

**Siuslaw News**  
P.O. Box 10  
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# Opinion

## VIEW FROM UPRIVER



## A shared experience... and concern

WESLEY VOTH  
For the Siuslaw News

water has come in the time we've been here.

There is no guarantee it will never come higher. I am willing to take the risk and live here anyway, to get to experience days like today on a regular basis.

It is also election season; I am beginning to see the first absentee ballots in the mail, meaning the end is near. I grew up in a family that did not, for religious and political reasons, have a television.

The summer I was 16 I stayed in a house that had one and I could watch what I wanted. It was 1968, immediately following the assassinations of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy, and so my first television experience was watching the Republican and then Democrat National Conventions.

I watched as Nixon, and then Humphrey, were nominated. And then I watched Civil Rights marches and riots, and the coverage of the Vietnam War, and felt politically moved for

the first time.

That was a much worse period of time in this country than what we are experiencing now.

When Susie and I moved to our house on the river, we decided not to have television. It is partly about simplicity, but there is also something about the frenetic tone. It always sounds to me like a toddler that isn't getting enough attention and keeps ramping up the drama — *look at ME, listen to ME.*

So to watch this past week's presidential debate in real time, we had to go to the house of some friends. We weren't alone; there were other friends there who don't have television at home either. I went in part because I knew many others would be watching at the same time, to share a common experience with millions of others in this country.

I am not undecided, but wanted to try and grasp some of the thinking and appeal of someone I haven't taken seriously enough. To be able to listen to entire answers rather than soundbites.

I came away shaking my head at a number

of things. The debate did not measure up to my standards of civility; I have a low tolerance when people interrupt one another, or for a debate format that seems to permit — and then force — that lack of civility in order to achieve some fairness.

I was not impressed, either, by the glowering looks on the one hand or the laughing at some private joke or texting on the other.

Donald Trump doesn't pay taxes because he is "smart?" And then complains that the U.S. doesn't make other countries in its military alliances "pay their fair share."

What kind of double standard is that?

The critical question of the night, not only for the candidates, but also for each of us watching is this: "If the will of the people" turns out to select the other one, will he/she/we support that person?

Do we have faith in our system, and show good faith by respecting the selection process of our form of government?

May our collective answer to that be more positive and generous than either candidate was able to articulate the other night.

## LETTERS

### Tax code of ethics

During the presidential debates, Secretary Clinton brought up the subject of taxes, and the so called fact the Mr. Trump has paid none. I can make a guess that Mr. Trump, being a savvy businessman, has paid very little in taxes over the years.

This is probably true because our tax system was written by millionaires and billionaires at the start of the 20th century as a means to get money to expand the government attached to a Post Office Bill passed on Christmas Eve.

So why not have loop holes for the wealthy to reduce or eliminate their tax burden?

Before the turn of the last century, charity was just that: Charity. Now, it's big business and a way to skirt the tax system for every wealthy group or individual to pay less or no taxes.

Take, for instance, the case of Warren Buffet (who, by the way, is or was on President Obama's Economic Council). He gave half of his wealth to Mr. and Mrs. Bill Gates' charity to educate African children.

The Clintons' charities are another example

of getting around the tax liability laws.

So this goes on every day, year in and year out, for the wealthy to not pay their fair share.

What we need is a new tax code instead of thousands of pages in the filing of a wealthy person's taxes — which only an accountant can understand anyway.

Jimmie Moe  
Florence

### Not a case of 'Political Correctness'

I remember the fascination and excitement of learning about the explorers in history. About the rewards presented to the explorer for claiming new territory. The thrill of rubbing elbows with royalty and receiving rewards of gold and property (Of course, the value of property went completely unnoticed by my fifth grade mind.) But the vision of adventure, of gold and being presented to the queen... WOW.

As it turned out, my fifth grade history information proved to be more than just a little scanty.

For this discussion, let's stick to the subject first introduced. It's not a case of political correctness, but the history that we did not learn.

We did not learn that exploration was not to discover, but to enrich the power and wealth of the most wealthy and powerful few.

We did not learn that the treatment of the native populations in these lands was without any exception brutal beyond any standard. When the islands of Haiti and Cuba were discovered, the generous and friendly Arawaks were required to collect gold by anyone over age 14.

In two years, through murder, mutilation or suicide, half of the 250,000 Arawak Indians on Haiti were dead. By 1650, there was not one of the original Arawaks or their descendants left on the island.

In Cuba, 7,000 children died in three months. We did not learn that the cruel policies initiated by Columbus and pursued by his successors resulted in complete genocide.

Our Nation observes this discover-date as an October holiday. But our small community of Florence can proceed as a leader of truth.

Let us lead by showing honor to the first people of this nation. It is the job of thinking people, as Albert Camus suggested, not to be on the side of the executioners.

I call on our community not to honor the first slave trader of the Western World but, instead, to honor truth and compassion instead of political correctness by renaming this October day in honor of the First Nation's People.

Maris Robison  
Florence

### Unfit for presidency

I learned the hard way, that people tell you who they are, but sometimes you see who you want, or wish them to be, instead of who they really are.

Big mistake.

So it is with Trump.

The AZ Republic and Dallas Morning News papers have both endorsed Hillary. These conservative papers haven't endorsed a Democratic candidate in 50 years or more.

But this election is different because of the Trump threat. Many dyed-in-the wool republicans have also come out for Hillary.

They didn't become liberals; it's because Trump is unfit for the presidency.

He is a dangerous demagogue who won't save America.

Forget his words and pay attention to his actions.

He's a bully. Some of you like that. Maybe you imagine that he will bully all people you don't like — and you're safe because you are part of his club?

Wrong.

In the end, Trump the bully will eventually bully you as well. History proves it time and time again. We see that Donald loves Donald, not America.

His words are empty promises, and his past actions show us what to expect if we give him power.

Some hate Hillary for emails.

How does her email scandal compare to Donald's? Did she praise Vladimir Putin or cheat hardworking Americans?

Nope. But Trump has.

Those of us not under Donald's spell hope and pray you see his actions, not empty promises. He's not what you dream he is.

He's what he tells you he is: A nightmare for America.

Stephanie Spradling  
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 or poetry will not be published.

All submissions become the property of Siuslaw News and will not be returned.

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