

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

# Opinion

## VIEW FROM UPRIVER



WESLEY VOTH  
For the Siuslaw News

## Cast a line, cast a vote in hope

Me? I didn't mail my ballot, and chose to utilize the drop box instead. As a mail carrier maybe I ought to have more faith in the postal system. And I know we try especially hard with ballots, checking for example to make sure the voter remembered to sign the outside of the envelope. But, this somehow seemed too important to leave to someone as fallible as I sometimes am.

For me, it is usually this time of year when my most intense — I would say even religious — experiences happen outside.

Especially when fishing. Times when politics and the struggle to make a living, when all of the should and should nots of life, are washed away, blown away and only that which is most fundamental stands.

My favorite kind of fishing among the many types I've done over the course of my life is here on Oregon coastal rivers, bobber fishing for salmon or steelhead in fast water during stormy weather, especially when it involves wading and feeling the intensity of rushing water on top of everything else.

Using a bobber means less lost tackle to litter the river, gives a moving point of visual

focus, and the wonder when that orange and black indicator goes under if this is because of a fish or the bottom. I use steel shot rather than lead, which is also healthier for the river.

The hook has colored yarn and salmon roe, and why chinook and steelhead — but usually not coho — will strike at this is a mystery I spend little time puzzling over.

It is a zen thing, but fish tend to strike very randomly, often when nothing has happened for many hundreds of casts. Each of those casts is an act of hope

Of faith.

Of endurance.

Okay, quickly, one perfect couple of hours this past week. Lake Creek was high and no one was fishing my favorite stretch. When I got out and looked, I realized I could just make it by wading 20 tricky yards to access the best place. The first cast I hooked into a fish and we struggled for a time; eventually it got close enough to look me right in the eye, a bright female chinook of about 15 pounds, and then she quite neatly threw the hook.

For 15 minutes I felt several other fish, and then ran out of bait. Was it worth going back to Mapleton to get more?

Yes!

Back on the water conditions had changed and there was nothing happening. Not a fish

cast after cast as the daylight waned and the heavens opened. There were bursts of wind and the raining down of leaves and whirly-gigging maple seeds. Time to call it a day.

Maybe one last cast, despite the bait reduced to a thread of white tissue along the pink yarn. And then, bobber down, fish on, and a lively dance between one who lives in water and one who only fantasizes he does. There was the surge of current moving fast, the pull of salmon on line, the flexing of rod and sinews, the croaking of a heron driven from its place.

Some long time passed in this struggle, with me retracing my steps through deep rushing water while hanging on to my rod and reaching toward the bank for the net. The salmon tried to wrap the line around every rock, to tangle in every submerged patch of vegetation, and just when I began to move it toward the net in my other hand, the defibrillator implanted in my chest sensed my heart beating too fast — and for only the second time in the two years it has been standing guard, shocked me like a charge of lightning.

Somehow I didn't lose focus or balance, and while feeling especially alive and grateful to be so, landed the fish, which I cradled and spoke to in deepest thanksgiving as the light in its eyes and the day and the water faded to black.

## LETTERS

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** With this being our final issue before the Nov. 8 elections, today's Opinion page has been cleared of everything except our bi-weekly "View From Upriver" feature and required banner information in order to allow as much room as possible for your letters. Thanks to all of you for adding your voice to the many important community discussion these last several weeks as we prepare for the final votes at the county, state and national levels.

— Ned Hickson

### Education remains a passion

State Representative Caddy McKeown is a champion for coastal communities. Her heart lives on the coast and she commits her time in Salem to speak for coastal Oregon residents.

She is a native coastal Oregonian who cares deeply about our rural communities.

I have listened to the passion in her voice as she talks about "Oregon Promise," which ensures that students can attend community college tuition-free or the Office of Small Business Assistance, which gives small business owners a leg up, helping the economic recovery and vitality of our coastal communities.

Representative McKeown's first experience as a public official was on the school board in Coos Bay. She worked as a volunteer with the ASPIRE program, which pairs adult mentors with high school students to help them be best prepared for post-secondary educational endeavors.

She served as 2016 chair of the Oregon Coastal Caucus which brings together voices from various sectors on the coast.

