



New fleet can improve ISO rating, homeowners insurance premiums

South Lane County Fire and Rescue formed a Bond Committee to explore and discuss the issuance of a general obligation bond appearing on the ballot for the Nov. 3 election. If approved, the bond provides an estimated \$2.6 million to purchase and upgrade the current fleet, which has an average age of 24 years.

Measure 20-237 will cost District patrons \$30 per \$100,000 of assessed property value for 5.5 years. This means that if your house is worth \$250,000, you would contribute about \$75 a year for 5.5 years to upgrade the fleet, providing improved firefighter safety, citizen safety

and community risk reduction.

The National Fire Protection Association, which sets the standards for fire apparatus, provides that fire apparatus should be removed from service at 25 years of age. The majority of our front line fleet is aged out or will age out very soon. The costs associated with keeping the current fleet in service are over \$70,000 a year. This is money that can be saved every year to provide for planned fire truck replacements, which we are financially unable to do now.

A new fleet will provide for reduced carbon emissions and fuel efficiencies not possible now. Those who would like

more information can visit the SLFR website at www.southlanefire.org. Those who would like a presentation made to a group can call our office at 541-942-4493 or send us an email.

Based on scenarios we have run in cooperation with area insurance providers, we are confident in saying these scenarios provide a positive result in potential annual premium savings, should our ISO rating improve. A major piece of this would be gaining the full point values associated with a new fleet.

What we discovered in our research is that even one point can make a difference in an ISO rating changing from our current

5/9 to a 4/8 or even a 3/7. These changes correlate to increased point values for new apparatus. The proposed bond costs for a \$200,000 home are \$60 a year for 5.5 years. If you saved \$300 a year on home/property insurance costs from an improved ISO rating, you could still have \$240 left in your pocket in annual savings resulting from an improved ISO rating. These are scenario based estimates and every property is different.

**BY JOHN WOOTEN
FIRE CHIEF, SOUTH LANE COUNTY
FIRE AND RESCUE**



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A shameful article

I am writing in response to the publication of an 'article' in the Oct. 14 edition of the Cottage Grove Sentinel by Jim Jenkins. After reading it I felt shocked and physically ill. It defies all common sense and social responsibility that the editor chose to publish this hit piece.

If the citizens look back at our recent history in Cottage Grove, back in the 90s they will recall the rise of a toxic and hateful group called the "OCA". Mr. Jenkins was a party to this hate group. This collection of "Christians" in their witchhunt for gays and other unsuitable humans had torn Cottage Grove

apart. It set neighbor against neighbor and ruined many friendships — all in the name of intolerance, hate, and most of all, hypocrisy. When they were defeated they slithered away back into their caves, only to reappear when tragedy struck. Is Mr. Jenkins trying to re-start that culture war?

Mr. Jenkins' article is not only incoherent, but it goes against all the Christian principles that he espouses. He holds up Sheriff John Hanlin as a hero. This so-called law enforcement officer stated that he will enforce only the laws that he determines to be following his interpretation of the Constitution. So we have an anarchist sheriff who is

obviously not a Constitutional scholar (as Obama is) spouting off treasonous beliefs, and yet he attracts fans.

Toward the end of Jenkins' diatribe he puts across his immense self-satisfaction by bragging how he worked in stress debriefings at a high school shooting and being a "chaplain" at Ground Zero.

He is a fan boy of the Republican Party that has accomplished zero in making our country better — a party that espouses massive hate for immigrants, the LGBTQ community, and people who do not embrace the heretical "Gospel of Prosperity". The rise of the Christian Taliban is both shocking and sad.

I travel all around the world holding dialogues with many people. The most often asked question is "What is wrong with America?" The follow-up questions are about guns, the tea baggers, Trump, and the tolerance of our children being murdered by guns. Of course then comes universal health care, which we lack, and the Republican obsession with a woman's uterus.

