

The Bulletin

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‘Tremendous shame and guilt’

Kip Kinkel, 1998 Oregon school shooter, gives first interview from prison

Associated Press

SALEM — Kip Kinkel, who killed his parents before going on a shooting rampage at his Oregon high school in 1998, killing two classmates and injuring 25 more, has given his first news interview, telling HuffPost he feels “tremendous, tremendous shame and guilt.”

Kinkel, now 38, is serving a de facto life sentence at the Oregon State Correctional Institution. He spoke with the news site by phone for about 20 hours over 10 months.

He said he felt guilty not just for what he did as a 15-year-old suffering from then-undiagnosed paranoid schizophrenia, but the effect his crime has had on other juvenile offenders sentenced to life terms: His case has been held up

by some of his victims and by others as a reason to oppose juvenile justice reform in the state.

While he has not previously given interviews because he did not want to further traumatize his victims, he said, he also began to feel that his silence was preventing those offenders from getting a second chance.

“I have responsibility for the harm that I caused when I was 15,” Kinkel said. “But I also have responsibility for the harm that I am causing now as I’m 38 because of what I did at 15.”

‘My whole world blew up’

Kinkel described how he had been hearing voices since age 12 and how he became obsessed with knives, guns and explosives, be-

lieving China was going to invade the U.S. and that the government and the Walt Disney Co. had implanted a microchip in his head.

When he was caught at Thurston High School in Springfield with a stolen handgun he bought from another student on May 19, 1998, “My whole world blew up,” he said. “All the feelings of safety and security — of being able to take control over a threat — disappeared.”

Facing expulsion, a possible felony charge and an enormous sense of shame, he said, the voices in his head made him believe he had to kill his parents and then return to school to “kill everybody.”

See [Kinkel / A10](#)



Don Ryan/AP file

Thurston High School student Kip Kinkel, then 15, is led to his arraignment in Eugene in May 1998. Kinkel killed his parents before going on a shooting rampage at the Springfield school, killing two there and injuring 25.



Family photo

Peter Ansoff, a vexillologist — someone who studies flags — holds a replica of a U.S. flag that was flown on a British warship after it was captured in 1779.

A salute to flag history, and to today’s ‘holiday’

BY MARYLOU TOUSIGNANT
Special To The Washington Post

Monday is Flag Day, an event marking the day in 1777 when the Second Continental Congress approved a design for the first United States flag. Thirteen stars, white on blue. Thirteen stripes, alternating red and white. Sound familiar?

In 1916, President Woodrow Wilson called the U.S. flag “the emblem of our unity, our power, our thought and purpose as a nation.” He asked that June 14 be celebrated each year as Flag Day, a day to think about the country’s ideals and principles.

Although Congress made Flag Day a national event in 1949, it is not an official federal holiday. Sandwiched between Memorial Day and the Fourth of July, which are federal holidays, it often gets overlooked.

But not at Peter Ansoff’s house. He’ll be hoisting some of the more than 100 flags he owns up the three flagpoles in his Annandale front yard.

Ansoff is a vexillologist (pronounced vex-ill-LOLL-oh-gist), a person who studies the history and meaning of flags. As president of the 700-member North American Vexillological Association, he enjoys sharing his knowledge and love of flags.

While some people see flags as just colorful pieces of cloth, Ansoff says there are others who are excited about what they represent. His own excitement started when he was a kid and came across colorful pictures of flags in an encyclopedia.

“Our neighbors had a flagpole, and I told my dad I wanted one, too,” he recalled. His mother bought him his first flag and sewed others for him.

Ansoff doesn’t call himself a collector. He does have a few rare flags, but mostly “I buy them to fly them,” he said.

Some are copies of the 27 official flags the U.S. has had since 1777. Ansoff also has several unofficial U.S. flags, ensigns flown by American and British merchant ships, and flags of other countries. On July 1, a national holiday in Canada, he hoists its red-and-white maple-leaf banner. If it’s a cold winter day in Northern Virginia, he’ll warm things up by flying the flag of a toasty South Pacific island.

Ansoff can’t (or won’t) pick one flag as his favorite. For a posed photo, he chose a replica of the Serapis (sir-APE-us) ensign, named for the British warship that American naval hero John Paul Jones captured off the coast of England in 1779.

The original Serapis banner is lost to history. But vexillologists such as Ansoff keep its memory aloft.

