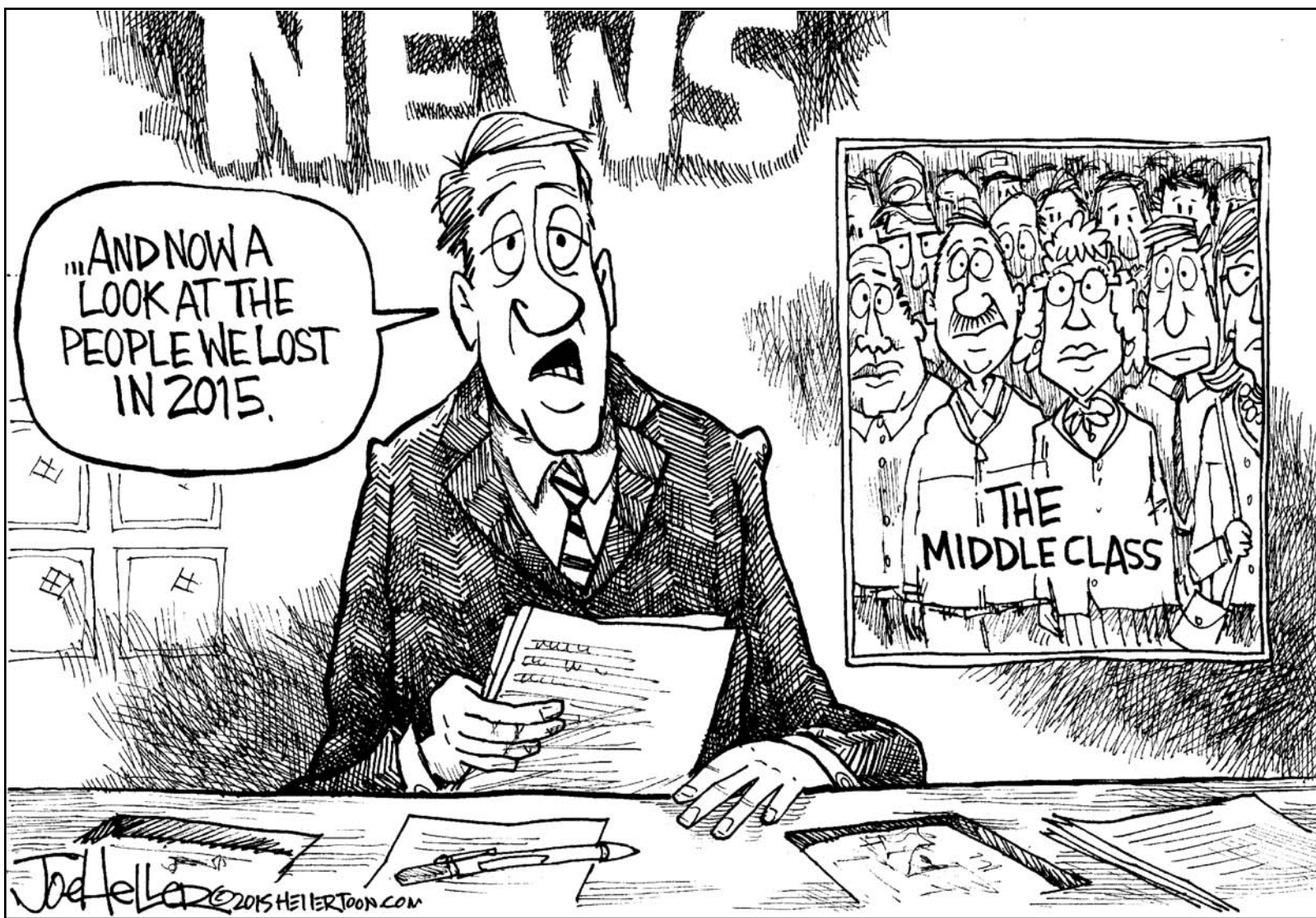


Siuslaw News
 P.O. Box 10
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Opinion



YESTERDAY'S NEWS

MOMENTS IN TIME The History Channel

- On Jan. 9, 1493, Christopher Columbus, sailing near the Dominican Republic, sees three “mermaids” — in reality manatees — and describes the mythical half-female, half-fish creatures as “not half as beautiful as they are painted.”
- On Jan. 7, 1785, Jean-Pierre Blanchard and John Jeffries travel from England to France in a gas balloon, becoming the first to cross the English Channel by air. They nearly crashed as their balloon was weighed down by extraneous supplies such as silk-covered oars.
- On Jan. 4, 1847, Samuel Colt rescues his faltering gun company by winning a contract to provide the U.S. government with 1,000 of his .44 caliber revolvers. The heart of Colt’s invention was a mechanism that combined a single rifled barrel with a revolving chamber that held five or six shots.
- On Jan. 8, 1867, Congress overrides President Andrew Johnson’s veto of a bill granting all adult male citizens of the District of Columbia the right to vote. It was the first law in American history to grant black men the right to vote.

- On Jan. 10, 1946, the first General Assembly of the United Nations convenes in London. Two weeks later it adopted its first resolution, which called for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction.

- On Jan. 5, 1957, in response to the increasingly tense situation in the Middle East, President Dwight Eisenhower delivers a proposal to Congress calling for a more proactive U.S. policy. The “Eisenhower Doctrine” established the Middle East as a Cold War battlefield.

