

Letters to the Editor:

Editor@TheSiuslawNews.com

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OPINION

WEDNESDAY

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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.

125TH ANNIVERSARY FLASHBACK

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

This year marks Siuslaw News' quasiquintennial, 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.

UFO sightings reported here Friday

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED APRIL 27, 1967
THE SIUSLAW NEWS, VOL. 7, NO. 17

One of the unidentified flying objects (UFO) sightings in the area was reported Friday night, April 21, 1967, by Coast Guardsmen at the Siuslaw Life Boat Station. The incident occurred at about 10:15 p.m. EN3 James Petr, officer of the day at the

station, first noticed the oval-shaped object hovering about 100 feet about the whistle buoy, with SM Robert Harrington, watch tender, seeing it at about the same time. The buoy lies one mile offshore.

Both men said the unidentified object was "a lot bigger than the buoy." Both said the object's upper half seemed bathed in a "pulsating" ruby glow and the lower half in a gold light.

According to Dick Johnson, officer in charge, there was bright moonlight Friday night with visibility good at the station and out over the ocean.

Harrington and Petr called Johnson at his home, and Johnson estimated he arrived at the station in about five minutes.

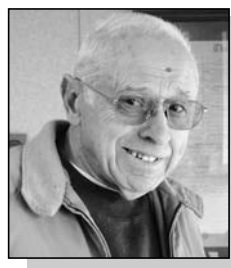
He reported that he saw the unidentified object for about three minutes, but only in a

pulsating red light before it "headed northwest at a pretty fast clip."

Johnson said that he notified the Air Force in North Bend of the sighting.

As one Coast Guardsmen said at the Siuslaw Station after watching the object hovering in the vicinity of the whistler buoy for the 15 minutes it was there, "I see it, but I don't believe it!" ❖

NEIGHBORS



Pull up, pull up

BOB JACKSON
NEIGHBORHOOD CORRESPONDENT
For the Siuslaw News

I remember when someone telling the same stories over and over would be told "you sound like a broken record!" For in the day of the old phonograph, a crack or scratch on the revolving record would cause the needle to skip, and endlessly repeat the same sounds. And I must admit to quite possibly sounding like a "broken record" because of my never ending fascination with the incredible display of instinctive avionics performed by the birds we see day after day here on the Siuslaw River.

There are the sandpipers, only four inches long. They appear only occasionally and always in a squadron so tightly packed it resembles a rapidly moving cloud. With flashing wings, it darts here and there, and then for no apparent reason, abruptly changes altitude. Sometimes they do a sudden wing-over and swoop down to land at the water's edge. They scatter individually to peck at the wet sand, possibly to feed on sand fleas. This foraging lasts only for a few moments before they again bunch up and coalesce into a seemingly solid mass,

catapulting themselves into the air and disappearing.

We see dark surf ducks flying upstream directly from the ocean. I call them "race track" birds. Barely inches above the water, the short wings are beating so fast that the image is blurred. They appear to be going well over 50 mph. What is their destination, and what is their hurry?

There are times when hundreds of black cormorants in bunches of a dozen or so will fly upstream, right "down on the deck." Just upstream from our home and directly in their flight path is a dock, a boathouse and several tall pilings. At the last minute, when what had seemed to be an example of mass hara-kiri is avoided, when inside these creatures heads (which doubles as a cockpit) an audio

signal is blaring — pull up, pull up!

Obviously, wild things have always had sophisticated "fly by wire" systems that precede and quite possibly surpass man's greatest inventions like all types of GPWS (ground terrain awareness warning systems), even EGPWS (enhanced ground warning systems). These wild critters have no need for air speed indicators, altimeters or stall warning horns. They have already been installed at birth!

What logical explanation can there be for the ability of birds like ordinary seagulls to avoid mid-air collisions when high above the earth in that empty air, they are wildly darting hither and thither in maneuvers that would shame the skills of the best Blue Angels pilots?

Expect the unexpected. A mallard drake with a green head showed up the other day. We have been here nine years now, and although they were common where we lived on Siltcoos Lake, he is the first we have seen in the river. One day I called Peggy to come see a "penguin" standing strangely upright and facing us on our beach. Researching it out, it more closely resembled a great auk; however, they have been noted as extinct — the last sighting was in 1852. It was undoubtedly a murre, which is classified with an auk. They can dive to 500 feet and only come ashore to breed.

I don't know about you, but the more I learn about life that exists on this old world of ours, the more I realize how little I really know about anything!

LETTERS

Genealogical society at work

Here is one example of the excellent sleuthing being done by members of the Siuslaw Genealogical Society. —Editor

A small, homemade book was recently found in Florence. It was a girl's family story. She was born in 1941, and there were lots of old photos and information.

One of the stories in the book was about Colin Mac Intyre (1804). This man was born into the clan Mac Intyrae. In Gaelic, it is Mac Antsor, meaning son of a carpenter. The land this clan held was called a fief. The MacGregors owned the land. Each year the family had to pay them one white fawn and one snowball. It was said the snowball was quite a feat. To get it down from the highlands at that particular season was a huge deal.