We must purge this poison that is sickening our country. It is not liberalism that is the enemy but the people who want to "take our country back" to the 1950s. These people are hell-bent on destroying the social fabric of our country and howl war cries as they succeed.

They do not want progress and growth; they want destruction. They are yearning for the "end of days". They are a cult of death.

In the 45 years of my daily Buddhist practice I vowed to alleviate human suffering. My mission is to have people live the happy lives that they deserve. Yes, and I have made this world a better place.

Steve Thoemmes
Cottage Grove

Help pass 20-237

The ISO, or the Insurance Service Office, is the group that

rates our Fire District. If we do not keep up our standards, the ratings will go against us, and our homeowners' insurance will probably go up.

It comes down to a choice of paying more for homeowner insurance or passing Bond Measure 20-237.

I for one would rather pay a short-term bond measure and have a better-rated fire department than pay more to the insurance companies.

The only thing we would have to show for paying more to them is a bad rating and more profits for them.

Tom Munroe
Mayor of Cottage Grove

Offbeat Oregon History

A tale of two heroes of two different Civil Wars

BY FINN J.D. JOHN
For the Sentinel

On July 28, 1915, one of the heroes of the American Civil War was laid to rest in a grave in Crystal Lake Cemetery in Corvallis.

The life story of U.S. Army General Thomas Thorp had been a remarkable one. But nothing it contained was too much more remarkable than the story of that funeral service. Presiding over it was one of Thorp's best friends, a Methodist minister and fellow Civil War veteran named John Richard Newton Bell — J.R.N., as he was called by nearly everyone.

Bell was a Confederate veteran — a Virginian by birth. When Thorp had arrived in Cor-

vallis 15 years before, he and Bell had quickly found each other — the Civil War veterans of both sides formed a sort of informal brotherhood in every community at that time. So, of course, Thorp and Bell started reminiscing about battles they'd been involved in, cross-referencing their memories to see if they might have been in the same fights.

They quickly realized that, in fact, they had. In a pitched battle late in the war, the regiment Thorp commanded — the 1st New York Dragoons — had actually captured Bell and hauled him off to a prisoner-of-war camp.

The two of them had never actually met in person on the battlefield — it would have been a bit odd for that to have happened, given that Bell was a private soldier and Thorp was a full-bird colonel in charge of the regiment that had captured him. But both men considered

it a marvelous coincidence, and it became the basis for a great friendship.

The Civil War hero: Blue vs. Gray

The first half of Thomas Thorp's life was utterly dominated by the U.S. Army. But, although both his grandfathers had fought in the Revolutionary War, he clearly wasn't envisioning a military career for himself until the rebellion broke out.

When it did, he was close to graduation from Union College in Schenectady. Leaving his classes behind, he raced to join the Army. He was appointed a captain in a regiment of volunteer infantry and finished up his college work in the field; his degree was conferred on him while he was with his regiment.

He also was married before his regiment; in 1862, while recovering from a battle wound, he met Mandana Major, the

daughter of another officer. Both of them were part of a group of recruiters barnstorming New York trying to enlist volunteers for the war. When Thomas and Mandana were married, it was before the full regiment, and they exited the ceremony beneath an arch of crossed sabers.

The two of them then plunged into action — he fighting with his regiment, and she helping in an auxiliary role; she insisted on accompanying him in the field. Thorp was captured in the battle of Trevelyan Station, but in the POW camp he made such fiery patriotic speeches that the rebels decided he was a security threat and transferred him to a POW camp in Charleston; while en route, his guards fell asleep, so he leaped off the speeding train into the blackness without. Landing by sheer good fortune without being injured or killed, he then traveled back through hundreds of miles of enemy territory to rejoin his regiment.

At the end of the war, Thorp was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General by brevet

(which means, essentially, that his title got a promotion but his paycheck did not; he remained a colonel in all but name).

