

**Siuslaw News**  
P.O. Box 10  
Florence, OR 97439

# Opinion

## VIEW FROM UPRIVER



## Climate change refugee

WESLEY VOTH  
For the Siuslaw News

trail in the water. Then it came sniffing up across the rocks where I had slid the fish as I landed it.

At that point it noticed me watching and jumped back in the water, heading upstream. This spooked a sizable Chinook salmon that had been in the pool, and that fish splashed up through the shallow water above, allowing both the otter and I a good look. This is the first time I've observed an otter tracking scent through water, although thinking about it, I remember seeing a mink do something similar when I was a boy fishing in a very clear lake in the Cascades. The mink was able to track an injured trout that I had been unable to hang onto, to where it was hiding under a log.

The Siuslaw Watershed Council is holding its annual fundraising dinner "Celebrate Siuslaw Salmon" tomorrow night, Sept. 13, at the Florence Events Center. Tickets are \$30 at the door, and more details can be found at their website [www.siuslaw.org](http://www.siuslaw.org). Monies raised at this event help fund grant-writing activities that in turn generate hundreds of thousands of dollars each year that benefit this region economically, in terms of restoration projects, and in outreach to area schools.

While celebrating fish that are native to our river, I heard this past week about some fish that aren't. A man who fishes from his bank in the section between the mouths of Hadsall

and Sweet Creeks told me he had been catching good numbers of large-mouth bass. Never having heard about this before, and thinking he might be confused about what fish he was catching, I had him send me some photos. But it looks like he is correct — big large-mouth bass in the Siuslaw.

Despite enough rain here to fill the 5-gallon buckets that sit under our eaves to catch the run-off, many small streams and ponds remain dry. One set of ponds dried up recently for the first time in the memory of folks who have lived here 60 to 80 years, and because of that, the turtles that lived there have had to flee. Pacific aka western pond turtles, while native here, are so reduced in numbers that few people I've talked to have seen them or know that they are here.

One of these rarities, an adult male with a 9-inch shell that could be as old as 50 himself, crossed Sweet Creek Road several times in an attempt to reach the main river, but was stymied by the long barrier of gravel being stockpiled there. Twice I tried putting him back on the pond side of the road, but he had no interest in returning to what I finally noticed was a completely dry field.

After rehydrating him for a couple of days, I found a place along Hadsall Creek 200 yards from his home that still had water and released him there. He quickly found a place where there were alder roots growing into the water with enough space underneath to swim into. I hope he is able to reunite with others of his kind, and continue a turtle presence in these parts.

It has been a great year for fruit at our place, most recently grapes, Brooks prunes and several varieties of apple, including Honeycrisp and Braeburn. The mild frost-free spring, warm summer temperatures and dry weather combined with sufficient numbers of our own bees and native pollinators has led to early seasons and heavy crops, which we are getting harvested ahead of the annual arrival of the bears. And so we have added cider and dried prunes to our larder, and by the time you read this, if all has gone well, raisins and applesauce.

Salmon have started to show up in our section of the river, just above the head of tide, and some are being caught, although not yet by me. I have caught a couple of nice blueback, the native sea-run cutthroat trout that are particularly wonderful in this river. After catching one of these last week that was hooked in such a way that it bled quite a bit, I went up to the house for a minute, and when I was coming back down the bank I saw an otter following what was apparently a blood

## YESTERDAY'S NEWS

### MOMENTS IN TIME The History Channel

- On Sept. 16, 1620, the Mayflower sails from Plymouth, England, bound for the New World. Along the way, the settlers formulated and signed the Mayflower Compact, establishing constitutional law and the rule of the majority, an important precursor to American democracy.

- On Sept. 17, 1796, George Washington prepares a final draft of his presidential farewell address, officially announcing that he will step down as the nation's first president. Rarely, if ever, in the history of Western civilization had a national leader voluntarily relinquished his title.

- On Sept. 15, 1916, during the Battle of the Somme, the British launch a major offensive against the Germans, employing tanks for the first time in history. Some of the 40 or so primitive tanks advanced more than a mile into enemy lines.