- On Jan. 6, 1994, Olympic hopeful Nancy Kerrigan is attacked at an ice rink two days before the Olympic trials. A man, hired by the ex-husband of skating rival Tonya Harding, clubbed Kerrigan in the leg in an attempt to keep her out of the Olympics. Months later, Kerrigan won the silver medal, while Harding finished eighth.

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LETTERS

Going above the call of duty

On Friday, Dec. 18, I was standing at the dock at Mercer Lake Resort. It was about 8 a.m. We had torrential wind and rain for days.

As I was standing there, I saw a jet ski being operated on the lake, heading for the dock. I wondered who would be crazy enough to be out in this weather.

As it got closer, I could see a man wearing a sweater and tie under a rain jacket. Now, I was really puzzled. Finally, he got close enough and I recognized Dr. Bruce Wantanabe. I asked what he was doing out in such horrible weather. He informed me of the landslide that had taken place about 3:15 a.m., closed down Mercer Lake Road and taken the life of a resident.

Dr. Wantanabe, showing true dedication to his profession, stated that he needed to get to work. A member of his staff was enroute to pick him up at the resort. He asked to leave his jet ski secured at the dock and was, of course, given permission by the gracious owners, Jim and Patty Tonole.

What a marvelous showing of his dedication to his patients and profession. Dr. Wantanabe should be recognized for being a special person and going above and beyond the call of duty.

John Ingram
 Florence

More DAV drivers needed

Many veterans struggle in the weeks, months and years after their military service. The Department of Veterans Affairs currently has 152 medical centers and serves some 8.76 million veterans on a yearly basis. To that end, the VA provides life-saving and life-sustaining care to many people who otherwise would not have access to the affordable, integrative healthcare that they need.

For some of these veterans, there are socioeconomic and geographical barriers to the care they need. To complicate matters, travel and transportation services through the VA system are sparse.

I know this well because I work at the Portland VA Medical Center with the non-profit Disabled American Veterans. Here, I manage a small fleet of shuttles that help veterans get to their medical appointments at the Portland Medical Center.

These shuttle services are free of charge to

veterans, and are made possible by a small community of volunteers. Many of our volunteer drivers are veterans themselves, or have family who served. All the drivers I work with on a day-to-day basis are dedicated, enjoy giving back to their community and forge meaningful connections along the way.

I write to you today to relay the struggle of our shuttle for the Florence community. Due to unforeseen circumstances, I have seen our Florence volunteer base whittle down over the months. As a result, we do not have the driver base necessary to properly serve our veterans’ needs.

As we all pull more than our own weight to compensate, we are in desperate need of help. If anyone in the community is willing and able to volunteer, we welcome you with open arms. The veterans welcome you, too. Call 503-721-7804 for more information.

As always, if you are a veteran, thank you for your service.

A'me Solheid
 DAV Hospital Services Coordinator
 Supervisor, Portland

Values or Trump?

One pauses upon reading recent letters warning Americans against humanitarian feelings toward Muslim families fleeing the horrible Mid-East crisis and expanding wars.

Any one individual is certainly entitled to take authority, or pride, from the darkest prominence of America’s many historical warnings, however bigoted or racist, of other imminent threats from immigrating Papist Catholics, Irish, Germans, Chinese, Japanese and Jews.

And for good measure, one could recollect the undoubted threats to a “way of life” represented by the young, black children, broken and crushed in the basements of bombed out churches in Birmingham.

But, in the 21st Century, one hopes for, one awaits, those credible civic, community and religious institutions, which will consider, will hold themselves out, will offer themselves to somewhat higher standards or ideals, while providing perceptible — audible — community expression that such values in fact remain — and that those humans, Muslim or not, on the far side of the world, do not stand alone.

Rand Dawson
 Siltcoos Lake

Take care of our own first

Recently, we read that a man from Syria is receiving federal funding of \$399 per month, plus an additional \$194 a month, and is also covered by the Oregon Health Plan during his first eight months in our state.

Then, once the United States approves and accepts a refugee, as it has this Syrian, it extends financial help to him and another 10,000 or more Syrian refugees to be brought into the United States by President Obama to try to ease their path into work, housing and permanent residency.

There are thousands of homeless hungry families, some with children, including little babies, born in this United States and some who even have to sleep in the bushes, who cannot get assistance like that, and most of them are in this position because they have lost their jobs since our manufacturing has been sent overseas to China.

We are ashamed of President Obama for not taking care of our own people first and instead taking care of refugees from other parts of the world first.

Linda and Gary Neal
 Florence

Monthly highlight

There is something special in everyone’s eyes when you see teenagers and senior citizens visiting or working together on a craft project. This is what we see every time our local Boys and Girls Club comes and visits our senior citizens here at Spruce Point Assisted Living and Memory Care.

We have this great opportunity and privilege every month thanks to the wonderful people at the Boys and Girls Club. These teens are so amazingly gentle and caring with our residents and are one of our monthly highlights as we all look forward to seeing all of them.

During their Christmas visit they made and brought goodie bags for all the residents in both our Assisted Living and Memory Care Communities along with a yummy dessert, which was served to them at dinner.

We can’t wait to see what fun we’ll have in the New Year. A big thank you to our local Boys and Girls Club for putting smiles on our residents faces.

Annette Poston
 Life Enrichment Director, Spruce Point
 Assisted Living and Memory Care

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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