



STORM BLESSINGS

Tom Bender * North Coast Citizen * 9 Dec. 07

- Thanks for a dry winter so far, so the ground wasn't saturated.
- Thanks that it didn't rain more.
- Thanks for almost no rain after the storm, with all the damaged roofs!
- Thanks that another storm didn't follow.
- Thanks that it was unusually warm during the power outage.
- Thanks that with all of the trees falling on houses, I haven't heard of anyone being killed by falling trees.
- Thanks for the amazing, miraculous "near-misses"!
- Thanks that three "500-year" storms in ten years should convince any remaining doubters that the impacts of global warming are already occurring, and major action needs to be taken to minimize further escalation.
- Thanks that everyone was better prepared than ever before. Storm-operational gas stations, banks, groceries, lumber companies!
- Thanks that the "cow-pie" dairy refuges worked!
- Thanks for the "free lunch" barbecues that turned potential food loss into gifts to others.
- Thanks for our wonderful TPUD, ODOT, public works, and emergency preparedness people.
- Thanks for a wonderful, open-hearted community that opened its arms, hearts, and pocketbooks to help each other.
- Thanks for the peaceful, "out-of-time" evenings around the fire, with soup warming on top, a couple of candles burning, and friends around.

- Thanks that splintered trees can still be used for OSB panels and paper, and can be replanted with genetically-better stock.
- Thanks for plenty of firewood.
- Thanks for simple phones, wood stoves, non-electric propane heaters, warm blankets, dry refuges. 3/4 of the people in the world live constantly under worse conditions than we have had for less than a week.
- Thanks for how beautiful the sunrise looked afterwards.
- Thanks for all the gifts of the heart we all received and gave.
- Thanks that this wasn't the "big one". We'll be more ready next time.

Driving through storm-darkened Bayside Gardens and Manzanita, with only a rare candle visible once and a while, I turned onto Ocean Road one night, only to see a huge new vacation home with every light in the place generator-blazing. No people visible, only one car in the driveway. I felt sad that people with such resources didn't know the community well enough yet to be able to reach out and offer shelter to others in need.

In last years' storms, cell phones were a new boon – they often worked when other things didn't. This time they didn't. But generators did help. Next time they may not. We need to prepare also for longer isolation emergencies, and their different needs. But also to be thankful for the silver-linings in the last week.