

Siuslaw News
P.O. Box 10
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Opinion

125TH ANNIVERSARY FLASHBACK

1890 | THE WEST ❖ FLORENCE TIMES ❖ THE SIUSLAW OAR ❖ THE SIUSLAW NEWS ❖ SIUSLAW NEWS | 2015

This year marks Siuslaw News’ quasiquicentennial, our 125th anniversary, a remarkable achievement for any business in a small community like Florence. To commemorate this milestone, throughout the year we’ll feature some of the town’s history as originally published in the newspaper, including historic articles and photos from more than a century ago. —*Editor*

Florence — ‘City of Progress’

*Originally Published July 13, 1967
The Siuslaw News, Vol. 7, No. 28*

The greatest heritage that Florence can claim from its pioneer forefathers besides initiative, perhaps, is that of genuine and open-hearted friendliness.

First visited by Hudson Bay Company trappers in 1826, Florence was opened for settlement in 1876 when a former Coast Indian Treaty reservation was declared available to all for homesteading.

However, a dearth of highways in the early days made the Siuslaw River and its tributary streams the only main avenues of travel and commerce until the 1920s.

The lack of transportation was remedied with the construction of adequate roadways.

Trade goods coming both into and from the area were then handled more efficiently with

a minimum of delay and at economical rates.

The City of Florence was originally incorporated under the provisions of Oregon State Laws in 1892, and for a number of years remained a quiet, sleepy, fishing and lumbering village.

The 1900 Census found 222 residents, and by 1940, the population reached 458. Since then, the growth has been considerably more impressive.

A census conducted by city personnel in June 1965 showed 1,978 residents, while the current estimate is 2,100.

A burst of activity in construction of major improvements occurred between 1948 and 1950 with the installation of the city-wide sewer system and construction of a new water supply source, treatment plant storage reservoir and distribution system.

Other major and extensive improvement

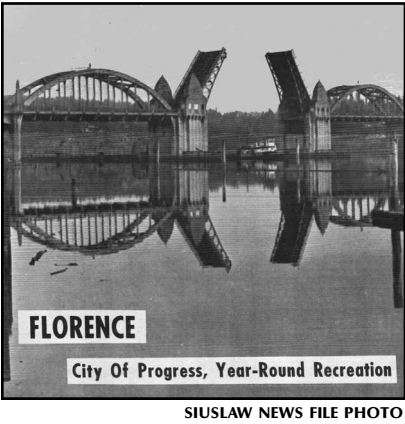
programs started in 1961 are still continuing, including sewer system extensions and street paving.

A total of 107 blocks of new streets have been paved in a four-year period.

The completion of the 1967 Street Program will see some 90 percent of all open streets in the city paved to full standard with curbs and gutters, storm sewers and all accessories.

It is not hard to see why, then, it is felt that few cities in Oregon can boast this percentage of fully-developed streets.

The new City Hall-Library building was completed and occupied near the end of



SIUSLAW NEWS FILE PHOTO

March of this year. The attractive and functional building is an outstanding example of what can be accomplished by a City Administration made up of dedicated, far-sighted and progressive people working in cooperation with a well-informed and interested citizenry anxious to improve their city.

Inasmuch as the greatest majority of cities tend to hold out their hand for help from other sources, Florence’s vast accomplishments, done almost entirely on its own, reflect creditably the resourcefulness and public spirit of its citizens — people who believe in their town and its progress. ❖

NEIGHBORS



BOB JACKSON
NEIGHBORHOOD CORRESPONDENT
For the Siuslaw News

Background music

Last week, somehow, like a puff of smoke, this column disappeared before it could be sent to the paper. It never appeared in the deleted area or any place else. This has never happened before now. Go figure! I am now attempting to re-write these thoughts as closely as possible.

The following rant will undoubtedly and indelibly cast me as an irascible, cantankerous Andy Rooney-type (which is OK with me, as I have long been a fan of his “straight-from-the-shoulder” style of writing).

The rapidly invasive proliferation of obnoxious background music continues to be a pet peeve of mine, and I am increasingly bewildered by the viewing public’s apathetic acceptance of this practice.

For example, when the contestants on the popular TV show “Jeopardy” are introduced, their names and occupations are nearly drowned out by a loud blast of theme show music. This practice is almost universal, even on the National Geographic Channel.

Much of the intrusive background sounds are not musical; to the contrary, they are annoying sounds similar to the wailing of a banshee or someone banging on pots and pans, etc., that make understanding the spoken words on the shows difficult and sometimes nearly impossible.

What sort of programmers are responsible for these travesties?

Remember the old corny “hillbilly” shows? Whenever a model T

Ford showed up, the distinctive sound of this old car was always blotted out by banjo music. I have never heard an old car that sounded anything like a banjo!

John Ford, the much lauded movie director, shot many films, like “Stagecoach,” against a beautiful but vast, harsh and rugged terrain; however, in these old epics, instead of hearing only the sound of horse hooves, the creaking and groaning of the wagons and the shouts of the

drivers, we were deluged with loud orchestra music.

In war movies, a four-engine bomber with radial engine has the same background sound dubbed in as a single-engine fighter with an inline engine. They both sound identically like a droning model airplane. This, I suppose, was to allow the actors in the cockpit and on the flight deck to talk without shouting — totally unrealistic!

“Strategic Air Command,” a movie starring Jimmy Stewart, had one scene that was very disappointing for me. A dramatic scene was shot of a squadron of B36 Peacemaker bombers flying into the

sunset, just above the clouds, with long contrails streaming behind.

