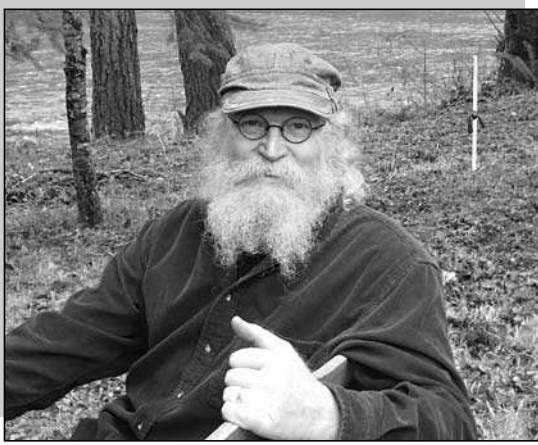


**Siuslaw News**  
P.O. Box 10  
Florence, OR 97439

# Opinion

## VIEW FROM UPRIVER



## Natural Benefits

WESLEY VOTH  
For the Siuslaw News

alone — the crowing of jungle fowl from 3 a.m. and the cacophony of coqui frogs all night.

Hawaii is a great place to observe the harm that invasive species can do, both the accidental and purposefully released. Many small mammals, birds, frogs, lizards, spiders and a myriad of

insect and plant species multiply phenomenally year round with nothing controlling them, completely supplanting either the native species or species that have lived there long enough to be in some sort of balance with everything else. Sometimes control of one (poisoning the rats and mongoose) has the unintended consequence of un-controlling something else (jungle fowl and wild turkeys).

We came home to a letter from the Oregon Department of Forestry telling us that our 2 little parcels of land had been left out of the Forest Patrol Assessment, and would this year be included when our property taxes come due in the fall.

I spoke with our District Forester Link Smith, and he said that about 700 of these letters had gone out in the greater Florence area. They try and look each area over on a five year rotation to see if all land that meets wild fire criteria that should be included actually is; better tools now make this process more accurate.

Link described for me some of the air and other support that would be deployed should wildfire come — as it surely will eventually — to Mapleton and Brickerville, support beyond what local fire departments can and would be able to handle. My apologies to our neighbors who have been paying for this wildfire protection all this time, while for the 15 years we have owned these parcels we have not.

Also in the mail was a survey “scientifically selected by address” to determine the number of people in the 50 states involved in wildlife associated recreation, including hunting and fishing.

Included was information gleaned from the last study, done in 2011, conducted by the census bureau. Roughly one third of American adults reported that wildlife watching was an activity they participated in during that year. If you included those who only listed hunting and/or fishing but not watching wildlife (and I wonder how you can do either of the first without watching wildlife), the percentage jumped to 38 percent. Virtually all of the wildlife watchers included “around the home” as one of the places this happened, and three-fourths reported feeding wildlife as part of that activity.

The report seems to suggest that people are more likely to travel to see the natural world as they get older, and underscored the great economic benefit to local communities associated with preservation of that natural world.

## YESTERDAY'S NEWS

### MOMENTS IN TIME The History Channel

- On March 20, 1823, Ned Buntline, the “dime millionaire” and discoverer of Buffalo Bill, is born in New York. More than any single writer, Buntline was responsible for creating a romanticized and misleading image of the American West. He once said, “I found that to make a living I must write ‘trash’ for the masses.”

- On March 18, 1834, in England, six English agricultural laborers are sentenced to seven years of banishment to Australia’s penal colony for their union activities. Their crime: They agreed that they would not accept work for less than 10 shillings a week.

- On March 17, 1901, paintings by Dutch painter Vincent van Gogh are shown in Paris, causing a sensation across the art world. Van Gogh had committed suicide 11 years earlier after selling only one painting.

- On March 14, 1922, John “Jack” Mack, co-founder of one of North America’s largest heavy-duty truck makers, is killed when his car collides with a trolley in Pennsylvania. The expression “it hit me like a Mack truck” (meaning something that creates a powerful impact) is part of the American lexicon.

