

Weekly Newspapers
Serving the Communities of
Northern Clackamas County



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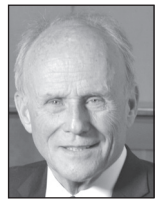
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Opinion

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Need for new Clackamas County courthouse is overwhelming

CITIZEN'S VIEW



John Foote



Kathie Steele

Recent newspaper stories have relayed concerns about the county budget, and questioned plans to build a new Clackamas County courthouse. We fear that this dialogue may result in the public wondering if a new courthouse is needed.

The answer is unequivocally yes! Our community is in dire and urgent need of a new courthouse. The residents and stakeholders of Clackamas County deserve to know the key information that makes this need overwhelming:

■ Our courthouse is obsolete. The existing courthouse, located in downtown Oregon City, was built in 1937. At that time, the county's population was slightly more than 50,000 and the courthouse was home to virtually every county department, the county jail and one courtroom. Today, our population is close to 420,000, and the county continues to grow at a fast rate. We've carved out enough space for 11 total courtrooms — but that's still three fewer than what our caseload demands require. We're completely out of space and we have no prospects for expanding.

Equipment used to keep the courthouse operational is far past its useful life, and lots of overtime is spent keeping us hanging on. A failure is inevitable.

■ Seismic and geographic risk: The courthouse was not built to modern seismic standards, and retrofitting for seismic events is not a prudent decision given the enormous cost, especially when the courthouse no longer meets the needs of the community. Further, we're located on the bank of the Willamette River. And we don't mean near the bank, we mean on the bank. Our building is now less than one yard away from an eroding ledge. Back in 1981, when Judge Steele started practicing law at the courthouse, the building was 10.5 feet away. It doesn't take a legal scholar to see where this is going!

■ Delays of justice: Our current courthouse is so small that Clackamas County will not receive any additional judicial positions until a new one is built. As we haven't had enough room for additional judges for years, we've already been experiencing bulging caseloads. This leads to heartbreaking delays that

have a real effect on people, like mothers who are only seeking child support. Some civil cases are scheduled one-to-two years out. Our delay time will only continue to lengthen.

■ Lack of security/safety: Our current courthouse is so small that victims and defendants share the crowded corridors. Families of perpetrators can be next to witnesses. Jurors have no assembly rooms on site, which at times can leave them exposed to improper communications and unsafe conditions.

Some 140 staffers from the District Attorney's office, judges and others from the Oregon Judicial Department, Sheriff deputies and other personnel continue to serve hundreds — sometimes thousands — of residents daily. But the simple fact of the matter is that the courthouse no longer adequately meet the demands of our increasing population.

The time to act is now, as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity has presented itself. The state of Oregon has established a fund that can provide matching dollars toward the construction of a new courthouse. In 2017, the Legislature pro-

vided the county with \$1.2 million for project planning costs. Last June, the Legislature authorized \$31.5 million in state bond funds for the project — funds that are contingent upon Clackamas County securing a local match. Altogether, the state could cover \$95 million in eligible project costs toward the potential \$230 million project.

If Clackamas County doesn't match this money with local dollars, we would lose out on this immense partnership opportunity with the state. That's unacceptable. If this happens and then the courthouse becomes unusable due to its physical state, then we'll be financially on the hook for the entire cost of replacing it. Here's our choice. Pay some of the shared costs now or pay for all of it later.

Factoring in population growth, the significant safety risks and the unique opportunity, all of our residents should get behind building a new courthouse as soon as possible.

John Foote is Clackamas County's district attorney, and Kathie Steele is presiding judge of the Clackamas County Circuit Court.

Support your community's local newspaper

Pamplin Media recently circulated information about supporting local newspapers that underpin their communities.

Social media, Wikipedia, and self-posted and researched news are beginning to be dominant. I feel it's time for us to speak up, as interested leaders, and show our support for researched and timely journalism.

