

Editorial

Something good

Something happened in Fort Bragg over the last 24 hours that was a bright spot in what for many is a difficult time, both in the political realm and with the current weather on the coast.

At 7:56 p.m. Tuesday, a man wrote to a coastal email list, to which the ICO subscribes, that he had lost \$550 of his Social Security money while at the local DMV office. He offered a \$50 reward "plus a free conscience" for its return.

Within about an hour, another coastal resident wrote that he'd be willing to be one of several people to kick in and make up the money if it wasn't returned to the original owner.

Throughout the evening and all day Wednesday, emails kept arriving saying "I'll chip in," "Put me down," "Me too."

By 8:22 p.m. Wednesday, the report was as follows:

"As of this moment ... I have \$342 in cash and checks in hand ... and another \$75 in checks which are 'in the mail,' for a total of \$417.

"There are a number of other contributors that have indicated an intent to contribute ... So, I think its clear we will make the goal of \$550, plus or minus just a bit.

"0Congratulations to all."

Indeed.

—Chris McManus



FENCE POST Letters to the Editor column is a forum of ideas. Letters are welcome and should be emailed if possible and limited to 300 words. ALL LETTERS MAY BE EDITED FOR BREVITY and grammar. We may limit the number of letters from a single correspondent or on a single topic. All letters must be signed and include complete mailing address and telephone number for verification, though only name and city will be printed. Address letters to Editor, Independent Coast Observer, PO Box 1200, Gualala, CA 95445. Via email: letters@mendonoma.com.

Thoughtful

Editor:

Thank you for the support of our community as expressed on page 2 of last week's issue. This north coast community is thoughtful and special to all of us who live here. You could not have expressed our feelings better!

Pat and George Haas
Genny Wilson
The Sea Ranch

VOIP a bust

Editor:

Sea Ranch Connect is a bust. If you have telephone service with Frontier or what used to be Verizon, keep it. The internet telephone service on this coast is extremely undependable.

Fortunately, the law requires the old landline system to remain intact, even though AT&T does not want to be in the landline business.

Internet phone service is as undependable as the cell phones on the coast.

Hopefully you have good neighbors to depend on in the event of an emergency.

Sue Hart
The Sea Ranch

Rich in irony

Editor:

Complaints about opposition to Trump are rich in irony. But if you don't see it, you're not likely to. And if you do, but aren't bothered by it, or by Trump, you likely don't care.

But consider that Trump has done nothing to unify the country and just about everything to unify and fuel the opposition.

It's just getting started. Get used to it.

M. D. Olson
Sebastopol

Groundhog Day

Editor:

As I write this, it's Groundhog Day; Punxsutawney Phil saw his shadow and has scurried away to await six more

weeks of winter. Most everyone has seen the film "Groundhog Day" about a reporter who has to relive his Groundhog Day experiences over and over again until he wakes up and gets it right.

This is what I'm feeling about today's politics, especially Trump's executive orders and his team's irrational utterances. Kelly Ann Conway and Mike Pence, constant guests on news-casts and talk shows, continually spew propaganda answers to every question asked rather than "just the facts, ma'am." Steve Bannon tells the press to forget their First Amendment rights and just "shut up."

Sean Spicer can't get through a day without lying about something: "Trump's inauguration crowd was the largest ever;" "Trump won by a landslide;" "Trump received the most votes nationwide;" "Trump's the most popular president ever," etc., etc.

And Trump forbade non-governmental agencies from giving complete, nonbiased, and perhaps life-saving medical advice to women; gave the nod to finishing the Dakota Access Pipeline; ordered scientists to delete their website climate information; picked a fight with Australia; threatened to invade Mexico; promised to halt monetary support to Sanctuary Cities, and to universities and cities where protests were staged, and closed access to the U. S. by visa and green-card holders.

On and on it goes. When will they get it right? It seems the nation is doomed to reliving this Groundhog Day nightmare over and over again. It may be "spring time for Hitler and Germany" but it's winter

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Opening Dialogue...

“Don't let us make imaginary evils, when you know we have so many real ones to encounter.”

—Oliver Goldsmith (1730 - 1774)

Open Space

Open Space is an occasional feature devoted to opinion or information received from our readers or other sources which does not fit into the Fence Post column comfortably. Authors' opinions are their own; we welcome contributions to this column and will publish them as space permits.

The threat of offshore drilling

By Tom Cochrane

(Tom Cochrane is a California Professional Geologist and a former employee in the oil and gas business. He lives in The Sea Ranch.)

