

# Recent earthquake email debunked

A number of folks from around Columbia County have been recently receiving a forwarded e-mail regarding "new" procedures for earthquakes, such as curling up in a fetal position or evacuating buildings during earthquakes. The original information in the e-mail claims to come from a person who has worked in earthquake recoveries.

However, the information goes against proven earthquake response protocols, according to local emergency preparedness officials.

"The information in this e-mail does not align with what the vast majority of scientists and emergency planners say work," says Derek White, interim director of Columbia County Emergency Management. "It is important that people have the right information when it comes to protecting themselves and loved ones during an earthquake."

Earthquakes are a very real threat to Columbia County. The Cascadia Subduction Zone, an earthquake fault that sits off the Oregon coast, ruptures every 300-500 years, with the last quake occurring in 1700. Subduction zone earthquakes are major seismic events, causing earthquakes and tsunamis like those seen in Anchorage in 1964 and Indonesia in 2004. "While this is the most likely cause of a future earthquake for us, there are some other faults nearby, so employers and citizens alike need to be prepared," White adds.

The procedure that has proven to work best is drop,

cover and hold on. This means dropping to the floor where you are, getting under a sturdy desk or table, and staying there until the earthquake ends.

Some other helpful tips from Columbia County Emergency Management include:

- Do not evacuate during the earthquake. You are very likely to be hit with debris, such as pieces of ceiling and glass. "It is highly unlikely with a Cascadia subduction zone quake that you will be able to walk at all in any regard," White says.

- If you cannot get under something, drop beside a desk or something else that is relatively stable (low-to-ground file cabinets, interior walls, etc.), cover your head and stay there.

- Try to stay away from windows and the outside walls.

- Do not stand in door thresholds or frames as you are likely to be hit with debris.

- If you are outside, go to an

open space away from buildings and power lines. Stay away from the bottoms of hills or underneath cliffs, where there could be landslides or rock falls.

- Once the earthquake ends, try to evacuate before tremors start. Try to turn off electricity at breaker panels and gas lines as you leave. If you are stuck, try to save your breath by tapping on debris around you so that emergency responders can locate you more easily.

For more information regarding earthquake safety, go to <http://www.earthquakecountry.info/dropcoverholdon/>. For further information on local emergency preparedness, contact Emergency Management at 503-366-3931 or [emergency.management@co.columbia.or.us](mailto:emergency.management@co.columbia.or.us), or visit the Emergency Management blog at <http://columbiacountyem.blogspot.com>.

# Sometimes you have to rip the cover off the book

by Robert Evans Wilson, Jr., [www.jumpstartyourmeeting.com](http://www.jumpstartyourmeeting.com)

On a summer weekend in 1977, my friend Tony and I made plans to go waterskiing. When he picked me up there were two people in the car that I did not know. He introduced his new girlfriend, Sue, and her brother, Bubba.

Bubba was the quintessential redneck. Within minutes of getting on the boat, he stuffed a wad of chewing tobacco the size of a baseball in his cheek, then chugged several beers. In less than an hour we were

dealing with an irritable drunk. He belched loudly, spit constantly, complained incessantly, and couldn't string two words together without inserting a profanity. In short, Bubba made our visit to the lake completely unpleasant. Eventually he passed out in the back of the boat and we enjoyed the rest of the day.

My opinion of Bubba's character, talent and intelligence could not have been lower. I looked upon him as a total loser. A dimwit who would never amount to anything.

At the end of the day, Tony drove Sue and Bubba home first. When we arrived at their home, Bubba was awake and

# Family meals bring extra benefits

One of the best pieces of advice we can offer families these days is to make sure you eat together as a family most nights of the week. Eating together as a family provides a variety of positive benefits for all family members.

Parents who regularly eat with their children can help their children develop lifelong healthful eating habits. Children who regularly eat meals with their family eat more fruits and vegetables and less fried food, saturated fat and soda, than children who do not. They also have a higher intake of calcium, iron, fiber and vitamins. All of these nutrients are important for the growth and development of children.

Here are some additional benefits:

- A University of Illinois study of 7-11 year old children found that children who did well in school and on achievement

tests regularly ate meals with their families.

- A study conducted at Harvard's Graduate School of Education found that young children who regularly participated in family meals had increased vocabulary, which helps with reading skills.

- The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University found that teens who eat dinner with their parents six or seven times per week are less likely to smoke cigarettes or marijuana and less likely to consume alcohol. They are also less likely to have sex, get into fights and have thoughts of suicide.

- A study at the University of Minnesota found that girls who participate regularly in family meals have less eating disorders.

How can a busy family make family meals happen?

**See Family on page 21**

somewhat sober. Sue asked Tony to come inside and see the new dress she'd bought. Then she turned to Bubba and said, "Why don't you show Robert your chickens?"

We walked around to the back of the house and Bubba pointed toward a miniature barn. It was the cutest little building I'd ever seen. Rounded roof, little windows, bright colors and lots of lacy gingerbread all around.

"Where'd you get this?" I asked. "I built it," replied Bubba.

"From a kit?" I asked. "No, I built it after my grandfather's barn."

For the first time that day, I was impressed by Bubba. When we went inside, the first thing I saw was a display case full of blue ribbons. Dozens of them. These were first place awards from around the country that Bubba had won for his chickens. Then he started showing me his chickens and telling me about them. Suddenly the cussing and complaining Bubba became eloquent.

As we walked around the barn, he showed me more than 50 of the most beautiful and exotic looking birds I'd ever seen. Unusual looking birds that I would never have known were chickens. These were not birds

for eating or laying eggs — these were prize show chickens.

He explained to me that chickens originated in the jungles of Asia. He told me how he bred and raised them. What he did to make their plumage bright, colorful and plentiful. I was amazed by the extent of his knowledge and I listened eagerly to everything he said. He spoke with an enthusiasm and energy that I could not have imagined earlier. The difference was that I had entered his real world. The world he loved and was excited about. Here was his hobby, but he was so motivated by it that it brought out the very best in him.

I learned a big lesson that day. I'd always heard my teachers say, "Don't judge a book by its cover," but until then I had not witnessed the truth of that proverb. I decided then and there that I would never judge another person completely by my first impression. That if time and opportunity allowed, I would look further, deeper.

When you discover someone's passion, you have discovered what motivates them. And, that is the key to communicating with them in the most productive way possible.

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