



Offbeat Oregon History: The city of Quivira

By Finn JD John
For The Sentinel

In the late 1530s, Viceroy Antonio de Mendoza of the Spanish colony of Mexico started hearing rumors of a string of rich, gold-encrusted cities far to the north.

Of course, no 1500s Spanish colonial administrator would ever ignore rumors of more wealthy natives to rob and kill, so Mendoza dispatched a scouting party to see what could be learned about these “Seven Cities of Cibola.”

When the party returned, they hadn’t actually seen anything of interest, but they’d heard plenty.

“I found a man born in Cibola,” the emissary, Fray (Friar) Marcos de Niza, wrote in his report to the governor. “He told me that Cibola was a great city, inhabited by a great store of people ... He says that the houses are of lime and stone ... and that the gates and small pillars of the principal houses are of turquoise, and all the vessels wherein they are served, and the other ornaments of their houses, were of gold: and the other six cities are like unto this, whereof some are bigger.”

Well, this was most exciting, and Mendoza lost very little time in arranging for an expedition to find and conquer these seven golden cities.

To do this, he partnered up with Francisco Vasquez de Coronado, the governor of the “Kingdom of New Galicia” (a large patch of coastal south-central Mexico, including modern-day Aguascalientes and Jalisco) to outfit an expedition. Coronado would lead it personally, and both he and Mendoza invested a great deal of their own money into it.

It set forth in 1540.

The expedition was not a success. On the great plains near Kansas and Oklahoma, Coronado found what he assumed was the “Great Lime-

stone-and-Turquoise City” of Cibola, and found that it was in reality a collection of grass huts occupied by a population of regular, hard-working, non-gold-having Native Americans.

But when he arrived, he soon started hearing rumors of another city, off to the east, that was even shinier and more golden than Cibola: The marvelous sunset city of Quivira.

Not yet having figured out that the natives were simply trying to get rid of them, Coronado set forth in quest of this new store of plunder, following a Native American guide he called “El Turco” because he looked vaguely Turkish.

Later he was told that Quivira was not to the east, but to the north, so Coronado sent most of his army back and, with about 30 men and El Turco, headed out in the general direction of Kansas.

Eventually Coronado found an Indian village that he could call Quivira, whereupon he declared victory and marched home, considerably poorer in purse. And after that, Quivira started appearing on maps.

And this is where things get interesting. Because the legends of Quivira that were fed to Coronado indicated that it was a seaport town, close by a great river two miles wide, full of fish the size of horses.

Well, Kansas is not exactly richly endowed with seaports; nor does such a river exist there. But transplant Quivira to the West Coast, and it starts to sound a lot like the Columbia River and its sturgeon fishery.

So as the West Coast started getting explored, mapmakers started including Quivira on it. Generally they tended to put it right around 42 degrees north latitude — right on or slightly north of today’s Oregon-California border.

Of course, today this seems pretty ridiculous. But those early mapmakers, working with the an-

ecdotal reports of various explorers, had no idea how much real estate there was between Kansas and Oregon. And there must have been some skepticism on the subject of whether the dumpy little village found by Coronado was really the Quivira. Perhaps there were two? Or perhaps Coronado was covering up some secret knowledge that he hoped to exploit later, without having to share it with dozens of big-mouthed soldiers?

So Quivira lived on in dozens of maps drawn in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As late as 1750 — just three decades before the American revolution — it was still being included.

Sir Francis Drake, on his famous voyage around the world that may actually have included a stopover in an Oregon bay (“Nova Albion”), had at least one such map in his possession, and surely was keeping an eye out for signs of Quivira.

He never saw any, of course. The Oregon Coast at that time was a wilderness. The closest it had to cities were communities of itinerant Native Americans living in portable or makeshift structures.

But had it always been so? Was it possible that the city of Quivira was, at one time, real? Did it stand there, on the edge of a little bay just north of Cape Blanco, thriving around the time Rome fell? And did something then happen — perhaps the 300-year Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and tsunami — to close off the mouth of its bay and crush its walls into heaps of rubble and cover them with soil, leaving only a handful of odd-looking mounds and a string of legends to mark what once had been? Legends, perhaps, of a golden city trimmed with turquoise, passed back and forth among its survivors’ descendants until the chance came to use them to lead a gang of rapacious steel-clad Spanish thugs astray?

This is all pure speculation, of course — more, it’s romantic tale-spinning of the kind one usually

finds in pulp-fiction magazine stories about Atlantis and Lemuria. But there is a wisp of supporting evidence for such a theory:

On Sept. 8, 1881, the Port Orford Post printed a very curious article. “There have recently been discovered near Floras (Lake) in this county, what appear to be the ruins of an ancient city, built of cut stone,” the article states. “The site of the numerous buildings of the ages gone by are indicated by mounds, in and under which, by making excavations, are found masses of cut stone, bearing quite plainly the marks of the stone cutter’s chisel, and lying as if the wall had tumbled down.

