

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

# Opinion

## VIEW FROM UPRIVER



WESLEY VOTH  
 For the Siuslaw News

## A chance to do the right thing

February hailstorms — with a little thunder and lightning thrown in — dampen, threaten, but don't dissuade the blooms appearing on the bare brown branches. Salmonberry, flowering currant, Indian plum and willow spindles are among the natives resurging right now, and in various yards forsythia and plum and flowering quince join that number. What has looked dead, dormant and some might say dreadful, now shows stunning color and exquisite shapes. Even though I know this will happen, it is always heartening to watch these early signs of spring. Signs that life will continue and there is yet hope.

Growing up I attended small-town Oregon public schools in places where education was a low tax-payer priority, schools continually dependent on voter-supported levies and bonds. I was told that we couldn't have certain things (text-books published since World War II was

one unfulfilled desire) because of all of the people who didn't have kids and voted "No." This felt very unfair to my childhood perspective, and I thought when I got the chance to vote I would be different.

As it turned out, however, I resided during my parenting years and public school teaching career in Hawaii, a state whose entire education budget is funded and handled by the legislature and never goes to direct taxpayer vote. And, since coming back to Oregon in my grandparent years, there has until now not been a chance in Mapleton to vote to do something to honor my childhood vows, and to both pay back and pay forward on something this important. Oddly, even if I had been living in Mapleton all my adult years, this would still be my first opportunity.

This school district's last bond was repaid in 1961; its last vote some years before that.

Despite whatever it may have lacked, I owe a tremendous debt to the public schooling I got. While my learning curve was steeper along the social rather than academic lines, I was encouraged and challenged and inspired by many wonderful teachers. Most of what I learned about

appreciating and getting along with people of cultures and abilities and interests and perceptions vastly different from my own, I learned in public school.

I believe the successes of free and appropriate public education for every child has led to what successes we have had as a nation. And, in those places and with those children where we have failed to do this adequately, this has led to our many shortcomings.

Now, here in Mapleton-Swisshome-Deadwood (Florence has both its own bond measure and its own who know how to raise a loud "No"), we have a chance to vote "Yes" on a bond measure to make a difference for our community. To do our part in making sure our collective children have what they need to succeed in and contribute to the world we have shaped around them.

We may be the poorest and the smallest school district in terms of number of tax-base households in Lane County, but we have a chance by passing a bond to double the money available to us (\$4 million to \$5 million of our own becomes \$8 million to \$9 million total), and make improvements on a scale we have been unable to do since that last bond ended in 1961.

Yes it will cost us something, every one of us. But far less ultimately than every other alternate scenario. If we don't pass our bond, we will have nothing.

## YESTERDAY'S NEWS

### MOMENTS IN TIME The History Channel

- On March 3, 1887, Anne Sullivan begins teaching 6-year-old Helen Keller, who lost her sight and hearing after a severe illness at the age of 19 months. Under Sullivan's tutelage, the previously uncontrollable Keller flourished, eventually graduating from college and becoming a lecturer and activist.

- On March 6, 1899, the patent office in Berlin registers Aspirin, the brand name for acetylsalicylic acid, on behalf of Friedrich Bayer & Co. Acetylsalicylic acid was originally made from a chemical found in the bark of willow trees.

- On March 2, 1904, Theodor Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss, the author and illustrator of such beloved children's books as "The Cat in the Hat," is born in Massachusetts. Geisel's first book, "And to Think That I Saw It On Mulberry Street," was rejected by over two dozen publishers before making it into print in 1937.

- On March 5, 1929, David Dunbar Buick, founder of the Buick Motor Company, dies in relative obscurity after years of working menial jobs. By 1906, Buick had lost control of the business and sold his stock, which would later be worth millions of dollars.

- On March 1, 1932, the 20-month-old son of aviator Charles Lindbergh is kidnapped from the family's mansion in New Jersey. Although a ransom note demanding \$50,000 was left in the nursery, the baby had been killed the night of the kidnapping.

- On Feb. 29, 1940, the film "Gone With the Wind" is honored with eight Oscars. The most momentous award went to Hattie McDaniel for her portrayal of "Mammy," a housemaid and former slave. McDaniel was the first black actor ever to win an Oscar.

- On March 4, 1962, a Trans-African DC-7 crashes on takeoff in Cameroon, its 111 passengers and crew doomed by a mechanical failure. It was the first single-airplane disaster in history in which more than 100 people died.

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## LETTERS

### Special thanks

I'd like to give a special shout out to Florence Police Sgt. James Macfarlane for giving emergency assistance to myself in a time of need.

You're a gentleman and a savior. Thank you once again for helping me in my crisis.

From a grateful citizen,  
 Debbie Neece  
 Florence

### Sorting fiction from fact

In response to Jim Selby's letter, "Wake-up Call," Feb. 17, I would like to sort out a little of the myth and fiction from fact.

None of our taxes have risen. In fact, because my husband, now a blind and disabled veteran, was also a first responder — Battalion Chief, fire service — we were able to deduct an extra \$3,000 this year.

