

Editor's Note: Community Voices is a monthly feature in the *Siuslaw News*. It consists of viewpoints from people in the Siuslaw region. *Siuslaw News* welcomes these opinions as part of its goal to encourage community discussion and exchange of perspectives, but they should not be interpreted as the views of the *News* or its staff.

Community Voices

MORAL OF THE STORY — OH, WELL

BY KAREN D. NICHOLS
Author and Artist
Special to Siuslaw News

Rats! Something is wrong with the car! Sputtering and dying, the car rolled to Tony's Garage, barely making it into the parking lot. The initial trauma was mitigated by the fact that the catastrophe occurred in this locale and not out in the sticks. We rented a Chevy Silverado pickup truck for a day while the battery was replaced.

With very different ramifications, there was another time when the alternator malfunctioned, and we coasted into Tony's garage. It was late Friday, so we'd need to wait until Monday to order the part. The repair would then take two days, making it necessary to rent a car, as we own only one car. With renting a car for four or five days and a rather expensive repair, the budget would take a heavy hit.

After calling the only vehicle rental agency on

Florence, U-Haul, we were told no cars or pickups were available. There was, however, a small truck.

"Could you pick us up at Tony's garage?"

"Sorry, I am the only person here."

Tony was too busy to take us.

Oh, well. (Mom once advised me to accept adversity gracefully with an, "Oh, Well.")

We called a taxi. No luck. What about a friend? Slump shouldered, shuffling, wringing our hands

and gnashing our teeth, we bolstered our aged bodies, realizing there would be a two-mile walk ahead. I glanced at my feet shoved into super tight tennis shoes and pictured the blisters burgeoning. Maybe we could stop at Fred's for Band-Aids, but it's across from U-Haul.

Oh, well.

Then the angel arrived in the form of an "elderly" man — about the same age as Ralph and I! "Could I offer you a ride?"

Mouths agape, we grate-

fully accepted. He was picking up his car, the same model and color as ours. After a short, pleasant conversation, he delivered us to U-Haul.

There it was, towering next to us, our "small" moving truck, a Chevy Box truck, with full U-Haul ad painted huge across the sides!

Oh, well.

Hoisting ourselves, in slow motion, we climbed in. Viewing our world from new heights, we looked down on the rest of the traf-

fic as we drove home.

For two days, we sa-shayed around town in our "limo." With dropped jaw or wide-eyes, friends caught a glimpse of us touring in the truck.

Happy ending: The parts came on Monday, our car restored the following day, thus saving two days' rental.

Rats! We had to return the moving truck!

Moral of the Story: Oh, well. When you're riding high, keep on truckin'!

US TOO FLORENCE — MY PROSTATE CANCER JOURNEY CONTINUES ...

BY BOB HORNEY
Prostate Cancer Survivor
Us Too Chapter Leader
Special to Siuslaw News

Continuing my prostate cancer journey with Botox injection in the bladder, I arrived at Oregon Urology Institute (OUI) just before 11 a.m. on June 23, 2021. I luckily found a shady spot to park since my wife, Marianne, would be reading and waiting in the car (in accordance with OUI's COVID precautions that only the patient enters the building — unless the patient was a child).

Upon making sure she had the cell phone handy in case someone needed to reach her, following a good luck kiss and masking up, I was on my way across the

parking lot to the OUI Medical Center and, upon entering, took an immediate left into OUI's SurgiCenter.

After the necessary paperwork, I was led into "the room." First on the list was the urine sample. As I was finishing that, Dr. McKimmy's excellent assistant, Lauren, called out my first instructions (I paraphrase): "When finished in there, come out to the seat here, drop your pants (and she meant both pants) and sit down." After being seated, she alternately raised the foot and lowered the back of the table until I was flat on my back.

Once she had me properly positioned for Dr. McKimmy, she told me how I would be prepped: First, she would use an iodine wash

to make sure the area (you know where) was clean, then inject some Lidocaine into the urethra and, finally, flood the bladder with iced 2% Lidocaine. Flooding the bladder means that the entire bladder is available for Dr. McKimmy to inject with Botox.

After the iced 2% Lidocaine was placed in the bladder, I would be laying there for upwards of 30 minutes while the Lidocaine was numbing the walls (muscles) of the bladder. That sense of numbness is much appreciated when Dr. McKimmy proceeds with the Botox injections. I was totally surprised when Lauren told me she was all done with the prepping — I simply hadn't felt any discomfort while she was doing her business.