“These relics of ancient masonry were first unearthed to view by the storm uprooting a large tree which had grown up on one of these mound-like elevations. Thus the blocks of sand stone were exposed to view, and thus curiosity excited which led to the prospecting of other mounds (of which there are many) in the same locality, in all of which the phenomena were present. Further explorations will be made with a view to throwing more light if possible on this curious spectacle.

“We shall visit and personally inspect these alleged ‘ruins’ at no distant day, when we hope to be able to give a detailed description of the ‘town’ and its immediate surrounding,” the article concludes.

But historian Bill Wallace has found no sign of a follow-up to this story. It just seems to disappear.

Was it a mistake? A rumor started by a troublemaker? Most likely, it is something like that.

But there is always the possibility — a remote and unlikely possibility, but a possibility nonetheless — that the broken bones of a lost civilization lie buried beneath the loam and sod between Port Orford and Bandon, waiting even yet to be rediscovered.

Dr. Fuhrman: Can fiber help prevent breast cancer?

By Joel Fuhrman, MD
For The Sentinel

Breast cancer - two words that strike fear in every woman. The good news is women can help lessen their risk. One important defense is to consume a high fiber diet.

A 2011 meta-analysis of 10 scientific studies found that higher fiber intake is associated with lower risk of breast cancer. In 2012, another meta-analysis of 16 studies came to the same conclusion. In the Nurses’ Health Study, higher fiber intake during childhood and adolescence was linked to a decrease in the risk of breast cancer in adulthood.

Given that animal products, refined grains, sugars and oils contain little or no fiber, fiber intake is a marker for greater intake of natural plant foods, many of which are known to have a variety of anti-cancer phytochemicals. Some breast cancer protective substances that have already been discovered include isothiocyanates from cruciferous vegetables⁴, organosulfur compounds from onions and garlic, aromatase inhibitors from mushrooms, flavonoids from berries, lignans from flax, chia and sesame seeds, and inositol pentakisphosphate (an angiogenesis inhibitor) from beans.

High-fiber foods help to slow emptying of the stomach and absorption of sugars, which decreases the after-meal elevation in glucose. This is meaningful because elevated glucose levels lead to elevated insulin levels, which can send pro-cancer growth signals

throughout the body, for example via insulin-like growth factor 1 (IGF-1). As such, high dietary glycemic index and glycemic load (characteristic of refined grains and processed foods) are associated with an increase in breast cancer risk. Accordingly, a study on Korean women found that higher white rice intake was associated with higher breast cancer risk.

Increased exposure to estrogen is known to increase breast cancer risk. A woman may be exposed to estrogen via her ovaries’ own production, estrogen production by excess fat tissue, or environmental sources such as endocrine-disrupting chemicals (like BPA, a chemical added to many consumer products). Fiber can reduce circulating estrogen levels, thereby reducing breast cancer risk, because it helps to remove excess estrogen from the body via the digestive tract. Fiber binds up estrogen in the digestive tract, accelerates its removal, and prevents it from being reabsorbed into the body.

In addition, soluble fiber (as shown in studies using prunes and flaxseed) seems to alter estrogen metabolism so that a less dangerous form of estrogen is produced, whereas insoluble fiber (wheat bran) did not have the same effect. For this reason, beans, oats, chia seeds and flaxseeds may provide some extra protection due to their high soluble fiber content.

Although most people probably just associate whole grains with fiber, beans contain more fiber than whole grains, and vegetables and fruits (and some seeds) contain comparable amounts — here are a few examples:

- 1 cup cooked quinoa – 5 grams fiber
- 1 cup cooked brown rice – 4 grams fiber
- 1 cup cooked kidney beans – 11 grams fiber

- 1 cup cooked broccoli – 6 grams fiber
- 1 cup blueberries – 4 grams fiber
- 1 tablespoon chia seeds – 6 grams fiber

Fiber, by definition, is resistant to digestion in the human small intestine. This means that during the digestive process, fiber arrives at the large intestine still intact. Fiber takes up space in the stomach but does not provide absorbable calories, and it also slows the emptying of the stomach. These properties of fiber make meals more satiating, slow the rise in blood glucose after eating and promote weight loss. In the colon, fiber adds bulk and accelerates movement, factors that are beneficial for colon health. Soluble fiber (primarily from legumes and oats) is effective at removing cholesterol via the digestive tract, resulting in lower blood cholesterol levels. Some types of fiber are fermented by intestinal bacteria. The fermentation products, short-chain fatty acids (SCFA) such as butyrate and propionate, have anti-cancer effects in the colon and also serve as energy sources for colonic cells. These SCFA are also thought to contribute to promoting insulin sensitivity and a healthy weight.

Fermentable fiber also acts as a prebiotic in the colon, promoting the growth of beneficial bacteria. Fiber intake is associated with a multitude of health benefits, including healthy blood pressure levels and reduced risk of diabetes, heart disease and some cancers.

