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# OPINION

SATURDAY

JANUARY 31 • 2015

## The First Amendment

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

## LETTERS

### Logs in the surf

I recently went to the Honeyman Park office and asked for a permit to allow me to have access to the beach so I could cut firewood.

I was told the ocean shores specialist officer was not issuing permits. He did not think it was safe to allow people to cut wood on the beach. I think the danger of a log rolling over some tourist is more dangerous than me cutting wood on the beach.

Years ago the governor, Tom McCall, asked the people to go clean the beach of logs to make it safer for tourists.

Last fall a tourist was involved in an accident up the coast with a log in the surf.

I have driven on the beach for more than 50 years. I remember when the road to the South Jetty ended before where the booth is now. If you didn't have a four-wheel-drive or a beach buggy, you had to walk, even to get to the big dune.

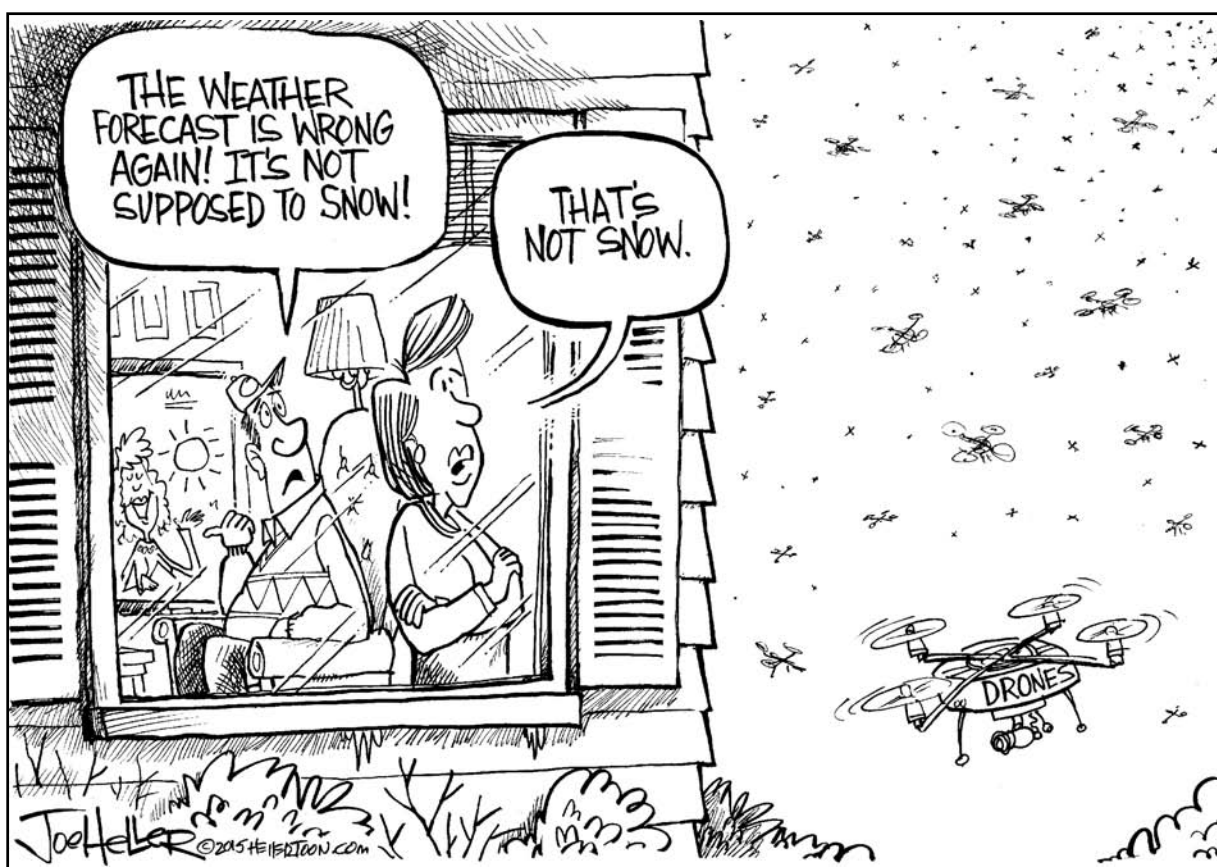
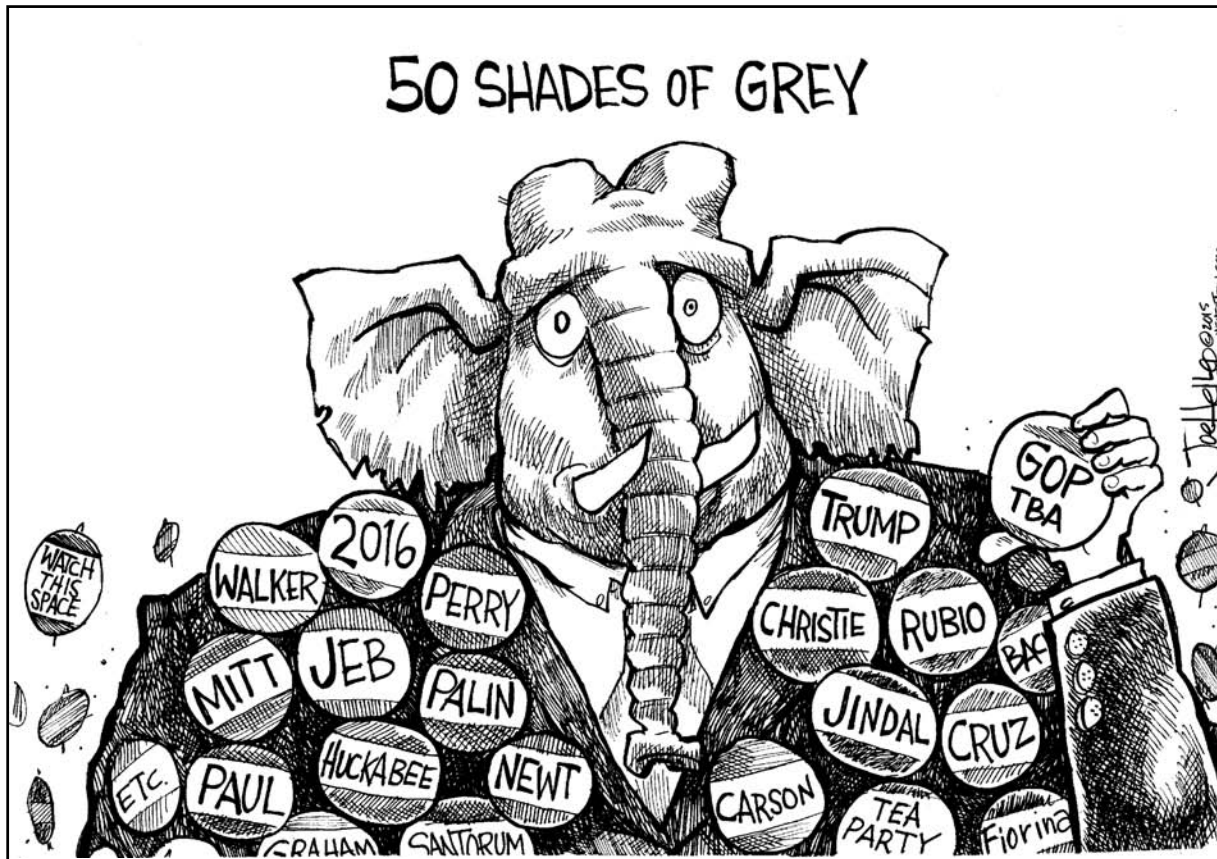
I believe there is no such thing as luck. What happens is because of your actions.

