



OPINION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thank you all

On Friday, May 13, my mom and I enjoyed "Singin' in the Rain" at Cottage Grove High School.

As we were leaving, my 89 year-old mother had a bad fall in the bus lane and was taken by ambulance to McKenzie Willamette Hospital, where she had CT scans, X-rays and nine stitches. Her face and hands were badly damaged but, luckily, there were no broken bones.

Everyone at the scene was so concerned, kind and helpful — calling 911, offering sweaters and blankets, rides, etc., but especially Laurie, helping with rides, and a young man named Mac who had served two tours in Afghanistan.

He took control of the situation, rendering aid, using his leather coat on which to rest my mom's head and keeping us calm. He did not leave until after the ambulance had departed.

Sometimes it is easy to get discouraged with today's society, but watching the wonderful kids at the school and seeing the kindness of so many strangers makes one realize how lucky we are.

It is a joy to call Cottage Grove home and to see firsthand how wonderful people are.

Thank you all so very much,

Becky Walter
Betty Berny
Cottage Grove

re: Park meeting

Well, the "Main Street Vampire Plan" has risen from its coffin yet again. A public meeting was held at the Armory on Tuesday, May 17. A second and final meeting was scheduled to be a "charrette" one week later with the City Planner, the new architect and "stakeholders," whoever they are. The intended victim is Opal Park, again.

A modest crowd of Cottage Grove citizens attended to listen to a presentation by the City Planner and a landscape architect hired by the planner. Amanda Ferguson explained to the audience that this will be a 'listening' meeting where we can discuss what we would like to see done or not done to Opal Park.

This was met with audible and well deserved skepticism, anger and distrust. This is because last year the city planner and city council ignored protests, testimony, a huge petition drive and the objection of the majority of business owners and passed the "Main Street Refinement Plan" anyway.

Marston Morgan AIA, a local architect who designed Opal Park free of charge, gave a detailed presentation about the park illustrated with photos and drawings. The original planning and thoughts about the design were fully explained.

Morgan exposed an obscene faux pas by the city in pointing out that when the work of an architect is being considered



for change, improvement, refinement, or destruction, then the original architect should be involved so that he can illustrate the original thoughts and aim of his work. The hired architect admitted after the meeting that he did not know that Morgan, a colleague, designed the park, nor did he know the history of the park and admitted ignorance of who Opal Whitely was. He was given seven days to come up with a design.

Two walls were covered with various photos of the park and other parks' features. Ferguson invited the public to use the supplied little Post-It notes and broad tipped felt markers to write down our thoughts of the park and paste them to the appropriate photos.

What surprised me were two things. First, it was near impossible to write anything with a large marker onto a small piece of paper. Second: A lot of the photos and proposals already had blue Post-It notes written

in the same feminine script that suggested using concrete pavers instead of flagstones and open seating.

Finally, "All America City Square" just doesn't roll off the tongue does it? Eight syllables. "Opal Park" [three syllables] has a wonderful sound to it. It is used by everyone except the city employees.

It is time to drive a stake through the heart of this monster of a plan and kill it once and for all. We had no silver bullets, no

crucifixes before. Prayers and pleas went unanswered.

Do everything in your power to save Tree City USA, and the entire old town district. Opal Park is known worldwide and is a tourist draw. Local businesses love tourists. SO do we.

And it is time for the unelected city planner to be dismissed from her job.

Stephen Thoemmes
Cottage Grove

Offbeat Oregon History

The Jackson County Rebellion: Llewellyn Banks comes to power

BY FINN J.D. JOHN
For the Sentinel

The year of 1932 hit the Rogue River Valley as hard as it hit anywhere. That year was the psychological nadir of the Great Depression — a year of bank closures, suicides, hunger and civil unrest. Across most of the nation, as historian Jeff LaLande points out, the national mood was mostly one of bewilderment rather than anger ... but most of the nation didn't have two local newspapers doing their level best to crystallize that bewilderment into bitter hatred against local political leaders.

Jackson County did. And Jackson County entered 1932 on the brink of open hostilities. Some residents had even taken to carrying pistols on their hips, and armed guards and state police officers with submachine guns were not an uncommon sight on Medford streets.

Moreover, the owners of the two newspapers that were doing all the rab-

ble-rousing — Llewellyn Banks, owner of the Medford Daily News, and Earl Fehl, owner of the weekly Pacific Record Herald — faced increasingly desperate financial straits as the effects of the Depression worsened. Banks was in particularly bad shape. He was behind on payments to the former owners of his newspaper and faced foreclosure on his orchards. He also was being sued by half a dozen different parties at the same time — creditors, union representatives and people he'd libeled in his newspaper column.

The only hope for both of them seemed to be a total takeover of the Jackson County political and judicial machinery. That would enable them to stall their creditors and frustrate their litigants, while possibly also giving them suitably prestigious positions to transition into after the foreclosures and judgments finally did run their inevitable course.

Fortunately, Banks and Fehl had been gearing up for just such a takeover

for years.