Yes, fiber itself has some breast cancer-protective properties, like limiting glycemic effects of foods and assisting in estrogen removal, but we get optimal protection when we focus on foods that are both rich in fiber and rich in micronutrients and phytochemicals.

For more information, visit DrFuhrman.com.

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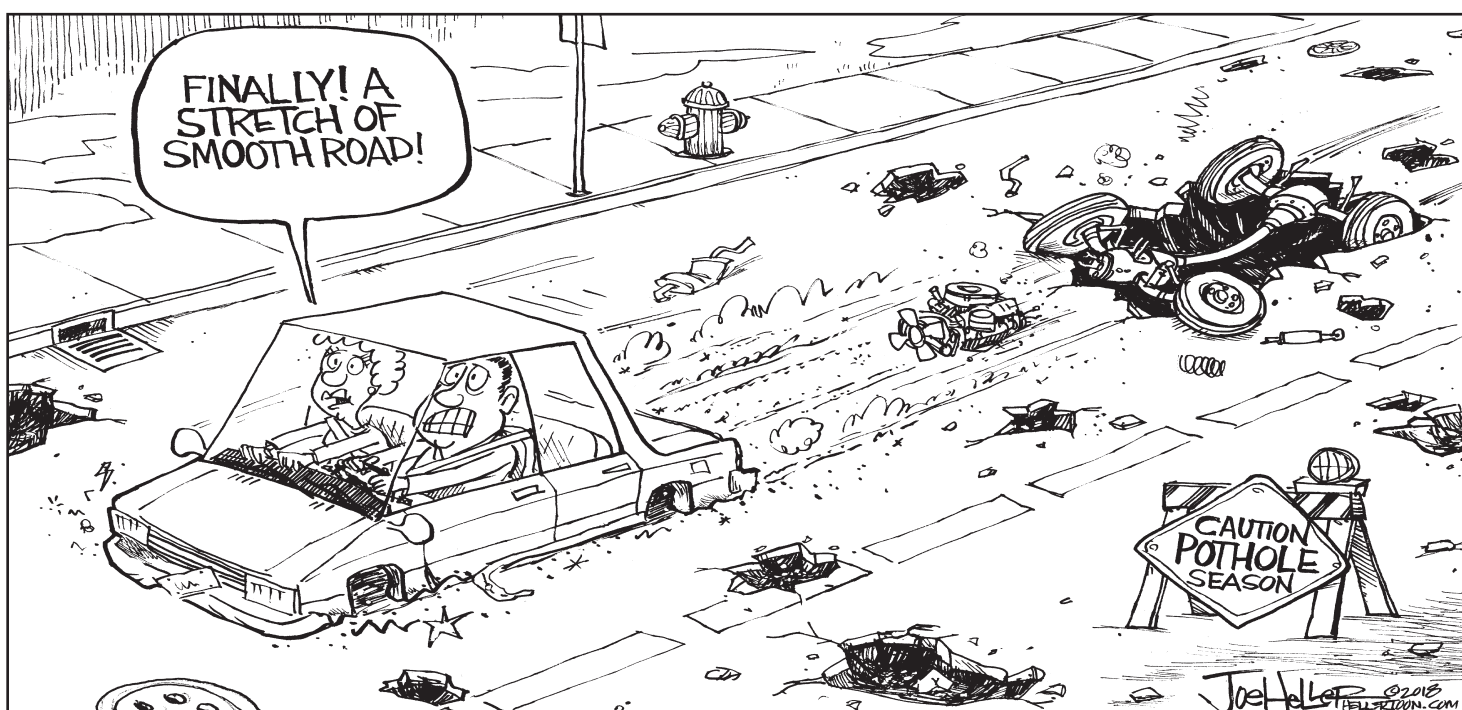
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In order to ensure that your letter will be printed, letters must be under 300 words and submitted by Friday at 5 p.m. Letters must be signed and must include an address, city and phone number or e-mail address for verification purposes. No anonymous letters will be printed. Letters must be of interest to local readers. Personal attacks and name calling in response to letters are uncalled for and unnecessary. To avoid transcription errors, the Sentinel would prefer editorial and news content be sent electronically via email or electronic media. Handwritten submissions will be accepted, but we may need to call to verify spelling, which could delay the publishing of the submission. The Sentinel reserves the right not to print letters that may contain libelous content.

IN BRIEF MARCH 7-MARCH 19

Art Space at The Crafty Mercantile (Open Studio) at 517 East Main Street on Saturday from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. (donation) For more information call (541) 514-0704.

The East Lane County Commissioner Candidate Forum will be held on March 19 at the Pleasant Hill Community Center. Four of the six candidates running in the May 15 election will be attending.

Bohemia Elementary and Cottage Grove High School have community garden spaces open. The rate for one year is \$15. Contact South Lane School District for more information.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help will host a St. Patrick’s Day dinner from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. on March 18. Tickets are \$12 for adults and \$25 for families.

Do you have an event, class or workshop coming up? Email cmay@cgsentinel.com with the details to be featured here.