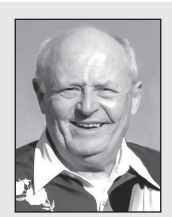
Our news resources need to serve our communities. They need to be researched and properly presented as stories that identify people, places and issues of concern to us.

We often complain about stories and incomplete information, while not always realizing that newspapers and print media in general require not just ad sales, but subscriptions to survive.

Dr. Pamplin, a business leader in Oregon, decided to underpin Oregon's communities with his idea called "community newspapers." His organization has established the evolution of 38 such newspapers that share regional information, while focusing in on local news in the Willamette Valley and Central Oregon. They further share the news from one newspaper location to others, within their system, allowing communities to get a broader view, while not losing the local focus.

Community newspapers are important. We need them. Let's not lose one of Oregon's best homegrown and important resources.

Gladstone resident Jerry Herrmann is president of Rivers of Life Center, a nonprofit organization that organizes cleanup efforts throughout the length of the Willamette River.



CITIZEN'S VIEW
Jerry Herrmann

Number extravaganza for Bob Moore's 91st birthday

Feb. 15 marked the 91st birthday of Bob Moore, the founder of Bob's Red Mill Natural Foods located in Milwaukie. Bob is a pioneer in producing high-quality nutritional whole-grain foods. The natural food business he founded in 1978 is an Oregon success story that continues to be an inspiration for generations to come.

When I met Bob personally at the store in Milwaukie, I appreciated his genuine and humble personality. I wanted to do something special for him on this occasion. After investigating some of the numbers in his life, I put together this set of numerical properties as a birthday gift for him:

Bob's full name and his new age, 91, have an interesting "prime" connection: if numbers 1 through 26 are assigned to letters A through Z, the sum of the letter numbers of Bob Moore equals 85. The 85th prime number is 439 and half of the reverse of 439, namely 934, equals 467, and 467 is the 91st prime number.

Bob's 91st birthday, Feb. 15, coincides with the 46th day of this year. If 46 is split into its

digits 4 and 6, the product of the fourth and sixth prime numbers, namely 7 and 13, yields 91. Additionally, 7 plus 13 equals 20 and 20 equals the left and right halves of 2020.

The reverse of Bob's new age, 91, is 19 and 19 equals the sum of the letter numbers of Bob.

Furthermore, the digits of 91, 9 and 1, differ by 8 and 8 equals the sum of the digits of Bob's birthdate, 2/15 (2 + 1 + 5 = 8).

The reverse of 215 (2/15), namely 512, equals 8 cube.

Moreover, the reverse of 46 (see item # 2), namely 64, equals 8 square.

Also, the eighth prime number is 19 and 19 is the reverse of 91 (Bob's new age).

Bob and Moore consist of 3 and 5 letters respectively. The difference and the sum of 3 and 5 are 2 and 8. Note that 2 cube equals 8 and 8^2 is 64 (see item # 7).

Lastly, Bob turned 91 and entered the 92nd year of his life. Note that the reverses of 91 and 92, namely 19 and 29, put side by side yield Bob's birth year, 1929.

Thank you for your lifelong dedication in advocating for healthier and nutritional foods, Bob Moore. I hope you had a



COURTESY PHOTO
Bob Moore, founder of Bob's Red Mill Natural Foods in Milwaukie, has become a national brand and recently celebrated his 91st birthday.

happy and healthy 91st birthday!

P.S. Coincidentally, my mom Aysie, who is visiting us from Istanbul, Turkey, turned 91 last November and she also wanted to wish Bob a happy 91st birthday. She and my dad visited Bob's Red Mill store with us about five years ago, and I introduced them to Bob. My mom (who cooked for us 24/7 when we were growing up) loved Bob's store and she was impressed with Bob's nutritional products.

Aziz S. Inan, Ph.D., is a professor in the Electrical Engineering Department at the University of Portland.

Why are rural Oregonians subsidizing Teslas?

Why are rural, low-income residents subsidizing Teslas for Oregon's urban elite?

