

Bicycle safeway, awareness urged on area roadways

Heavy morning mist. Unpredictable and shifting wind. The arrival of seemingly thousands of RVs and out-of-state license plates. Oh yes, spring is definitely in the air here on the North Coast.

Spring is a wonderful time of year in our area as it gives us an opportunity to appreciate the beautiful environment, abundance of plants and fauna and the clean air. For many, it provides further recreation opportunities, with the fairer temperatures and extended daylight hours.

Over the past few weeks, I've taken to one of my favorite past times, as I'm accustomed to each Spring season: bicycling. I have enjoyed riding my bike since I was a little boy pedaling around the streets of Gearhart and causing mischief. And while other activities may hold my interest temporarily — for several years of my childhood I rollerbladed everywhere — only cycling provides the rush of adrenaline, speed and freedom with a hinge of excitement.

Since moving to this area more than four years ago, I've experienced many of the same wonderful aspects of bicycling that I enjoyed as a child. But I've also experienced some truly traumatic ones, mostly coming as a result of unsafe road conditions and dangerous, or at least distracted, driving.

Hopefully we recognize the necessity of providing a transportation system that cyclists can utilize. Highway 101 is the main road on the Oregon Coast Bike



David Forbes, Chelsea and Skyler Archibald after completing the Seattle to Portland bike ride several years ago.

Route, a route utilized by some 6,000 to 10,000 people annually. Add in those that cycle either for need or recreation in our area and that is a lot of people riding along our streets and highway.

Now this isn't simply a chide to all drivers nor is it a "bicycling is holier than driving" pitch. Due to demands of work and personal life and convenience, I drive far more often than I cycle. But the fact remains that every time I make the commitment to bike to work, to bike while running errands or even use my bike as a form of exercise, that is one less car that is clogging our heavily utilized road system.

I've noticed that one of

our favorite past times here on the North Coast is complaining about traffic and



SKYBOX
SKYLER ARCHIBALD

the issues caused by events and out-of-state drivers. But have we ever stopped to consider the impact of our personal usage of vehicles. Have we ever made a goal of walking, bicycling or utilizing our great public transportation options to run an errand, get to work or get to where we need to go? Doing so, even for one trip or one person, eases the

traffic on our community.

Having said all that, I want to provide a few tips for helping ensure that cyclists like me return to their homes safely.

Cyclists, like all vehicles, must obey all traffic laws. That includes not riding against traffic (a personal pet peeve) and using hand signals to indicate to other vehicles what you are doing. If cyclists do use sidewalks, they should be going slow and yielding to pedestrians.

For cars and trucks, it is important to remember bicyclists are much more difficult to see and predict behavior from than a larger vehicle. While riding home from work, I may have worry about dodging

potholes, glass, storm grates and other objects that a car doesn't have to worry about.

I find that many vehicles do not give bicycles

enough space. On narrow roads, like Wahanna Road or near the Necanicum Bridge on the north end of Seaside, cyclists can get squeezed into dangerous positions. Vehicles may only pass bicyclists in these situations if they can do so safely. I can't count how many times a frustrated vehicle has slowed down for me during a portion of narrow road or bridge only to aggressively speed up and sometimes make a gesture my direction when they do pass.

I speak to these things based on improved quality of life for all people using the road. Like it or not, bicyclists are here to stay. While it might be someone from Portland, or Oklahoma it might also be your neighbor. Please remember that each ride from a cyclist is one less vehicle on the road. While we all have somewhere to be and want to get there on time, it isn't worth it to scare the death out of a bicyclist, or worse, hit them.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Clearcut for bugs?

Thanks for running the "Preserving Pollinators" feature on May 31. I attended that particular "Listening to the Land" gathering at the library.

I was curious about the newfound interest Hampton Lumber had in creating or maintaining pollinator habitat, and I must admit I have been maneuvered into realizing that the best way to create pollinator habitat is to clearcut all the trees in a given area.

By pure coincidence, a clearcut is the most efficient and profitable method of harvest. A tightly stocked plantation is a biological desert, a monoculture where very little sunlight can reach the ground. Now I am four-square for clearcuts. Clearcuts for bugs!

