



# If you've never had food poisoning, thank a humor columnist

**Ned Hickson**

April 18th is National Columnist Day. Being a columnist, I naturally have journalist friends who, whenever we get together, want to talk about (yawn) heady issues facing the nation and the world. This is done in a discussion format similar to "Meet the Press," except that our debates are often interrupted by someone's beer foaming over.

Aside from that, it's just like the show on TV.

As you can imagine, our exchanges get pretty heated

as each of us presents an important topic of debate:

What is our stance on political reform?

Should we overhaul social security?

How do we deal with terrorism?

Or, as I challenged: Why do all of the superheroes seem to be fighting each other lately?

That's usually when our debate comes to a screeching halt and I'm forced, once again, to defend my journalistic integrity by explaining the value of what I do as a columnist, then emphasizing my point by offering to pay for everyone's beer.

Admittedly, I have it easy

compared to other journalists who must worry about gathering "facts" and finding "sources" while I, on the other hand, can "make" things up without "leaving" my desk. Which isn't to say I'm not held to the same journalistic standards as everyone else.

I can't claim, for example, that rubbing your head in Frito-Lay bean dip can promote hair growth similar to that of a Tibetan Mountain yak.

(At least, not without some kind of corroborating evidence, such as testimony from an actual mountain yak.)

If I were to do this, I could

open myself up to litigation from Frito-Lay and, quite possibly, every bald person smelling of bean dip.

The fact is, what I do comes at great personal risk. And by that I mean actual physical danger, like the time I was attacked by amorous turkeys for a column about Thanksgiving. I also mention my editor a lot in my columns, which is an occupational hazard my "real" journalist friends never have to contend with.

Chances are, they'll never write a story, be sitting at their desk in the newsroom, and have a city official walk by and smack them in the head with the newspaper.

Yet, week after week, dedicated humor columnists like myself sit at their keyboards, surfing the net until an hour before deadline.

Why?

Because each of us truly believes we're making the world a better place by doing everything we can, as columnists, to stay out of the skilled-labor work force.

Let's face it, for every culinary position a humor columnist takes up, there are at least a dozen people with Salmonella.

As columnists, we understand our place in the world.

We accept the dangers.

And we know countless people (i.e., there's no time to

count them before my deadline) owe their lives to the fact that I — and others like me — are sitting in a newsroom writing about glow-in-the-dark mice or how to harmonize with your wife's nose whistle.

That being said, as someone who actually spent time working in the food service industry before becoming a columnist, I'd like to thank all of you for reading.

And also, you should wash your hands after reading this. (Ned is a syndicated columnist with News Media Corporation. His book, "Humor at the Speed of Life," is available online at Port Hole Publications, Amazon Books and Barnes & Noble. Write to him at nedhickson@icloud.com)

## Gospel duo to perform in Florence

Folk Mountain Gospel, the husband-and-wife duo of Don and Donna Mohl from Fair Grove, Mo., will present a free 7 p.m. concert Wednesday, April 13, at Florence Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The Mohls perform a unique style of music, merging their voices with Biblical and traditional instruments such as hammered dulcimer, bowed psaltery, zither, mountain dulcimer, mandolin, harmonica and guitar.

The Mohls have traveled the United States extensively since 1988 as members of The Master's Travelers and Simply His, and as Folk Mountain Gospel. Listeners are treated to hymns, more recent gospel music, and a "down-home" family-oriented message of Jesus' love and grace.

The Mohls also blend heartwarming stories that inspire and encourage into their concerts.

The church is at 4445 Highway 101 (across from



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NAPA Auto Parts).

CDs, DVDs and handcrafted biblical musical instruments will be available for sale after the program.

For more information call the Seventh Day Adventist Church at 541-997-3951 or visit [www.folkmountaingospel.com](http://www.folkmountaingospel.com).

**C.R.O.W. Fairytales should really be updated!**

**SHREK THE MUSICAL JR.**

**April 15 - 17**

Florence Events Center (541) 997-1994 Adults: \$16 Kids Under 12: \$8

[www.crowkids.com](http://www.crowkids.com)



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Adorable coastal retreat or full time living! Enjoy country living, close to Sutton Lake  
2 Bdrm, 1 Ba 768 sq ft  
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**NEW LISTING**  
Great beach area lot. Walking distance to the beach & dunes. Current foundation for 3 bdrm, 1760 sqft home + bonus w/attached garage is on this lot  
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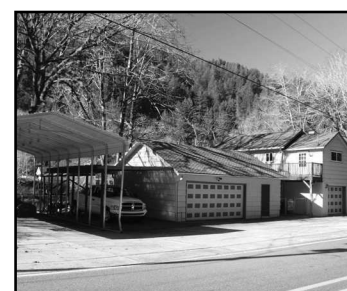
**NEW LISTING**  
Beautiful lot. Build your dream home or put new manufactured home.  
.36 acre, close to dunes & beach.  
**\$69,900** BH7223 ML#16542072



**PRICE REDUCTION**  
Beautiful home inside & out. Upgrades throughout in the 3-5 bedroom very clean, neat home. Room for crafts, office, storage, 2 car garage, room for RV  
3-5 bdrm, 2 3/4 Ba 1756 sq ft  
**\$219,900** BH7197 ML#16567076



**PRICE REDUCTION**  
Recreational lakefront on Collard Lake .47 acre, old growth trees, seasonal creek, warm southern exposure. Canoe, kayak, paddleboat, swim, fish & picnic!  
**\$65,000** BH7098 ML#15124919



**FEATURED LISTING**  
Riverfront ranch home on top of full daylight basement. Covered parking for 5. Fully fenced yard.  
2 Bdrm + den, 1 1/2 Ba 1388 sq ft  
**\$299,000** BH7180 ML#16047474



**FEATURED LISTING**  
Siuslaw riverfront lot .39 acre at Shelter Cove gated community. City water & sewer, power available. Minutes to town & all services  
**\$249,000** BH7202 ML#16052417