Oregon state officials recently celebrated helping the state reach 25,000 registered electric vehicles (EVs) through local incentives and the Clean Vehicle Rebate Program. This celebration, however, is a punch in the gut to the state's low-income and rural residents whose taxes fund the rebates and incentives used to purchase the EVs by predominantly wealthy and urban Oregon residents.

There are two rebate programs through the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, a federal tax credit and local utility rebates (though local utility rebates generally tend to target businesses and the 2019 Nissan LEAF). For example, a consumer could use between \$7,500 and \$10,000 in taxpayer dollars to purchase a new 2020 Tesla Model 3, which currently sells for \$39,999. In fact, 24% of the EVs registered in Oregon are Teslas.

These incentive programs may shave a couple thousand dollars off the consumer cost of Teslas and plug-in hybrids, but their prices will likely still be too high for those with lower incomes. Purchasing an EV also isn't a viable option for many residents living in rural

counties due to a lack of EV infrastructure.

The three counties with the largest number of EV purchases, Washington, Multnomah and Clackamas, are all incidentally located in the Portland metro area. They also happen to be the three wealthiest counties in the state, so it's no wonder their residents purchase 75% of the state's registered EVs.

David Larson, Jaguar Land Rover's general manager of product development, told ABC news that EVs "still cost a lot more than ICE [internal combustion engine] cars and charging takes a long time ... For a rancher in Montana, EVs are not the solution. These cars are for people who live in urban areas and don't travel more than 100 miles or more a week." The same logic could be applied to people living in Eastern and Southern Oregon.

EVs are being promoted due to their supposed environmental benefits, but in reality, the emissions are simply being shifted from urban cities to rural areas. The electricity powering the vehicles comes from a mix of coal, hydro, wind, solar and gas power plants. You won't see any of these plants in Portland, as most of them are located in other areas of the state, such as Eastern Oregon, where utilities can pur-

chase and construct facilities on large plots of land.

Oregon officials are very vocal when it comes to "environmental benefits," but seem to have tight lips when it comes to the range of issues EVs experience.

The vehicles use lithium ion batteries, which are sensitive to temperature changes. Larson says that cold weather can cut range by up to one third. These issues make EVs a suitable option for warm, urban areas — a big reason why the largest markets for EVs in the US are located in California, Texas, and Florida. This may not be an issue in warmer climates, but EVs will experience a variety of problems during Oregon's cold winters. The battery can also be significantly drained depending on how fast one drives, heating or cooling the vehicle, and radio usage.

Portland also has one of the milder climates in the state, so it is no surprise that the state has seen a surge of EV purchases in the urban metro area. But even in an urban environment, relying on an EV can prove costly and inefficient. Recent electricity blackouts in California have left thousands without power, leaving EV owners stranded unless they own a gasoline powered generator to charge their vehicle or have access to other means of transportation.

Officials' environmental concerns should be eased by the fact that vehicle emissions in Oregon are decreasing

despite a growing population and are projected by ODOT to decrease to 20% below 1990 levels by 2050. This is due in part to older vehicles being retired and replaced by more efficient cars.

Multiple legislative concepts related to EV infrastructure will be discussed in the legislative short session this year. LC 222 would amend building code requirements to create an EV infrastructure requirement for the construction of certain buildings, such as privately-owned commercial buildings and residential and mixed-use buildings with five or more "dwelling units." LC 224 would authorize the Public Utility Commission to allow utilities to recover the costs of EV infrastructure from all ratepayers.

The passage of these potential bills would further disperse the cost of EVs to those who do not own one through increased power bills and housing prices. Oregon taxpayers from across various counties and income levels should not be subsidizing EV purchases that tend to be used by wealthier residents living in urban environments. Given that EVs are already decreasing in price as new vehicles enter the market and technology improves, state officials should not move forward with the above legislative concepts and should eliminate the unjust EV rebates.

Rachel Dawson is a policy analyst at Cascade Policy Institute, Oregon's free market public policy research institute.

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