I'm thinking our constant chatting kept my mind off what she was doing

Of course, time marched on and, before long, Dr. McKimmy entered the room. Now we were getting down to business.

Following a quick review of what would happen during the procedure, Dr. McKimmy showed me the needle that would be used in the injections. It was very short since it was designed to remain within the confines of the bladder wall.

With that behind us, we moved ahead with the Botox Injection procedure. As Dr. McKimmy guided his necessary instruments (with camera) through the urethra to the bladder, he stopped to view and take note of my remaining sphincter (lost one

when my prostate gland was removed in 2002) and the fact that it looked to be in fairly good shape although was showing its (my) age. I confirmed that it was not as effective at stopping leakage of urine from the bladder as during the earlier years following the surgery (prostatectomy).

Onward into the bladder, where he said it looked better than before I underwent the 60 hours of Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy treatments. He also confirmed that the remaining radiation damage was mostly confined to the area near the urethra. I commented that his finding confirmed my self-assessment, since my bladder would become very irritated whenever I stood up, demanding that I promptly get that urine

out of there (before it does it for me).

Getting now to the Botox Injection procedure, Dr. McKimmy chose a spot for his first injection. First, he inserted the needle into the bladder wall. Once the needle was in place, he told me he would now make a little bubble at that site. That was the Botox being injected into the bladder wall. He did that by holding the needle in place with his right hand and taking a syringe containing the Botox in his left hand and injecting the Botox into the injection site through the needle. And, lo, a small bubble appeared.

This process was repeated 15 times at various locations within the bladder.

The journey will continue in this series.

MILITARY HERITAGE CHRONICLES — VETERAN PROFILE — ALAN KNOBLOCK

BY CAL APPLEBEE
Military and Vehicle Historian
Special to Siuslaw News

When I first approached US Army veteran Alan Knoblock at Band of Brothers coffee here in Florence to be the subject of a Veteran Profile, he was at first hesitant, because he had not served in combat. That's a response I receive often from Veterans, but I quickly remind them that they still put on the uniform and served their country.

Service in the US Army is a deep tradition in Alan's family, with his father, sister and brother-in-law also veterans of that branch, dating clear back to Korea.

Like a lot of us in our

youth at Alan's high school age, he had no idea what he wanted to do as an adult — other than just get out of Detroit Michigan. He began his 20-year Army career in 1982 as a Tank Systems Mechanic on M45 and M63 Main Battle Tanks, but eventually moved into recruiting.

Alan told me about his life altering experience:

"One single day is burned into my memory bank. The day was 9/11/2001. I was serving as the First Sergeant (1SG) for a Recruiting Company in Sacramento, Calif. That morning at 7 a.m., when the Twin Towers were hit, my cell phone rang off the hook. Just about every soldier and NCO in my company called me. Not just asking; almost begging

to leave immediately. They were ready to defend our nation.

"Our role that day was not one for deployment, but to be the face of the military in the local community. We opened every recruiting station, and turned on the TV. All day long, people from the community came in to volunteer. WW2, Korean War, Vietnam vets, schoolteachers, you name it. They all came in volunteering to do whatever they could. Wash dishes, drive a truck; it did not matter to them.

"We didn't recruit anyone that day; it wasn't the right thing to do. But on that day, I saw the patriotism in this county come to life like I had never seen it before. Over the coming months

and years, most of the soldiers and NCOs in my company deployed to Afghanistan and IRAQ. All of them served with honor, and most of them returned."

Like many veterans, Alan maintained life-long friendships with his brothers-in-arms. He described that close friendship with one fellow veteran.

"Dennis and I met during our service in the Army. He was a platoon sergeant under me, later replacing me as 1SG after I retired. Dennis and I have been close since the first time we met. We have maintained that relationship ever since."

After his 20-year US Army career, Alan enjoyed a successful career with New York Life Insurance com-

pany and credits his Army leadership training and experience for that success.

Now actively engaged in the Band of Brothers here in Florence, he told me, "Having been away from the military for 18 years, my No. one priority in retirement was to join whatever military associations existed here in Florence. It was time to 'Give Back!' I wake up every day with the attitude of serving others, and giving back as my No. one priority. I have been blessed in so many ways during my two careers, it's important for me to pay it forward."

The Band of Brothers meets for coffee each Monday morning at 11 a.m. at the Florence Elks Lodge and is open to any veteran.