The book was presented to me, and I was asked if I could locate its family. I searched the Internet and found them. I received a phone call less than 24 hours later.

The book is now on its way to the family members.

Pat Rongey
Siuslaw Genealogical Society
Florence

Level playing field

There's change in the air. Hillary Clinton has added as a fourth "leg" of her platform: reform of the present financial situation wherein 99 percent of the monies created in the United States are going to 1 percent of the population. She added "even if it takes a Constitutional Amendment."

Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., says his only platform, should he decide to run, will be to bring about change in the current inequality of income. He suggested that we need a wholesale uprising of all citizens to prevent the rich and powerful "barons" from turning the United States into an oligarchy.

That brave, heroic Florida mailman, who landed on the White House lawn, surely echoes all of us in this quest? But what's really needed is for the Supreme Court to have term limits. This way a majority of an unelected group, secure in income for life, would no longer be able to make decisions that change the whole fabric of democracy in this country — allowing monies to flow unhindered into the Congressional and Presidential races from the rich and powerful, virtually buying the U.S. government.

Also, it would ensure the laws set up by Congress to protect the rights of all citizens, minorities included, could not be tossed aside allowing voting discrimination to go unheeded in individual states. What a change that would be!

Barbara Prisbe-Sutton
Oceanside, Calif.
Formerly of Florence

Cost of art

I have no idea where Harlen Springer, the president of the Florence Regional Arts Alliance, is coming from with his proposal for "Street Art." He first stated that he wanted to start in the port area with ceramic and bronze sculptures with a nautical theme that would be eight to 10 feet tall and would be purchased from \$5,000 to \$7,000. I hope this was in jest.

He then mentioned Leavenworth, Wash., and Joseph, Ore., as thriving art communities that had "Street Art." I could not find anything in Leavenworth, but Joseph does have some wonderful bronze sculptures in their town. How about Shelley S. Curtis or Ramon Parmenter with their small bronze sculptures at \$34,000 and \$75,000?

Mr. Springer and the FRAA need to do a reality check on their proposal to the city. There is no way in the world that they will be able to purchase anything for the prices they are dreaming of.

I am a watercolor painter. An example of costs for me to do a

painting and display it in a gallery or art show for sale: If I did a painting about 12" x 18" and put a price of \$900 on it, would I be wrong? If the framing of the painting costs \$100, and the gallery or show takes between 30 or 40 percent, I must charge to be compensated. So that would leave me with \$530. If my time is worth \$30 an hour, I would have spent 17 hours on the painting.

In fact, that is about appropriate. I spend more than half the time coming up with the concept, planning the composition and drawing and then in the painting process, changing things.

How much would it cost for an artist to plan and execute a model to then be cast in bronze, and where is the foundry? How about an eight-foot ceramic sculpture, and how much time it would take to come up with a concept? Where is a kiln able to fire something that large? Maybe welded metal or something of wood, but could the wood stand up to time?

Win Jolley
Florence

Beach patrol

I saw Jay Bozievich on TV this morning, April 22, saying that the sheriff's department was struggling with finances. Why then can they buy quads for the deputy sheriffs to patrol the beach?

My grandson was run off the beach by six deputies on quads. They said there was a 10 o'clock curfew on the south beach. I ran the beach for years at night looking for glass balls. I never heard of a curfew on the beach.

Maybe if the sheriff's department was having financial trouble, they could spend their money better. I don't think much crime happens at night on the beach. I also don't think I should pay \$70 a year for road tax on my motorhome and tow car that travels on 101 from Mitchell Loop to the Douglas County line.

Virgle Bechtold
Florence

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John Bartlett
Jenna Bartlett
Ryan Cronk
Susan Gutierrez
Cathy Dietz
Ron Annis
Jeremy Gentry

Publisher, ext. 327
General Manager, ext. 318
Editor, ext. 313
Advertising Director, ext. 326
Office Supervisor, ext. 312
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Press Manager

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WHERE TO WRITE

Pres. Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20500
Comments: 202-456-1111
Switchboard: 202-456-1414
FAX: 202-456-2461
TTY/TDD Comments: 202-456-6213
www.whitehouse.gov

Gov. Kate Brown
160 State Capitol
900 Court St.
Salem, OR 97301-4047
Governor's Citizens' Rep.
Message Line 503-378-4582
www.oregon.gov/ov

U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden
221 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20510

202-224-5244
541-431-0229
www.wyden.senate.gov

U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley
313 Hart Senate Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20510
202-224-3753/FAX: 202-228-3997
541-465-6750

U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio (4th Dist.)
2134 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515
202-225-6416/ 800-944-9603
541-269-2609/ 541-465-6732
www.defazio.house.gov

State Sen. Arnie Roblan (Dist. 5)
900 Court St. NE - S-417
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1705

FAX: 503-986-1080
Email:
Sen.ArnieRoblan@state.or.us

State Rep. Caddy McKeown
(Dist. 9)
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1409
Email:
rep.caddymckeown@state.or.us

West Lane County Commissioner
Jay Bozievich
125 E. Eighth St.
Eugene, OR 97401
541-682-4203
FAX: 541-682-4616
Email:
Jay.Bozievich@co.lane.or.us