They'd really focused their editorial and organizational fire on local politics after a moderately disastrous attempt by Banks to unseat U.S. Sen. Charles McNary in 1930. The most memorable incident in that race had been when Banks tried to start a fistfight with a constituent who twitted him about the California license tags on his Cadillac. He'd lost in a landslide and decided that his time would be better spent trying to build a local power base rather than bothering with state office.

So after that, his column in the Daily News talked much less of statewide issues and far more about "The Gang" — the elected officials in charge of Jackson County. And Earl Fehl — whose latest run for mayor had come tantalizingly close to succeeding — backed him up with gusto in the Record Herald.

Now, after two years of steadily beating the drum for electoral war upon "The Gang," Banks and Fehl were ready to make their play.

It started with an attempt to recall a Circuit Court judge who was scheduled to preside over one of the lawsuits in which Banks was a defendant. Banks crystallized the recall movement into a political organization, dubbed it the "Good Government Congress," and

started charging its members monthly dues. In spite of this expense, or perhaps partly because of it, it grew into an ominously large force of often heavily armed Jackson County residents, mostly rural residents, working stiffly and the newly unemployed. Members would gather by the hundreds (and, occasionally, thousands) on the courthouse lawn to hear their leader speak, flanked by members of his own militia — the "Green Springs Mountain Boys."

Then came the election, and the Good Government Congress's candidates won some of the key positions in the county. In particular, Earl Fehl himself was elected county judge, and Good Government Congress candidate Gordon Schermerhorn squeaked by on a razor-thin majority to become county sheriff.

It would have been a complete takeover had it not been for M.O. Wilkins' loss in the race for district attorney. That loss hurt, since the D.A. had a lot of influence over the issues Banks and Fehl cared most about: their legal troubles. Already Fehl had lost his printing plant in a libel judgment, and Banks' creditors were trying to foreclose on his newspaper.

The two self-styled political bosses quickly set about consolidating their

victory, whipping their Good Government Congress members into ever more dangerous frenzies with exhortations on the courthouse steps and in the pages of their newspapers. The rival daily newspaper, the Medford Mail Tribune, which was getting threatening letters every day, hired armed guards to protect itself from the angry crowds. Llewellyn Banks deployed paramilitary detachments of the Green Springs Mountain Boys to guard his own newspaper's office and printing plant — although that was not for protection against political enemies so much as to prevent it from being seized by his creditors.

Meanwhile, ex-sheriff Jennings remained suspicious that the election that had kicked him out of office had been fraudulent. He'd lost by just over 100 votes — well within the range at which a recount is appropriate — but his efforts to arrange for one were being stymied by the new county judge, Earl Fehl. So he went over Fehl's head and appealed directly to the state of Oregon, which ordered the recount done.

This was a problem, because the election HAD been rigged — or, at least, an attempt had been made to ensure a

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Vitamin D, high-nutrient diet: Natural treatments for depression

BY JOEL FUHRMAN, MD
For the Sentinel

Winter is a common time to experience symp-

toms of depression. When the holidays are over and the weather is cold and dark, it is more common to feel sad, anxious or hopeless. Whether one is ex-

periencing a seasonal decline in mood or suffering from major depression, natural treatments have very high success rates, and are of course much safer than prescription drugs.

My prescription for natural treatment of depression:

Morning light therapy. Light deprivation, common in the winter, can disrupt circadian rhythms and neurotransmitter production. Bright light therapy, not only in the winter, can be an effective substitute for natural sunlight — applied first thing in the morning it corrects the body's clock and stimulates

mood-elevating neurotransmitters. Bright light therapy is effective for not only seasonal affective disorder (SAD) but it also has been found to be just as effective as antidepressants for treating depression.

Vitamin D. Vitamin D is thought to regulate mood by affecting daily biorhythms and serotonin production. Reduced exposure to sunlight during the winter also means less natural vitamin D production by the skin. Low circulating vitamin D is associated with SAD and major depression. Studies of subjects with depression have found that vitamin D supplementation produces an improvement in symptoms and feelings of well-being.

High dose omega-3 fatty acids. DHA and EPA play important roles in the brain, and low

omega-3 intake is associated with depression. DHA is an important structural component of brain tissue, and a recent meta-analysis revealed that EPA is the more important omega-3 fatty acid for improving depression symptoms. I recommend DHA plus approximately 1,000 mg EPA per day for depression.

High-nutrient diet. Nutrition is extremely important for regulating mood. High antioxidant intake from colorful fruits and vegetables helps prevent oxidative stress, to which the brain is highly susceptible. Markers of oxidative stress are associated with a higher incidence of depression. Low intake of folate, present in green vegetables, also correlates with depression.

Regular exercise. Exercise is known to be as effective as antidepressant drugs or cog-

nitive behavioral therapy for improving the symptoms of depression. Exercise increases production of serotonin, a neurotransmitter associated with feelings of well being, which is often low in individuals suffering from depression. In fact, antidepressant drugs most often work by increasing the amount of serotonin in the brain. Aerobic exercise plus strength training works better than aerobic exercise alone, and yoga is also effective.

The combination of all of these approaches increases the likelihood of success, providing people suffering from depression with a safe, natural, and effective alternative to antidepressant drugs.

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

If you would like to submit an opinion piece, Another View must be no longer than 600 words.

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