I have made the statement before in articles and speeches that it doesn't matter whether a veteran served in the snow-cold trenches of Korea, or in a missile silo in Nebraska during the Cold War; or whether in the brown-water Navy in Vietnam, or the recruiting station in Sacramento — you still served, your service was needed, and is appreciated.

Thank you Alan, for your service, both then and now.

For more military heritage, visit the Oregon Coast Military Museum located on Kingwood Street adjacent to the Florence Municipal Airport, open from noon to 4 p.m. Thursday thru Sunday, or by visiting the Museum's website at www.oregon-coastmilitarymuseum.com.

THREADS OF ACTIVISM — TIME TO TURN UP THE HEAT

BY MICHAEL ALLEN
Activist
Special to Siuslaw News

In my earlier "Threads of Activism," I described tipping points that triggered my activism. What follows is another tipping point right here in Florence that stems from my outrage at the Florence City Council meeting on July 19, 2021.

Was it a tipping point for others in the community to take action as well?

I attended the city council meeting with the intention of verbally introducing our climate petition for the third time, then with 453 signatories, and reading as many names into the verbal record as I had time for in my allotted three minutes.

I should have known something was off as soon as I entered the meeting room, since it was packed with about 30 people.

While waiting for the meeting to start, I seated myself between Bruce Jarvis and Sam Spayd, then

unknown to me. Both were scheduled to speak. Little did I know that what they would say would trigger outrage and concern for our democracy and our planet.

In his comment, Mr. Jarvis stated, "I'm calling on this body to adopt what is known as a 'Stand for Freedom' resolution."

He explained the resolution would call on the city to not enforce any law, mandate or edict that they deem unconstitutional, implying the mayor and city council should make that determination.

Mr. Spayd supported Mr. Jarvis by calling on the council to deal with "draconian edicts" from our state government. He further asked the council not to placate those who wish to take actions to save the world, calling those actions insane and esoteric.

Following the council meeting, I had a chance to speak directly with Mayor Joe Henry. I asked him to honor our request to meet with us, or send a designee,

to explore ways to create a climate action plan. He said NO, and further said he doesn't want his staff to talk to us. I asked if he would work with Lane County in developing and implementing a county wide climate action plan. He answered, "only if mandated."

How did our community respond to counter those outrageous assaults on our democracy and our ability to address the climate crisis and the non-responsiveness by the mayor?

Eighteen activists attended a "Save Our Democracy and Planet" rally prior to the city council meeting on Aug. 6, sponsored by the Florence Climate Emergency Campaign and Florence Indivisible. Fourteen activists submitted written testimonies in support of our climate campaign and to rebuke Jarvis and Spayd. Four speakers gave verbal testimony at public comment regarding the same issues; including Joshua Greene, who received a rousing applause after he called for a comprehensive

climate action plan. Twenty-five more people signed our climate petition. In addition, there were lots of comments on social media and coverage in the *Siuslaw News*.

Mark Brennan, lead reporter at the *Siuslaw News*, captured the current state of affairs both locally and internationally in his compressive article, "Friday Climate Strikes Hit 100 Weeks," (Aug. 11). He appropriately described the recent findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which has been described as "a code red for humanity."

Next steps for activism would be to join our Florence Climate Emergency Campaign, attend Friday Climate Strikes, gather petition signatures beyond the 475 already collected, become better educated, join the Elders Climate Action national organization and its Oregon Chapter, join other like-minded climate groups, and take action. Look for progressive candidates to run for mayor and city

council and the Lane County Board of Commissioners. Apply for city committees like EMAC and Transportation and Planning. Write letters to the editor and city leaders, the chamber, business and faith leaders, exhorting them to take action. Encourage our school board and teachers to institute K-12 climate curriculum and training for green technology occupations in collaboration with Lane Community College.

I could go on, but these actions I've mentioned need lots of passionate and persistent activists that believe as I do — that we are in the midst of an existential climate emergency that requires urgent, immediate action from everyone, including our City of Florence.

Many other cities across the country have met the challenge; let's make our city and community also rise to the occasion. The future for our children and grandchildren depends on us taking action now to save our city and planet.

I personally felt the need to respond to the threats to our planet and democracy. Did our community rise to the occasion with activism? Yes, we did. Will the mayor and city council heed our collective calls to move forward with a climate action plan?

Turn up the heat and find out. Stay tuned to this column for further updates.

The videos for the Florence City Council meetings can be watched on Vimeo through ci.florence.or.us.

Editor's Note: Community Voices continues on A8 and A9, with "Conservative Corner," "Closing The Loop" and "Pastor's Corner."