

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

# Opinion

## VIEW FROM UPRIVER



## Of, for and by

WESLEY VOTH  
For the Siuslaw News

the writing of this paragraph to complete that task, and can report that five boxes are now put together and up for use. I predict that by the time I finish this column, at least one will be claimed as a nest.

Some who read this column are no longer able to get out to where much of our flora and fauna can be seen, and especially like to hear about what is in bloom as spring progresses. Natives I have seen in the past two weeks: pacific crabapple, rhododendron, dogwood, elderberry, big-leaf maple, trailing blackberry or dewberry with their five pointed stars, bleeding heart, Hooker's and Smith's fairy bells, miner's lettuce, goats beard, false Solomon seal and the first of the columbine. Most of the trilliums still in bloom have turned purple; salmonberries are forming and it won't be that long before the first of those will be disappearing into the mouths of those who know real value.

I keep hearing people make comments that makes me wonder if they understand who the government in this country is. It is, first and foremost, "We the People of the United States." It is good from time to time to reread the preamble to our constitution

that begins with those words, and remember why we the people united and formed that constitution:

*"In Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."*

There are some who say they would like to see our country be great again. I think we become great only if we the people use our collective powers for the purposes laid out in that preamble. Things like a more perfect union, the establishment of justice, ensuring domestic tranquility and the promotion of the general welfare. Only if we deliver on the as yet unfulfilled promise of "liberty and justice for all."

Do a better job of seeing that black lives matter than the constitution with its counting those lives as three fifths of a person, or sentencing guidelines or profiling that manage to focus the harshest scrutiny and treatment on people of color. Do a better job to seeing to voting rights than recent districting and elections have demonstrated. Certainly living wages and health care are a huge part of the general welfare.

Only then can we say we have — and can be proud of — a government of the people, by the people and for the people.

## YESTERDAY'S NEWS

### MOMENTS IN TIME The History Channel

- On April 23, 1564, English dramatist and poet William Shakespeare is born in Stratford-on-Avon. While it is impossible to be certain of the exact day of his birth, church records show that he was baptized on April 26, and it was customary to wait three days before baptizing a newborn.

- On April 20, 1871, Congress authorizes President Ulysses S. Grant to use military force to suppress the Ku Klux Klan. Founded in 1865 by a group of Confederate veterans, the KKK engaged in night terrorist raids against black Americans and white Republicans.

- On April 19, 1897, the first Boston Marathon is held. Women were not allowed to enter the race until 1972, but in 1966 runner Roberta "Bobbi" Gibb hid in the bushes near the start until the race began. In 1967, Kathrine Switzer finished even though race officials tried to physically remove her.

- On April 21, 1918, Manfred von Richthofen, the German flying ace known as "The Red Baron," is killed by Allied fire. In a time when 20 air victories ensured a pilot legendary status, von Richthofen had downed 80 enemy aircraft. He was 25 years old.

- On April 18, 1945, syndicated journalist Ernie Pyle, America's most popular war correspondent, is killed by Japanese machine-gun fire on the island of Ie Shima in the Pacific. Pyle always wrote about the experiences of enlisted men rather than the battles they participated in.

- On April 24, 1953, Winston Churchill, the British leader who guided Great Britain and the Allies through World War II, is knighted by Queen Elizabeth II.

- On April 22, 1978, the Blues Brothers make their world premiere on "Saturday Night Live." Led by SNL cast members Dan Aykroyd and John Belushi, the band would go on to score three top-40 hits and a No. 1 album.

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## LETTERS

### Amazing CROW

I and the residents from Spruce Point, a prestige senior living community, would like to say thank you to Melanie Heard and the kids from CROW (Children's Repertory of Oregon Workshops) for their amazing performance of "Shrek the Musical, Jr."

There is so much talent in this group of young people that just talking about it gives us goosebumps.

Melanie and the CROW performers always bring a sneak peek of the project they are working on to our community and then invite us to attend the rehearsal performance. This works out great for us as the residents feel like CROW is performing just for them. The programs, costumes, backdrops and props are so professionally done — the talent goes way beyond the performers.

We look forward to the next amazing performance offered to our community.

Thank you again for all you do for our seniors.

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

### Money in politics

While on his way to the Republican presidential nominating convention, Donald Trump has hijacked the party from those driving the national GOP bus. Not mentioned, the drivers had themselves commandeered the party a decade or more ago.

That was when the Koch brothers and their billionaire allies set out with Super PACs like Americans for Prosperity and



influencers like ALEC to reduce government, in Grover Norquist's memorable metaphor, to bathtub drowning size.

The media focusses on obscene amounts of money compromising presidential elections. Meanwhile, the Koch brothers quietly finance the election of like-minded candidates at the state level, capturing 11 state legislatures from Democrats in 2014 and gaining conservative Republican control of 30 state legislatures and full control of state legislature and governorship in 23 states. (Democrats controlled 27 state legislatures in 2009, now have full control of 11 state legislatures and total control in seven states.)

Along the way, a populist Tea Party uprising has morphed into the unmanageable Republican primaries bash. But, in the meantime, success at the state level provided control of the decennial redistricting process solidifying congressional ascendancy through the gerrymandering of House seats. (In 2014, 95 percent of House incumbents were re-elected.)

This has resulted in a polarized Congress that will become even more so at least until the 2020 decennial redistricting.

Of more immediate interest to the Koch brothers are policies concerning the panopoly of business regulation set at the state legislative level, control of which they continue to hold. For example, taxpayer subsidies for Koch's Georgia Pacific and overlooked contamination by Koch's Frac-Chem fracking in Pennsylvania. Or, the undermining of solar energy and renewable fuel standards that threaten their extensive fossil fuel interests in Florida, Arizona, Kansas and Ohio.

Bottom line, Koch money-in-politics is good for Koch Industries.

Koch's network of political nonprofits, "super PACs" and donors marching to their drumbeat is planning to spend \$750 million over the next two years advancing their brand of conservative candidates and policies.

Self-funded anomalies like Donald Trump and crowd-funded candidates like Bernie Sanders might suggest the influence of

jumbo donations in the presidential campaign is being diluted.

But, the Kochs' state level successes underscore the growing need to limit Citizen United-enabled, big money influence in politics that hamstring reasonable regulation and throws the middle class under the bus.

Arnold Buchman  
Florence

### Woodbury for justice of peace

Lane County voters have an exceptional choice for Lane County Justice of the Peace.

Woody Woodbury is the best candidate for the position. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in communication, which makes him highly suited for the qualifications needed for the position.

Woodbury's strengths include the ability to listen carefully and weigh possible solutions, with the highest of integrity.

Woodbury is owner/operator of the Florence Grocery Outlet, where his well-known generosity to the community makes him highly respected by all who know him. He was named Volunteer of the Year in his community for 2015.

Woodbury resides in Florence, which is perfect since the Lane County Justice Court, serving the entire county, is located in Florence, as a result of court closures in Oakridge and Springfield.

We encourage all Lane County voters to join us in voting for Woody Woodbury for Lane County Justice of the Peace.

Bob and Kay King  
Florence

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