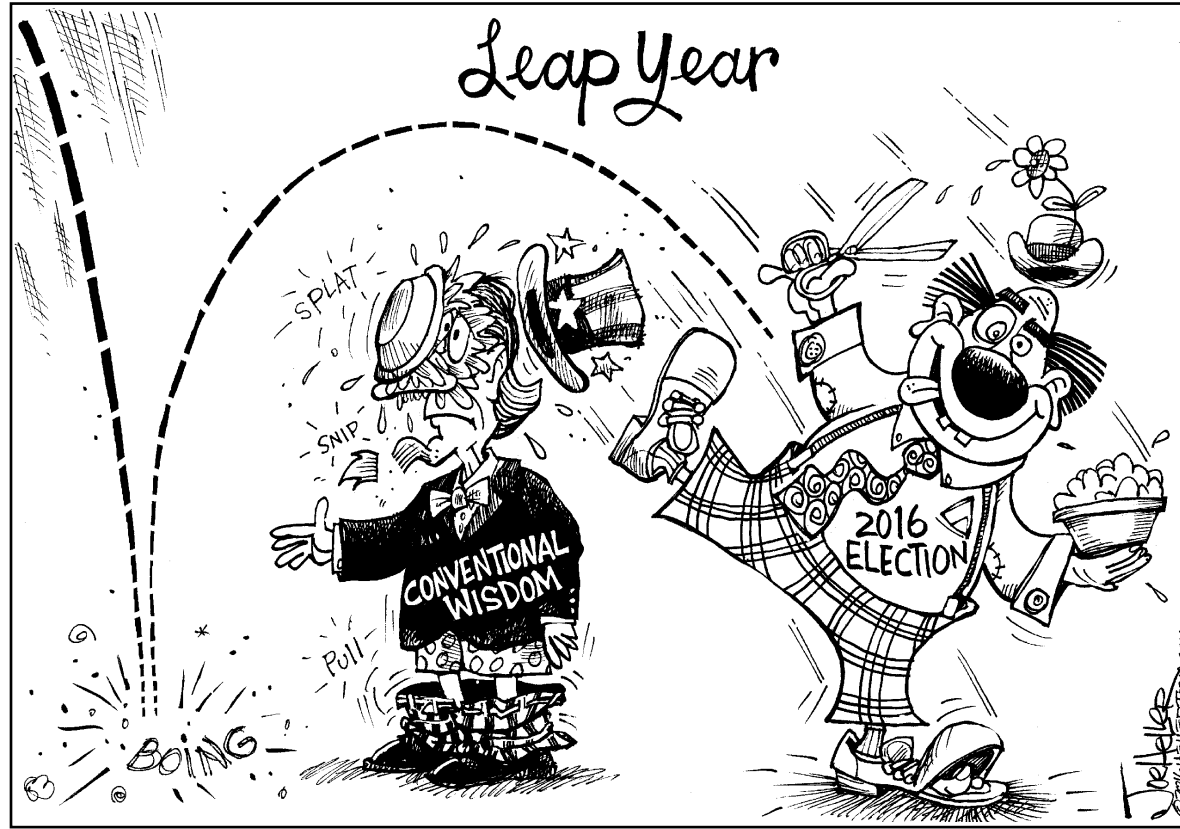
More controls? Where? At airports? But isn't that providing us with more security?

Less freedom? For the first time in 50 years Cuba and the United States will open their doors to each other.

Remember, it was the Republicans, under George W. Bush, who opened the flood gates to chaos in the Middle East resulting in so many refugees seeking asylum.

If the Iraq War had never been, the world would be a calmer place.

And, it is the Republicans who want to keep minimum wage to



\$7.25; to allow the outrage of shutting down Planned Parenthood; and to privatize Social Security and the Veteran's Administration.

They want to cut off medical assistance to millions of people who are now covered by the OCA, and are protected from bankruptcy, due to the impossible cost of medical care.

None of that will help the ordinary U.S. citizen. But maybe Mr. Selby's in the 1 percent billionaire class who doesn't care about all this?

Barbara Prisbe-Sutton  
 Oceanside, Calif.  
 formerly of Florence

### Religious class

Recently your paper carried an article describing a class about the Old Testament in the Bible. It was to be held at 6:30 p.m. every Tuesday at the LDS church. The class, taught by Joel Marks, was planned to be a 12-week course of study. This is a brief review of the class so far.

Anyone who reads the Bible, whether as literature or scripture, will enjoy the depth and details of the material presented. Marks has been a teacher and scriptoriar for more than 40 years. He is providing an interesting series of discussions with material often overlooked.

Included (but not limited to) are Jewish traditions, information regarding the apocrypha, prophecies of the Messiah ("anointed one"), further prophecies about the futures of the nation of Israel, our nation and the world.

The class is still in its beginning stage. Every week will provide new, fascinating information and points to ponder.

This is a free class. Be sure to get the basic hand-out for resource materials and the early efforts to create a common-language Bible.

Come and enjoy!  
 Patricia Kane  
 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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