

MY OPINION FROM BEHIND THE GREEN DOOR

A territory to care for

BY CHRIS BRATT

There is a venerable citizen forester who taught many of us small woodlands/forest owners in the northwest a lot about how we should be caring for our public and private forest lands. His name is Orville Camp. He and his wife, Mary, have for many years, managed and conducted tours on their own 180-acre forest parcel just south of the Applegate Watershed in Selma, Oregon.

One of Orville's theories of sustainable forest management that he practices has got me thinking seriously about its implementation on our public forest lands nationwide. He believes that the reason public land management agencies like the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Forest Service have so much trouble and controversy managing our public forests is because their foresters never really spend enough time in the forest or have any individual authority to manage the land. Neither do they live in the rural forest communities they are affecting with unpopular management plans crafted elsewhere in a political urban environment.

Orville's contention is that foresters should not be managing our nation's forests from a computer in the city. Under his stewardship concepts, every forester would be assigned a parcel of forest land (2,000 acres or more) to live on and caretake. He believes that foresters must become intimately involved with their forests and take full responsibility for keeping these assigned acres of trees healthy and vigorous. They should work with the community in making management

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decisions. He insists the results of this more personal forest management would lead to more permanent forest jobs and products while creating more sustainable rural communities and healthy forests.

From my perspective, it's time Orville's proposal is granted some consideration by the BLM and Forest Service. Under their present joint Northwest Forest Plan, his idea of having federal foresters actually live and work in forest communities would fit perfectly into the common adaptive management approach these two agencies have adopted.

Throughout this entire ecological region of more than 24 million public forest acres here in the northwest, surely many thousand acres could be set aside for this kind of experiment in

ecologic, economic and community development. Orville's (and others) success on the small private scale managing their woodlands also may be an answer for agency management success. Putting agency foresters on the ground following the standards and guidelines of the Northwest Forest Plan and our existing environmental laws would lead to more intelligent and accountable site-specific management decisions for our public lands as well.

This is a critical and necessary time for choosing new approaches like Orville's for managing our vast public forests. Old federal agency proposals for revising existing forest plans (the BLM is already revising downward the ecologically sound, balanced and comprehensive approach found in the Northwest Forest Plan) must be looked at now as being based on more harmful forest-wide management considerations and faulty assumptions. These revisions put forward by timber interests and reactionary politicians years ago must be reevaluated in light of our faltering economy and increased awareness of the environmental consequences of such actions. Ideas like Orville's also become more important given the very real threats like global warming to sustaining the broader functioning of our ecosystems.

Could federal foresters living and working on the land they manage do a better job? With help, I believe they could. We have many good, well-trained people working in forestry who would love to get out of the office and into the field. The help they need must come from upper level bureaucrats who are willing to examine contemporary approaches to ecosystem management and forest science, make sure that logging levels are not placed above other forest uses and values, provide adequate funding and reject political lobbying and interference with on-the-ground decisions.

If you think, as I do, that Orville Camp's idea has merit, you might want to explore his other ideas for forest management. He has written, *The Forest Farmers Handbook—a guide to natural selection forest management*, Sky River Press, Ashland, Oregon 1984. He also has submitted alternative management proposals for BLM-managed lands in the area where he lives.

Like many of our nation's institutions, our federal land management agencies are experiencing their own crisis of confidence. I say give them all a territory to care for and lots of good ideas to manage it. Maybe this will revitalize their commitment to sustainable forestry, habitats and communities.

Let me in on any good ideas you have.

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VETERANS' CORNER

Fall musings

BY VICTOR CORTEZ

As I write this, October has just begun, a few trees have turned color with slower changing trees seemingly in no hurry to change. The first rainstorm is due tomorrow, Halloween is filling the stores and the Palin-Biden debate is about to make history.

As you read this, November is here. Rain is our friend, Halloween sugar rushes abound, the election is here, and a sincere domestic Thanksgiving wish is gracefully delivered in a timely manner.

The concept of writing to you 30 days in the future about things yet to have happened is interesting and challenging in that my perception of what is true has yet to occur. And yet, if I am correct, what I apply here with ink to paper is/was the prediction of the future, past. With that disclaimer, let me bring you up-to-date.

There is now a post office box for submissions and information exchange for Veterans' Corner which is: Veterans' Corner, c/o Victor Cortez, P.O. Box 3285, Applegate, Oregon 97533. Please remember I must receive any

information no later than the 20th of the published month for printing the 1st, 40 days later. Example, Sept. 1 issue release, Sept. 20 deadline for Nov 1st issue. Nov. 20th for Jan. 1st issue. Please remember dates for listing scheduled events.

VPC-ITO (Veterans, Parenting, Community—In That Order), as presented last issue, has some successes and some disappointments to relate. One disappointment is that I cannot report on the meeting that recently took place because it hasn't happened yet. That future-past trick required that I wait until information that I received September 30 (yesterday) be assimilated into reality.

A few days prior I had read in the *Mail Tribune* that White City Southern Oregon Rehabilitation Center and Clinics (SORCC aka "the Dom") was to receive two new vans from the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) in a ceremony the Dom. Nervous tension developed as I reacted instinctively to brace myself for combat. We had been waiting patiently for BM (Bureaucratic Movement) on our request for a van in the Applegate Corridor for months now, with no word from the Veterans Administration or SORCC in White City. I started developing that invisible feeling again. I knew we had to act, to fight for one of those vans, to keep pushing for Applegate Medical Services and to correct the disrespectful treatment of one of our Applegate Veterans. Tomorrow we march on the Dom. I

won't sleep tonight.

In the morning, dosed with coffee and my pain and head medications (stress always kicks it up a notch), I polished my armor, sharpened my sword and awaited my trusty steed. (Kathy the Rock Lady, a non-veteran affiliate volunteer, showed up to drive me instead.) On the way, I practiced my tact. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) anxieties tend to spew forth unintelligibly when I'm treating my survival guilt with penance of service due for family members.

As usual, all my prep was nullified shortly after arrival by those famous BM words, "He's not in his office at the moment but if you would like to take a seat..." BM's and waiting, two of my favorite things. While we wait... a

short description of Dan Kelly, Assistant to the Director at SORCC.

Dan Kelly was the liaison who came to Applegate Community Church and spoke to our VPC-ITO group, early in our attempts to bring veterans' services to the Applegate. He has been helpful, honest and realistic. There are communication

issues that have limited cooperation and dissemination and the desire to work with us whose PTSD, manias or just choice have led us to choose the rural sanctuary of Applegate as our asylum. For this I thank him and hope you will also by calling and encouraging him on behalf of Applegate Veterans at 541-826-2111 ext. 3346.

So...now that Dan has arrived, we catch up and get to the point. I show Dan the article about SORCC receiving the two vans from DAV. "Are either of these for us?" I posed. They are finalizing, but as it stands, both vans will be headed for the Applegate. One pointed towards SORCC White City, the other towards Grants Pass Veterans' Center. Eureka! Achievement! Success! But wait, the details are unclear so the cheering is on hold. Logistics take time but hopefully at this reading, someone will be scanning the *Applegater* on their way to SORCC in the comfort of a new transport van and can thank Dan for the rest of us. If not, hopefully soon.

Next on the agenda was the disrespectful treatment by an SORCC bureaucrat in eligibility whose name I won't mention because I don't know it. I can say that Dan Kelly would like to know the name for follow-through. It was his hand-carried delivery that precipitated and expects better treatment than that which was delivered to our fellow veteran. Hurrah!

With that we move on to the Applegate Medical Services agenda.

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