The B36 was the largest mass-produced piston engine aircraft ever built. It had a 230-foot wingspan, a crew of 15 and made a Boeing B29 look like a toy. With six 28-cylinder engines and four jets, when they passed over, even at high altitude, the pulsating, reverberating sound seemed to shake the ground below.

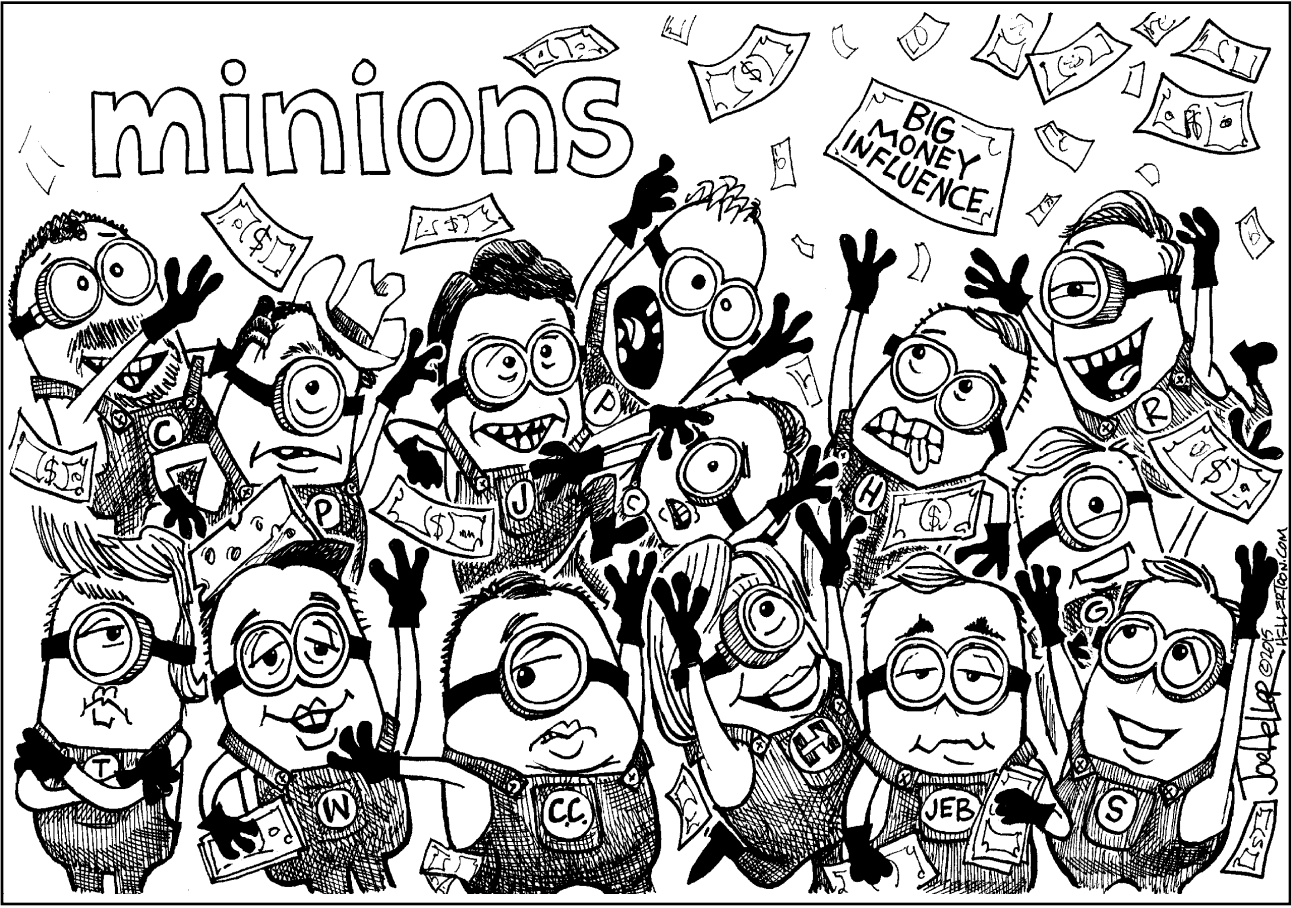
The unforgettable sound was lost forever, for it was not caught on the film. Instead, more annoying and irrelevant classical music was dubbed in.

And then, sometimes silence will grab the emotions and hold them

tight, far better than jarring background music.

I will never forget a long-ago documentary; perhaps on the Discovery Channel. Out on a barren ice floe, an old solitary Eskimo was filmed. Holding a harpoon, he was sitting on a stool while watching a feather attached to a stick above a seal’s breathing hole in the ice. The only sound was the heavy breathing of this old man, the sighing of the wind and the rustling of his heavy clothing as he changed positions, never taking his eye off the feather.

It was like you were standing there, close behind him. It was real, and it was unforgettable!



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The Siuslaw News welcomes letters to the editor concerning issues affecting the Florence area and Lane County.

Emailed letters are preferred. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed. All letters should be limited to about 300 words and must include the writer’s full name, address and phone number for verification. Letters are subject to editing for length, grammar and clarity.

Publication of any letter is not guaranteed and depends on space available and the volume of letters received. Libelous and anonymous letters as well as poetry will not be published.

All submissions become the property of Siuslaw News and will not be returned.

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