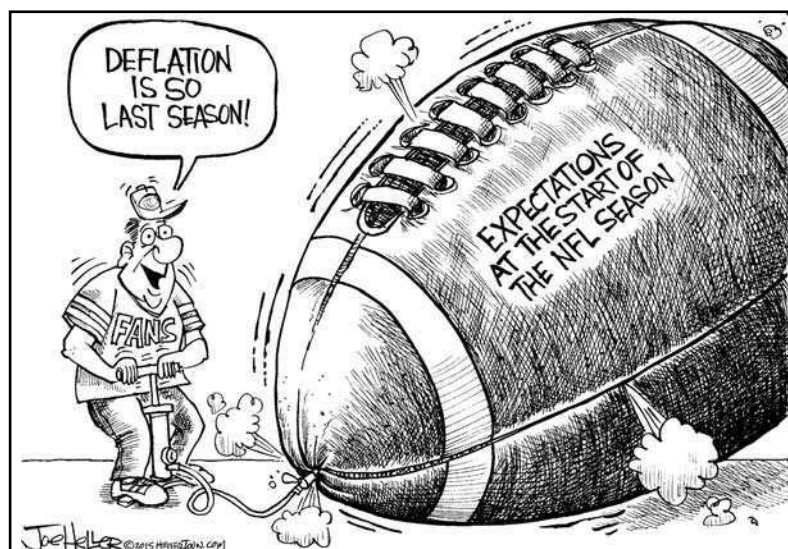
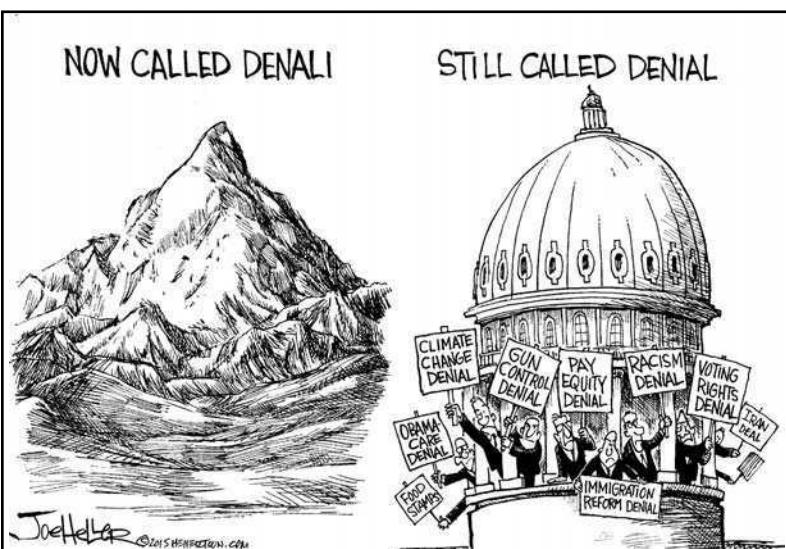
- On Sept. 20, 1946, the first Cannes Film Festival opens in the resort city on the French Riviera. The outbreak of World War II had forced the cancellation of the inaugural Cannes festival in 1939.

- On Sept. 19, 1957, the United States detonates a 1.7 kiloton nuclear weapon in an underground tunnel 65 miles north of Las Vegas. The test was the first fully contained underground detonation and produced no radioactive fallout.

- On Sept. 18, 1960, Fidel Castro arrives in New York City as the head of the Cuban delegation to the United Nations. Castro's visit was climaxed by his four-hour speech, a blistering attack on American "aggression" and "imperialism." In January 1961, the U.S. severed diplomatic relations with Cuba.

- On Sept. 14, 1975, Elizabeth Ann Seton is canonized by Pope Paul VI at the Vatican in Rome, becoming the first American-born Catholic saint. In 1797, Seton founded the Society for the Relief of Poor Widows with Small Children in New York.

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## LETTERS

### Don't miss 'Mercy Killers'

I hope everyone in our community will take the opportunity to see "Mercy Killers." It's a powerful one-man play that is hard to forget.

The playwright and actor, Michael Milligan, is amazing at conveying his bewilderment, despair and pain at the loss of his wife, his job and his home because of the machinations of the healthcare system. It's a gut-wrenching indictment of the power that's been given to corporate entities. The fact that the majority of personal bankruptcies are medically related underscores the point.

I've seen "Mercy Killers" already. I'm going to see it again. It is being performed at City Lights Cinemas on Thursday, Sept. 24, at 7 p.m.

Patricia Burke  
Westlake

### Waiting for care

I must report a recent incident involving the medical care available through PeaceHealth's Walk-In Clinic in Florence.

Aware of a spider bite on my lower right leg Tuesday evening, I applied usual anti-itch ointment before retiring. By the next day, I was surprised to see an inflamed area. There seemed to be no itching, but bright coloration (deep red) was very pronounced.

Since the bright red color persisted, by Friday early morning I decided I should ride the local Rhody bus to the clinic to have a medic's evaluation. The first bus is not available until 10 a.m. I boarded the bus at 16th and Spruce streets and was delivered to the clinic front door about 10:25 a.m.

The usual sign-in procedure was done and I was directed to take paperwork to another clerk, only to be told of a two-hour wait

time. Being an avid reader, I waited and read, and read some more. After two hours and 15 minutes, I returned to the same clerk who said there were still six patients in front of me.

After sitting in the waiting area a short while longer, I decided I couldn't take the chance of missing the last bus pick up. At age 86, I won't be missed.

Having read the "No Appointments Necessary" and the posting of clinic hours starting at 6:45 a.m., I realized that no bus rider could reasonably be accommodated after four whole hours of patients with private transportation who had already signed in ahead of my 10:25 arrival time.

I had hoped for at least a triage nurse, but none were available.

I had wasted my time, thinking a walk-in clinic could be the answer as I felt it wasn't an ER case or problem. My hope is that a triage nurse could have evaluat-

ed the situation and eliminated the prolonged wait and inconvenience for all.

Becky Beckner  
Florence

### A big thanks

Thank you to the community of Florence for celebrating Backstreet Gallery's 10th Anniversary this summer.

It is a great pleasure for our cooperative gallery on Bay Street to serve our local community as well as those, from all over the world, who travel through our town. Serving our community includes welcoming local artists and providing display opportunities that encourages artistic growth.

Thanks again to artists and art lovers for your continued support over these past 10 years and into the future.

Jane Rincon  
Backstreet Gallery President  
Florence

## 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.

Write to:

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