After the war, the Thorps headed west. They farmed and ranched in Michigan and Arizona before coming to Newberg in the early 1890s when their two children enrolled in Pacific College (now George Fox University). By the turn of the century, they'd settled in Corvallis, where Thorp met the former enemy who was to become his great friend: The Reverend Dr. J.R.N. Bell.

The Civil War hero: Beavers vs. Ducks

J.R.N. Bell was just 16 when the Civil War broke out, but he was already a college student — studying theology at Wytheville College in Virginia. When the shooting started, he, like Thorp, rallied to his local flag; but unlike Thorp, he entered the ser-

vice as a plain Confederate private.

Bell saw plenty of action; he took a bayonet through the shoulder in a Union charge at Cold Harbor and fought in 32 battles. By the time he was captured by Thorp's regiment, he was a seasoned veteran. Even so, Thorp may have saved his life on that battlefield: of the original 86 members of his company, only himself and three other men survived the war alive and physically intact.

After the war, Bell took a job teaching school to raise tuition money to finish his degree; while there, he met and married his wife, fellow teacher Margaret Kirk. Once he'd graduated, he was ordained a Methodist minister and, after a brief assignment in Arkansas, found himself embarking on what would be a 50-year career in Oregon — starting with the Southern Methodist Church in Ashland.

Bell finally settled in Corvallis

Please see **OFFBEAT**, Page 8A

Going nuts for figs

BY JOEL FUHRMAN, MD
For the Sentinel

Many Americans are only familiar with dried figs,

but fresh figs are a delicious treat available in the summer and fall seasons. Figs are commonly grown throughout the Mediterranean region as well in

the southern part of the United States.

Figs were eaten by the Sumerians as early as 2900 BC, and figs were one of the earliest cultivated fruits, eaten in Ancient Greece and Rome. Figs originally came to the Americas from Spain in the early 1500s, and by the 1800s there were many varieties growing in California. A fig is actually not a fruit at all, but a flower inverted into itself; the small seeds found inside the fig are the true botanical fruit.

Figs range in color from pale yellow to brown to purple. These are a few of the common fig varieties that you might encounter throughout the season:



Black mission figs are purple-black in color and have the sweetest taste of all types of figs. Mission figs are named for the Franciscan missionaries who planted them in California in the 1700s.

Calimyrna figs are a pale yellow-green color. These figs originated from Turkey and are now grown in California. Black mission and Calimyrna are the most common varieties of cultivated figs.

Brown turkey figs are a lighter purple than black mission figs with hints of yellow-green and brown.

There are about 60 different varieties of figs grown throughout the United States today. Like other high-nutrient fruits, figs are rich in fiber, minerals, and polyphenol antioxidant compounds; eating figs has been shown to increase the an-

tioxidant capacity of the blood, which could help to prevent oxidative damage in the body. Figs, similar to beans and oats, are notably high in soluble fiber, a nutrient with cholesterol-lowering properties.

Soft fruit with sap coming out of the end opposite the stem means it is ripe and has a high sugar content. Because they spoil quite easily, refrigerate them as soon as they ripen.

It is so much fun to grow your own figs, as they are easy to grow almost anywhere in the United States if you have any space in your yard or on a balcony. All you need to do is plant them in a big pot with good water drainage and if you live in the northern states, just wheel the potted trees into a garage or shed between Thanksgiving and April 1. You can trim them back before the winter so they easily

fit indoors and use the cuttings to start another tree. This way you can have as many fig trees as you want in a few seasons, from buying just one tiny sprig of a tree.

Dr. Fuhrman is a #1 New York Times best-selling author and a family physician specializing in lifestyle and nutritional medicine. His newest book, *The End of Dieting*, debunks the fake "science" of popular fad diets and offers an alternative to dieting that leads to permanent weight loss and excellent health. Visit his informative website at DrFuhrman.com. Submit your questions and comments about this column directly to news-questions@drfuhrman.com. The full reference list for this article can be found at DrFuhrman.com.

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Personal attacks and name calling in response to letters are uncalled for and unnecessary.

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