

SINKHOLE *from page 1A*

noted the big tree leaning at about a 45-degree angle and the cracks in the asphalt resulting from the enormous leverage the tree was exerting on the hillside. Over the last two weeks or so, we watched the cracks growing. About a week ago, the tree fell down into the ravine, tearing the entire root ball out of the hillside — taking a few feet of pavement with it — and leaving a huge hole,” Skip said.

While Orobey and the Thomsens believe the situation demands quick action, that has not been the response of county officials, who surprisingly were warned of the failing road more than a decade ago, according to a former member of the County Roads Commission, George Goldstein.

“Eleven years ago, I was appointed to the County Roads Committee. One of the first things I was assigned to do by the County Commissioner was to ascertain the condition of Collard Lake Road,” Goldstein said. “What I found was that the road had numerous dangerous problems and may have not met standards of construction. I verified this with a person who has professional engineers’ licenses in three states and works for a state roads agency.”

Goldstein shared his concerns with county officials

and the response he received was disappointing.

“I was informed by the county that jurisdiction for the road was partially the county’s, with no clear objective of what they would do, which was basically nothing ... I would like to remind you that this took place over 11 years ago and unfortunately for the residents, they were told at the time they would have to finance the road repairs themselves,” Goldstein said.

That repair, which would have been a costly one, was not undertaken at the time as residents were reluctant to take on a problem that they felt was not their responsibility.

The question of what to do when roads that are categorized as local access roads (LARs) need maintenance, is one that remains, even as recently re-elected Lane County Commissioner Jay Bozievich responded to resident concerns by adding an emergency item to the agenda of a Jan. 8 commissioners meeting.

The Thomsens watched the meeting, which left them unsatisfied with Lane County’s response.

“They allotted about the last two minutes of the meeting to the subject. Mr. Bozievich did submit this as an emergency, but at the end of the clip, Administrator Steve Mokrohisky made it clear

that it was not an emergency at all,” Skip said. “Our ‘emergency’ was addressed as the road being damaged but still usable, that it would be ‘extremely expensive to repair,’ he mentioned more than once. He also said that the only people using it are from ‘the handful of residents’ at the end of a dead-end road. Somehow, that doesn’t feel to have been presented as much of an emergency.”

He also pointed out that the number of residents mentioned as being impacted is inaccurate.

“Contrary to Mokrohisky’s comment about a ‘half a dozen residents at the end of a dead-end street,’ there are at least 25 homes affected by this road hazard. The homes range from a few cabins to a majority of mid-to-large size homes, most of which are right on Collard Lake,” Skip said.

He added that another 50 homes could be impacted in the area, as Collard Lake Road is the access to the larger Mercer Lake Road, which connects to Highway 101.

“Some of those homes are very upscale, with world-class views all the way to the ocean, and all of these homeowners have to use Collard Lake Road,” he said.

There are currently no county or residential plans to repair the hole on Collard Road.

John Barnett joins team at Coldwell Banker Real Estate

Officials at Coldwell Banker Coast Real Estate recently announced the addition of John Barnett as a new real estate broker.

“I’ve known John for a long time and I am excited to have him join our team,” said owner Andy Johnson. “He is a great family man and a friend in addition to being a well-respected community member. He will no doubt put in the work and diligence for a long and fruitful real estate career.”

Previously, Barnett was a long-time and well-respected local real estate appraiser for 17 years. His work took him up and down the coast and his vast knowledge of properties and valuations enhance his real estate career.

Described as being detail-oriented and com-



Real estate broker John Barnett

mitted to follow-through, Barnett said he is ready and eager to build his real estate business and career.

He and his wife, Melissa, have five children, ages 11 to 23. When not in the office, he enjoys all aspects of the outdoors and spending time with his family.

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FORESTRY *from page 1A*

Bell is with the Yachats-based Angell Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center, which is working to clear an area so an ADA-accessible camp can be built at Camp Baker, considered one of the nation’s premier Boy Scouts

of America camps.

“We’ve been told this is one of the top 10 camps in the nation for beauty,” said Stan Anderson, who lives on and manages the camp with his wife, Ann. “If we continue to help grow it with the help of Job Corps and the support of the community, we hope to be

a destination for Scouts from all over America.”

The 170-acre property that houses 22 buildings and 16 campsites is known for its near access to the ocean, the dunes and the many lakes of the area. Camp Baker is also known for its Challenging Outdoor Personal Experience

(COPE) course. But one of the things it doesn’t have is a camp designed for those with disabilities.

“Right now, we have McDonald pods, which is more of a small cabin that’s ADA accessible,” Anderson said. “What happens is, when troops come, and they have a kid who’s in a wheelchair, they get separated out from their troop for the overnights.”

That can be isolating for those Scouts, so instead the Andersons have been working on grants and partnerships to build a fully ADA-accessible

camp that will include three sided Adirondack buildings, a vault toilet, accessible picnic tables and electrical plugs for wheelchairs.

“It’s important,” Stan said. “Another outreach to kids to feel included.”

This is where Angell workers comes in.

“We no longer have to have the tree removed,” Anderson said. “This is probably a couple thousand dollars’ worth of work. And the kids are amazing.”

See FORESTRY page 7A

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