After-harvest reforestation is another arena that should be of special interest. Forty years ago, modern forestry was tinkering with developing "super trees," those specimens that would grow and thrive to enable a bigger, better, and faster crop rotation. Who knows, by now such clones

may have been developed. We all know ten trees are planted for every one harvested. Perhaps the Necanicum Watershed Council can throw some sunshine on the real tree farms, those nurseries where our future tree crops are propagated and mass produced?

Gary Durheim
Seaside

Tsunami: Save lives? Or fire trucks?

I was invited to attend and all-day conference on coastal management, where presenters shared information on Federal Emergency Management Agency and Clatsop County planning.

My understanding is that now FEMA is more about people — what to do to save lives first. We need to focus on Gearhart taxpayers, rather than building a resilient fire station. Fire equipment should not take precedence over people.

One of the advisors to coastal cities asked me (I was the only one there

from Gearhart): "How is Gearhart going to take care of their tourists and residents when the tsunami comes?"

I did not have an answer. A vertical evacuation structure could be built, but where? We need to plan now to take care of our residents, and others, before we attempt to save easily replaceable fire equipment.

Gearhart has approximately 1,700 homes, with a largely senior citizen base of full-time residents. We have a fire department that has only responded to two fire calls, and over 400 emergency medical calls, in the same period of time. The responses to opioid overdoses, seizures, heart attacks, etc., far exceed our fire emergency needs.

Residents need to know at what level emergency medical technician training our volunteer fire fighters are at to respond to these emergencies, and increase the skills that each has to aid the residents and tourists they should be serving first, before being loaned out of state to fight fires.

Harold T. Gable
Gearhart

June events at the Seaside Public Library

Upcoming at the Seaside Public Library, 1131 Broadway:

June 8

"A Universe of Stories"

11 a.m. Summer Reading kick-off all ages event June 8.

"Sketching Butterflies"

1 p.m., or adults drawing class with Darota Haber-Lehigh.

June 11

Teen Tuesday

3:30 p.m. Giant games party.

June 12

Preschool storytime

OFF THE SHELVES

LIBRARY CALENDAR



10 a.m.

Birthdays theme.

June 12

Night of all Knowledge Trivia Tournament

6 p.m., For adults, bring a team or join one, in the library's meeting room.

June 13

Ode to the Tides

6 p.m. Wetlands Conservancy event, in the library's meeting room. Featuring Neal Maine.

June 18

Teen Tuesday

3 p.m. Out of this world slime.

June 19

Preschool storytime

10 a.m. Summer theme.

June 20

"Tears of Joy"

1:30 p.m. Puppet Theater Puppet show.

June 25

Teen Tuesday

3 p.m., Horoscope sign art project 3 p.m.

June 26

Preschool storytime

10 a.m., "Bugs bugs bugs" theme.

June 27

"Creature Teachers"

1:30 p.m., live reptiles show for all ages

Congratulations to our local 2019 OSU grads!

Seaside Signal

Oregon State University will hold its 150th commencement on Saturday, June 15, beginning at 10:30 a.m. in Reser Stadium.

Local students graduating this June from Oregon State include:

Gearhart: Dominique M. Harris, Master of Natural Resources, Natural Resources; Jeannette E. LaLonde, Bachelor of Science, Magna Cum Laude,



Psychology; Aimee R. Schacher, Bachelor of Science, Cum Laude, Anthropology.

Seaside: Jensen Liu, Bachelor of Science, Mechanical Engineering; Jackson C. Meyer, Master of Business Administration, Business Administration; Kevin Mistofsky, Bachelor of Science, Mechanical Engineering.

Tolovana Park: Teresa A. Paul, Bachelor of Science, Mathematics.

The commencement speaker is Jane Lubchenco, a marine ecologist and world-renowned leader in environmental research.

Lubchenco, a distinguished professor at Oregon State and former administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, will receive an honorary doctorate degree in ocean, earth and atmospheric sciences at the ceremony.

Commencement is free and open to the public; no tickets are necessary. OSU is one of the few large universities in the nation to hand out students' actual diplomas during the commencement ceremony.

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