- On March 19, 1957, Elvis Presley puts a \$1,000 down payment on a new home for his parents, a southern Colonial mansion on a 13.8-acre wooded estate. Presley agreed to purchase the Tennessee home called Graceland for \$102,500.

- On March 15, 1968, construction begins on the Eisenhower/Johnson Memorial Tunnel in Colorado. Cutting through the Continental Divide at an average elevation of 11,112 feet, it is America’s highest vehicle tunnel.

- On March 16, 1978, the oil tanker Amoco Cadiz wrecks off the coast of France. Although the French navy dropped bombs to open the hull immediately, releasing the oil where it was, much of the 68 million gallons of oil drifted to the coast.

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## LETTERS

### Caring for the caregivers

I would publicly like to express to Spruce Point Assisted Living my gratitude for its ongoing support to the bimonthly meeting of the Caregiver Support Group that has been meeting in its facility for four years. Spruce Point has provided a complimentary lunch for all the participants that attend.

It has been encouraging and gracious to us continuously. Thank you, caring folks. What a stellar relationship this has been.

Mary Ann Earl  
RN and BSN retired  
Florence

### Managing the forest

We received a letter from the state telling us that Oregon is going to add \$18.75 to our taxes for fire protection. We have .29 of an acre with one monkey tree and two apple trees. I wonder — how much are they going to charge the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Forest Service?

When I was a choker settler, I spent many hours clearing chunks and dragging limbs from creeks. That was what the Forest Service and BLM made the loggers do.

I see reports that the Forest Service plans to place 900 logs across Indian Creek for salmon enhancement. Now what would Tub Beers have to say to that?

The Forest Service has closed roads to the public. The do-gooders — “Save the spotted owl!” — and the tree-huggers have stopped the logging. But newly planted forests encourage deer and elk

habitats and help to contain forest fires.

When the government gets done closing all the roads, you will know who to blame when someone throws a cigarette out of a car window and starts a fire that burns from Highway 101 to Junction City.

I fought fires and know how they spread. I worked too long in these woods not to worry about fire.

I think the federal government needs to leave the management of the forests to the state.

Virgle Bechtold  
Florence

### A Florence forum

From the kitchen I heard what sounded like a raucous “cock fight” with the audience shouting and jeering. It turned out not to be an illegal cock fight, but an embarrassing exchange between Donald Trump and Marco Rubio.

The antics of this election year’s Republican candidates are not only

confusing but very troublesome, not just because of the base level of discourse taking place, but the media highlight of this behavior.

Florentines, we are being held captive by the six corporations who own 90 percent of media in America. These czars determine what we will or will not hear or read. They are promoting coverage of the juvenile antics of the Republican top runner and at the same time have put a media blitz on a major Democratic challenger.

We don’t know what we don’t know because the media is blocking important information from us. Unless we tap into non-commercial media outlets, such as KXCR, our community radio station or Free Speech TV and others like them, we will be in the dark about critical data that ought to inform our political and social thinking and action.

This has serious consequences for our quality of life. I don’t have the answer, I only know and feel the real danger of losing my fun-

damental rights.

This is not new; it has been creeping on us for a long time, but most of us have been too busy to notice it. A nation where 17 million, or one in four children in the country, is living without consistent access to enough nutritious food to live a healthy life and when they get to school are too hungry to learn, a nation that encourages donating millions and billions to essentially “buy” a candidate, is a situation that erodes our sense of national humanity.

While democracy is a time consuming endeavor, being a spectator is not going to win the game. I urge you to become involved, if only to ask questions and to learn ways to become an effective participant.

Florence needs a forum to investigate and inform its citizens of issues such as these, and many more. I invite like-minded readers to engage in such a forum.

Nan Harvey  
Florence

### Presenting a clean front

Florence is trying to attract tourists, yet the mall at the corner of Highways 101 and 126 is littered with old socks, food wrappers, coffee cups and overflowing garbage cans.

Where is the business pride?

I am aware that this area is frequented by transients, but Florence businesses need to clean up and put their “clean fronts” forward.

Pat Rongey  
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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