The bad news is that we now have a party in power that wants more oil production and offshore drilling. The good news is that for the oil and gas industry to actually be able to drill off the California coast, it takes a long process with a lot of paperwork and public input. This gives us several steps that we can take to slow and hopefully even prevent offshore oil drilling.

There is no doubt that there is oil and gas out there. Oil sand outcrops in Arena Cove. Offshore basins stretch the length of the California coast. The known rock formations are the same ones that produce offshore Santa Barbara. We can contest that the amount of oil and gas is uneconomical to warrant offshore drilling. The offshore basins are narrow, highly faulted, thicker sections of Pleistocene un-

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Nonviolent resistance to Trump: creative, powerful...and growing

by Rivera Sun

(Author/Activist Rivera Sun, syndicated by PeaceVoice, is the author of "The Dandelion Insurrection" and other books, and the Programs Coordinator for Campaign Non-violence.)

The rise of Donald Trump has been infuriating, horrifying, and ridiculous all at once. Meanwhile, what we, the People, are doing to resist injustice, oppression, discrimination, hate, bigotry, and authoritarianism is downright inspiring. Nonviolent action is reaching new heights of creativity in the United States, widening in frequency and participation. Here's just a sample of how ordinary, extraordinary people have mobilized for justice in the past month.

4.5 million people (3.3 million in U.S.) march for women's rights

The Women's March and Sister Marches exploded across the U.S. and around the world the day after the inauguration. March turnouts doubled or tripled expectations, and the number of solidarity or related marches far exceeded expectations. From senior citizens marching with walkers around nursing homes to 30 freezing souls in

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Sea Ranch poet Lipani featured at Third Thursday

On Thursday, Feb. 16, 7:30 p.m., The Third Thursday Poetry & Jazz Reading Series at 215 Main wine bar in Point Arena will feature Sea Ranch poet Lorraine Lipani. Admission is free; small plates, sandwiches and a variety of beverages will be available for purchase.

The reading will begin with live improv jazz and an open mic with jazz improv; the reading will conclude with more live improv jazz.

Originally from Brooklyn, New York, Lipani lived in the high desert mountains of northern New Mexico for 25 years, where she was influenced by Pueblo cultures and developed an appreciation for wilderness and solitude.

She is a trained massage therapist and cera-

mist whose sculptures have been shown in fine art galleries nationwide. In 2013 she relocated to Northern California and currently lives at The Sea Ranch.

Lipani began writing poems in her early teens and over the years has published works in journals and newspapers. In 2016 she published a collection of love poems, "Wild Solitude," which was a finalist in the Indie Excellence Awards that year.

Third Thursday Poetry & Jazz is supported by The Third Thursday Poetry Group, many anonymous donors, and Poets & Writers, Inc. through a grant it has received from The James Irvine Foundation.

For more information, call 215 Main at 707-882-3215.

Kawela Quintet and art opening at 215 Main next weekend

The Kawela Quintet returns to Point Arena to play three sets of mainstream jazz starting at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 18, at 215 Main wine bar. The event also marks the opening of an exhibit of new work by artist Carole Watanabe, the wife of Kawela Quintet bassist Don Watanabe.

Sax player Michael Gold comes all the way from San Francisco to play with this group. "I get to play with this band only a few times a year," he said recently, "and it takes hours to drive up to Point Arena. But I'm always glad I made the trip — and I wish I could

do it more often. Terrific players, awesome tunes, receptive crowd."

The musicians of the Kawela Quintet are Hal Forman on trumpet and flugelhorn, Michael Gold on tenor and soprano sax, Don Watanabe on upright bass, Gabe Yañez on drums and Chris Doering on seven-string guitar.

Admission to this event is free. 215 Main's selection of beers, wines, nonalcoholic beverages and goodies from Franny's Kitchen will be available for purchase.

For more information call 215 Main at 707-882-3215.

Twitter broadens protections on harassment and abuse

By Barbara Ortutay and Michael Kunzelman

Associated Press
NEW YORK (AP)

— Twitter announced Tuesday it is expanding efforts to protect its users from abuse and harassment, the latest milestone in a broader, growing corporate campaign to crack down on online hate.

The social media giant said it has begun identifying people who have been banned for abusive behavior and it will stop them from creating new accounts. The company said its changes, which also include a new "safe search" feature, will be implemented in the coming weeks.

