

We hold these truths to be self-evident

We hold these truths to be self-evident, That all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator With certain unalienable Rights, That among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness The U.S. Declaration of Independence

Yesterday we celebrated the Fourth of July and the above words again reminded us of the distinct privilege and blessings we have as Americans. The Fourth is one of those special days in our country's history that still bring chills of gratitude when we look back at the founding of our nation.

The USA that we know today is vastly different than it was two centuries ago. Our principals, however, remain the same as that of the original 13 colonies that were banded together by a desire for independence from Great Britain. Freedom was on the lips and in the hearts of every man, woman and child. Weary of being shackled to another country; of fighting battles, over basic principles of decency that they couldn't win, they toppled a giant and became one.

The Declaration of Independence that binds us together continues to guide us today. The declaration of freedom document was formally adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776. It proclaimed to the world that there was a new nation on the world stage. The formerly dominated colonies would be free of the tyranny of Great Britain. Free of "taxation without representation." Free to act on their own beliefs and to begin a new way of life in a new world. It was a brave and gutsy move.

The Library of Congress succinctly describes the declaration process as taking

months. Serious deliberations began in June 1776 with congress delegates from each of the 13 colonies. Jefferson, Adams, Franklin and others wrote and guided, while the war raged on. They debated and revised the document multiple times and finished just as the British fleet and army arrived at New York.

A formal vote for independence was passed on July 2. The document continued

of Independence on July 7 and it was publically read on July 8. Gen. George Washington ordered it to be read to the American Army in New York from his personal copy. After that, the original Declaration was formally inscribed and signed by members of Congress.

Still, word of the country's independence was slow to spread. It was said of colonial communications: "Even the most critical intelligence could only travel at the pace of the fastest horse or ship, often taking weeks to reach other colonies by treacherous postal roads." So, copies of the Declaration were read in town squares via newspapers and later in magazines. The document took nearly two months to reach some cities.

News of the American independence declaration reached London mid- August via the ship Mercury. England's General William Howe (stationed in the colonies), broke the news in a letter to The London Gazette with this succinct announcement: "I am informed that the Continental Congress have declared the United Colonies free and independent states."

The rest, as they say, is history. King George III was not happy but the Americans eventually won the war gaining freedom from tyranny and outside control. May we will always take the high ground with life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness available to all. God bless America!

Betty Kaiser's Chatterbox is about people, places, family, and other matters of the heart. Contact her at 942-1317 or e-mail — bchatty@bettykaiser.com



The *Chatterbox*
By Betty Kaiser

to be repeatedly revised until the morning of July 4, 1776. Then, church bells rang all over Philadelphia; the Declaration had been officially adopted! A hand-written copy was signed by Congress President John Hancock and that night 150-200 copies were made at a printing shop. Twenty-four copies are still in existence.

I am most intrigued by what happened after July 4. Getting the word out to the colonies and other countries was not easy. As you may recall there were no telephones, telegraphs, railroads or instant communication of any kind. The Pony Express was not even in existence.

This is where newspapers came into play. The Pennsylvania Evening Post printed the first newspaper rendition of the Declaration

State passes \$8.2 billion for education

Cut days may be reduced for South Lane School District



By Caitlyn May
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The Oregon State Legislature passed an \$8.2 billion education package on June 27 and while the funds are an increase—11 percent—from the current biennium, lawmakers insisted schools needed additional funding and may put forth an effort to deliver by the end of the current session.

The \$8.2 billion package

would fund schools at their current operating levels and is an improvement over the initially proposed \$7.8 billion earlier in the session. However, districts across the state contended that a budget of \$8.4 would prevent layoffs and other cuts.

At home in South Lane School district, the news is mixed.

"We adopted a budget at \$8.4 billion but we had a list of add ons that we wouldn't do unless we got the money," said South Lane Superintendent Krista Par-

ent. With the approved \$8.2 billion seemingly set to be signed by Brown, Parent said some of the items considered for the chopping block have gotten a reprieve, including cut days.

Originally, South Lane had scheduled four days to be cut from the calendar to contend with the possible slashed budget at the state level. According to Parent, that may be trimmed to one day off for students next year.

"We don't know yet but it looks like we might get three of those cut days back or three and a half," Parent said.

And while the \$8.2 billion package earns South Lane cut days, it isn't quite the \$8.4 it was hoping for and how the number will affect the 2018-2019 school year is still unknown.

"Unfortunately, we can't look two years out," Parent said

noting that a variety of factors prevents an accurate financial picture of the district beyond the next year including student enrollment and possible changes to the funding ratio.

What is known is that Measure 98 funds are likely going to be funded by half. Rather than \$800 per student, districts will receive \$400 per student. The measure, passed by voters in November of 2016, provides direct funding to school districts to increase high school graduation rates. According to Parent, South Lane has not spent the majority of those funds but the district did turn in a 72.59 percent overall graduation rate for the district according to the most recent data and a 93.62 percent four-year graduation rate for Cottage Grove High School.

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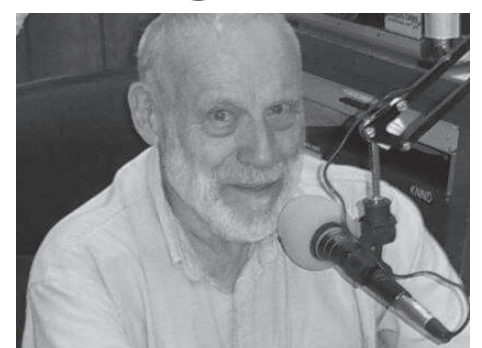


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Meet the DJ/Program Host



JOHN KLOBAS

John is a retired professor who taught classes in Sociology and Neuro-Linguistic Programming at Lane Community College. He loves playing international and Old World music. He played for years with The Polka Pipers and as a talented musician he is often invited to perform the music he loves at special events. John also hosts a similar show on KLFO in Florence, Oregon.



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