The young man that was killed by the police should have gotten off the street when he was told to. The parents shouldn't have given their son a toy that looked like a real gun. Then he wouldn't have been shot.

The choice is ours — if we don't take our medicine, drive when under the influence, or look both ways when crossing the street, we might die.

What happens to you is caused by you. So do not climb on logs on the beach. They have a tendency to roll in just a small amount of water.

Virgle Bechtold  
Florence



## YESTERDAY'S NEWS

### MOMENTS IN TIME The History Channel

• On Feb. 2, 1847, the first woman of a group of pioneers commonly known as the Donner Party dies during the group's journey through a snow-bound Sierra Nevada mountain pass. The disastrous trip west ended up killing 42 people and turned many of the survivors into cannibals.

• On Feb. 6, 1891, members of the Dalton Gang stage an unsuccessful train robbery in California — an inauspicious beginning to their careers as serious criminals. Bob, Emmett and Grat Dalton were only three of the 10 Dalton sons. The majority of the Dalton boys became law-abiding citizens, and one served as a deputy U.S. marshal.

• On Feb. 5, 1918, the steamship Tuscania, transporting over 2,000 American soldiers bound for Europe, is torpedoed and sinks off the coast of Ireland by the German submarine U-77.

• On Feb. 4, 1938, Walt Disney releases "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," his first full-length animated feature production. Naysayers, including his wife, warned him that audiences wouldn't sit through a cartoon fantasy about dwarfs, but the film quickly grossed \$8 million, a staggering sum during the Great Depression.

• On Feb. 3, 1953, French oceanographer Jacques-Yves Cousteau publishes "The Silent World." Three years later, the film version was released to world acclaim. The film, which revealed the hidden universe of tropical fish, whales and walrus, won Best Documentary at the Academy Awards.

• On Feb. 7, 1984, while in orbit 170 miles above Earth, Navy Capt. Bruce McCandless becomes the first human being to fly untethered in space when he exits the U.S. space shuttle Challenger and maneuvers freely. McCandless orbited Earth in tangent with the shuttle at speeds greater than 17,500 mph.

• On Feb. 8, 1990, singer-songwriter Del Shannon ("Runaway" and "Hats Off to Larry") commits suicide while in the midst of a comeback. Shannon's widow would later file a high-profile lawsuit against Eli Lilly, the manufacturer of the antidepressant Prozac, which Shannon had begun taking shortly before his suicide.

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## VIEW FROM UPRIVER



## Survey of communities revealing

WESLEY VOTH  
For the Siuslaw News

river was fishable — Norman Beers — died last spring. His absence makes this season feel quite different.

I frequently run into people who tell me they are serious birders; what they mean is that they have a confirmed glimpse of 500 or so species and checked these off their lifetime lists. I confess that I don't keep a list. And am happiest in my bird appreciation when I observe an old favorite doing something I haven't witnessed before, such as listening from 5 feet away to a lone American robin in the pre-dawn of a frigid Denver suburb whisper whistle its spring territorial song, beak shut, its only movement a tiny twitching in tail and wingtips.

Under the umbrella of the Ford Family Foundation, the Ford Institute for Community Building offers training programs that predominantly benefit small communities in rural Oregon. The Institute recently conducted a

survey that got an amazing response from the local communities of Deadwood (24), Swisshome (18), Mapleton (81), Florence (507) and Dunes City (32). It is hard enough to write a sensible overview without resorting to graphs, and for my purpose here I will stick with comparing and contrasting the upriver communities with Florence.

Except for Swisshome where the number was just one third, two thirds to three fourths of residents agree or strongly agree that their own community is safe (Deadwood, 75 percent; Swisshome, 33 percent; Mapleton, 72 percent; and Florence, 72 percent).

The thing most people value living here is the natural beauty, and specifically clean air and water (Deadwood, 79 percent; Swisshome, 56 percent; Mapleton, 60 percent; and Florence, 74 percent), followed by small town atmosphere/rural environment (Deadwood, 54 percent; Swisshome, 56 percent; Mapleton, 63 percent; and Florence, 56 percent).

Hardly anyone in any of the communities named their local school as one of the top

things they appreciated; in fact only 21 of the 662 people did so. Also low were "good place to raise children" and "nice place to retire."

At the end of the survey people were asked to reflect on the answers they had given as to who they are, what they value, what if any local governance is functional and to list what they think their most critical community needs are.

Here communities differ somewhat, but the top answers were Youth and Education (Deadwood, 38 percent; Swisshome, 39 percent; Mapleton, 58 percent; and Florence, 36 percent) and Economy and Business (Deadwood, 54 percent; Swisshome, 50 percent; Mapleton, 43 percent; and Florence, 52 percent). Or in other words, for Mapleton it was youth first, then the economy; for the others it was economy first, then youth.

No other concerns, be they Public Safety/Government/Infrastructure, Health and Human Services, Arts and Culture or Natural World and Recreation, registered very high.

Survey results can be viewed online at [www.siuslawpathways.com](http://www.siuslawpathways.com).

This winter continues to be drier than what is typical, the river consequently lower, except for brief periods when neither is true. My bees forage outside the hive whenever the temperature warms to 50 degrees or more, which has often been true for many days in a row this winter. There hasn't been a prolonged period of dormancy yet this year.

It seems to me that there are fewer people than usual pursuing steelhead, but my perspective may be skewed because one of the people I used to see many if not most days the

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