In July, Twitter banned conservative provocateur Milo Yiannopoulos, an editor of the right-wing news site Breitbart News, for "participating in or inciting targeted abuse of individuals." Twitter subsequently suspended the accounts of other prominent figureheads of the "alt-right" fringe movement, an amorphous mix of racism, white nationalism, xenophobia and anti-feminism.

Twitter has been under fire for failing to address hate and abuse on the site since its founding a decade ago. Balancing its reputation as a free speech haven has come into conflict with efforts to protect users.

Other internet companies have taken recent steps to curb abusive behavior and ban users who violate rules against promoting hate.

Reddit banned a forum for white nationalists from its social news website last Wednesday. A message at the link for the "r/altright" subreddit attributed its ban to an impermissible "proliferation of personal and confidential information."

Also last week, the crowdfunding website GoFundMe removed a campaign for a conservative author and self-described "researcher" on the internet conspiracy theory known as "pizzagate," which alleged with no evidence that Democrats were running a child sex ring out of a Washington, D.C., pizza shop. Brittany Pettibone had launched her GoFundMe campaign for a video podcast about "traditional values that once made Western Civilization great," including "love of one's own culture, race and country."

GoFundMe spokesman Bobby Whithorne said in an email that Pettibone's campaign was removed because it violated the company's terms of service, which include rules against promoting hate, violence, harassment, dis-

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Cochrane Open Space... from Page 5

productive rocks, etc.

Approximately 15 exploratory wells have been drilled offshore north of Santa Barbara. None of them found a prolific oil field or more drilling and leasing would have occurred.

We have both state and federal jurisdictions governing the offshore. We have the California Coastal Commission regulating uses along the adjoining shore. Offshore National Monuments and protected areas prevent drilling north of Santa Barbara to Point Arena. We need to set up, extend, or annex the rest of offshore northern California into protected zones. We should work toward getting the Gualala River estuary, and other northern rivers included as part of the offshore protected zones.

The seismic lines that the oil industry has offshore are 10 to 15 miles apart, and only produce regional interpretations of the geology from very old data. The oil industry will want new, state-of-the-art, seismic data to define exploratory targets. We can protest the shooting of new seismic lines with a good chance of success. Ah, the poor whales, the baby seals, migrating salmon, sea birds, abalone, crab fishing, the sport and commercial fishing industry, tourism, etc., etc.

Once the oil and gas industry decides it wants to drill, companies will need leases to drill. These leases must be put up for competitive bidding. This will tell us where they want to drill. We then can draw in the adjacent neighbors as particularly interested parties for their input at public meetings, which will extend the nomination period.

Since the lease bidding is competitive, it will attract several different companies. We can then examine the record of some of these companies and their past environmental disasters. We can have input into the terms of the leases, and the royalties that the companies pay to states and the federal government. We need to push our legislative representatives for higher royalties, especially for California, and that funds can be set aside for environmental cleanup in the event of pollution.

Before drilling permits are issued, environmental studies, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) must be conducted. The public has input at several opportunities — when it is proposed, at public meetings for a first draft, and at final draft time. Of course, we need more studies and information. No drilling fluids, drilling mud, or rock samples are to be dumped into the ocean. Then there is the question of where are they going to dispose of these materials. Not in our back yard! We want no unlined open pits. We want no injection of fluids into formations adjacent to the water table.

Exploratory wells (wildcats) are drilled from drilling ships. The safety regulations of these ships need to be vigorously examined, as it was a problem in the Gulf of Mexico blowout.

If successful in finding large amounts of economic reserves of oil and gas, a Production Platform for the offset and production drilling will need to be constructed. This is another time for public input to contest and get further environmental protection. We can see them, the platforms are in commercial shipping lanes, they interfere with fish and bird migration patterns, etc.

A pipeline to the shore will be proposed. We can contest that one easily on environmental reasons, and no one will give a permit to put the pipeline on their property. Then the oil industry will settle for oil tanker ships to take the oil to refineries and market. We should be able to regulate when they cannot dock because of weather reasons to get the oil. We want double hulled oil tankers with American registry. No offshore companies that we cannot find for a lawsuit!

With all these hurdles for the oil industry to jump through, we should be able to have input throughout the process, which may delay and stall the drilling for 10 to 15 years. By then, BP should have evolved into a really Beyond Petroleum company, green energy will dominate the energy production businesses, the demand for petroleum will be much less, and environmentalists will occupy the White House and legislatures. We all must be part of the process and continue the fight step by step.

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