WEEKEND OF ADVENTURE

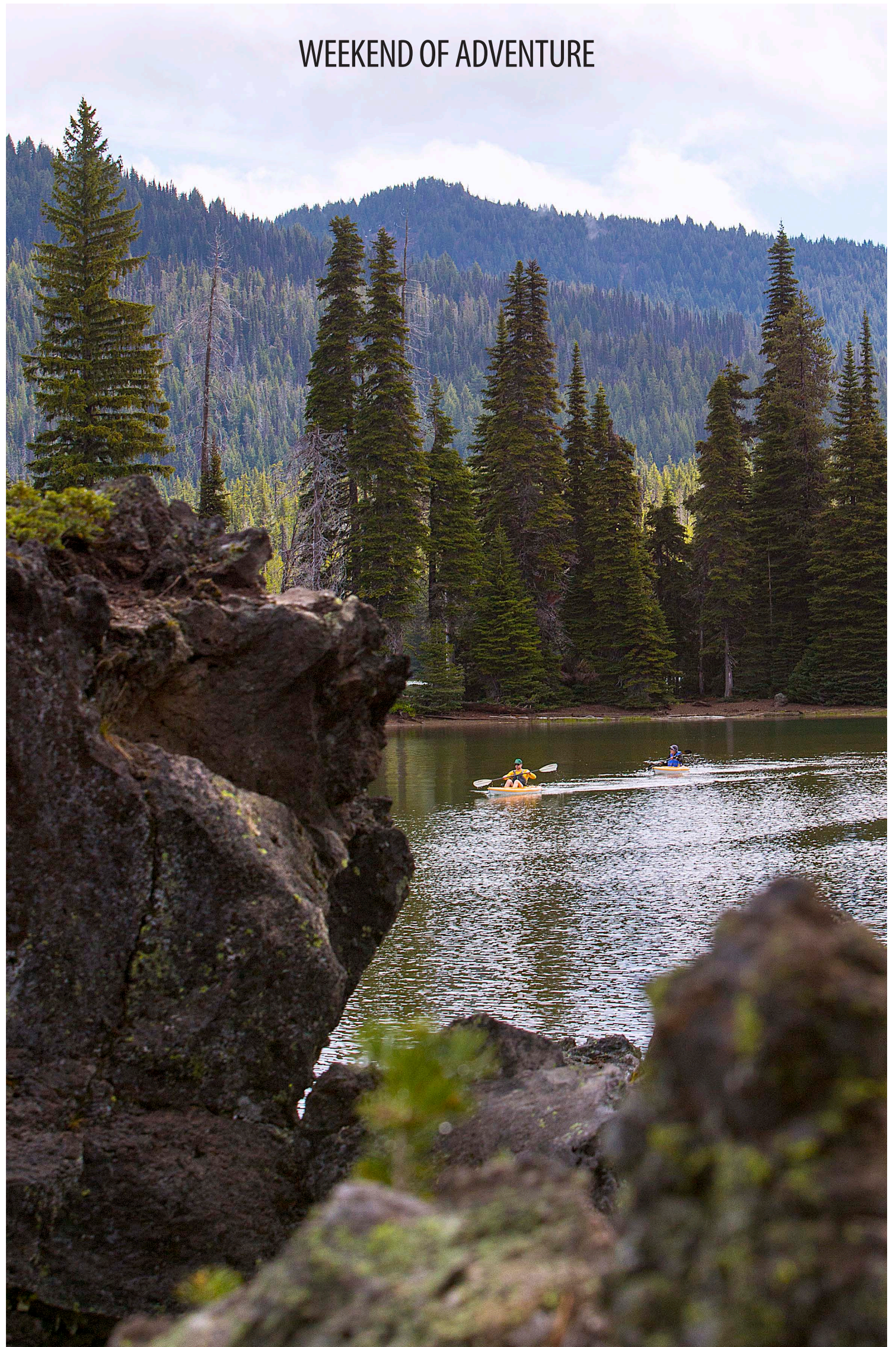


Photo by RYAN BRENNECKE • The Bulletin

Matt Biller leads the way as his father, Jim Biller, both of Portland, follows closely behind while paddling on Sparks Lake early Saturday. The pair spent the weekend exploring sights and outdoor activities around Oregon as part of a Christmas gift from son to father last year. The two said they had already visited the Painted Hills and a few waterfalls on the way to Central Oregon and planned on mountain biking around the Phil’s Trail complex after the early morning paddle.