense of Barrack Obama and Hillary Clinton.

When President Obama was first elected, Mitch McConnell — a powerful Republican — stated in an interview on national television that



the president would be “DOA (Dead On Arrival) at the White House.”

Since then, President Obama has had to fight for everything he’s tried to do for our country while listening to lies and twisted words from his opponents.

He and Mrs. Clinton are now being blamed for the things our Congress failed to pass.

I do admire them both and thank both Barrack and Michelle Obama for the strength of character they have shown these last eight years.

*Jeanette Hanson
 Florence*

It’s a lose/lose for taxpayers

The article “Ruling Clears Way for Timber Lawsuit” (Register-Guard 10-8-16) speaks of a class

action lawsuit by counties against the state for \$1.4 billion for trees not harvested for decades on state lands.

The counties have attorneys (paid for by taxpayer money) to sue the state. The state has attorneys (also paid for by taxpayers) to defend against the suit.

Should the counties win, the state will transfer \$1.4 billion of taxpayer money (less attorney’s fees) from the general fund to the counties’ respective general funds. The state will have to raise taxes to pay for this and the various law firms will get paid big bucks.

The taxpayer pays in several ways with no benefit — unless the counties refund the money back to taxpayers, which is unlikely.

We elect officials at the county and state level to manage these kinds of issues at minimal cost to the taxpayer.

A lawsuit between these two entities is a lose/lose proposition for the taxpayer.

*Jim Rash
 Florence*

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