She is a native coastal Oregonian, born and raised in Coos Bay. She understands and has lived through the economic roller coasters that have affected our rural communities. Her opponent, in contrast, moved to Oregon one year ago. She doesn't have the experience and understanding needed for us in Salem.

Please join me in casting a vote for Representative Caddy McKeown. She holds our communities in her heart and will continue to work tirelessly for improved economic, educational and social vitality.

Becky Goehring  
Florence

### Dire state of the planet

If you didn't see National Geographic's "Before The Flood" (aired on National Geographic Oct. 30), you need to check it out on Netflix, Youtube, etc. for free.

It reports on the dire state of the planet and global warming caused by excessive carbon pollution, continued fossil fuel development and methane releases.

Satellite imagery and renowned scientists research with fact-based conclusions expose the fossil fuels industry's blatant denial and callous disregard for the future of humanity on this planet.

The scientific analysis is that we are hurtling toward an environmental "Armageddon" much sooner than anticipated, documented in events taking place right now. If you care for the future generations and livability of this planet, watch this outstanding documentary that is so important in a time of climate denial and partisanship.

Corporate lobbyists for the fossil fuels industry control Washington and will wage war on anybody that gets in their way. The passing of Citizens United by the Supreme Court has allowed money to represent "freedom of speech," with a huge corporate influx of money that does not have humanity or the planet's health in mind.

Jon Tipple  
Dunes City

### Calm diplomacy

I have had the pleasure of knowing Arnie Roblan and his family for over 30 years. I have watched him go from respected math teacher to much-loved high school principal to state legislator.

Through all those transitions one thing has remained constant with Arnie: his incredible ability to treat everyone with respect.

I have watched him quietly and diplomatically deal with angry students, frustrated parents and upset community members.

This calm diplomacy has carried over to his service in the Oregon Legislature. Always a strong voice for the South Coast, he has also proven to be an effective statewide leader on education and economic development for rural Oregon.

The economic forum that he established on the coast each year brings statewide and national leaders to the coast to hear our issues.

Within state government he is respected and listened to which, ultimately, benefits the South Coast.

As we watch the acrimony and distrust play out on the national level, it is nice to see that you can be an effective leader who maintains a high level of self respect.

I will vote for Senator Roblan on Nov. 8.

Mike Lehman  
Coos Bay

### A big flaw

Just an observation, but I've been looking at the pros and cons of measure 97 recently. The one thing that leaps out at me is that the state with the lowest corporate taxes doesn't have the most corporations.

If the mantra "Low tax rates create jobs..."

why is there any unemployment here?

It seems corporations would be lined up on the borders making a mad rush to relocate their businesses here. I just don't see that happening.

What I do see is a lot of job creation from our neighbor to the south, California, where in the land of high taxes, jobs and wages are on the rise. So I find a big flaw in the correlation of high taxes and poor employment opportunities.

It just isn't factually true.

If it were true, Oregon should be busting at the seams with corporations wanting to relocate here.

Maybe our poor education and graduation rates are an issue and giving them pause, i.e., not enough young people with the skills to provide them with a work force required to fill the positions available.

Measure 97 can help correct this issue and give our children a boost to acquire the skills needed for these jobs.

Corporations need an educated work force. I see this as a boon for Oregon, her people and the corporations. Asking those that need an educated work force to help contribute their share is a reasonable request.

Please read Measure 97 in its entirety. Don't just obtain your information from TV ads and mail box flyers. Give our children and our community a fair start.

Vote "Yes" on Measure 97 for our children's future.

Sarah Bower  
Florence

### It isn't just talk

I encourage my fellow residents to vote for Lane County Justice of the Peace candidate Woody Woodbury.

I have personally known Woody for many years and know him to be a community-driven individual who cares for others around him. It's a quality often spoken about but not always acted on by politicians.

He is the owner of Grocery Outlet, a small business that offers food at a substantial discount to citizens on a budget.

Woody currently serves on the boards of the Florence Urban Renewal Agency and for Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue, both of which are entities that benefit the community. He is active as a community volunteer, particularly with Florence Food Share.

Having previously served on the Florence Area Chamber of Commerce Board as both president and vice president, Woody has been active in business retention and as well as helping businesses build foundations for success.

He also serves on the board of the Good Deed Project Foundation, a community movement working to promote random acts of kindness.

There is a distinct pattern here; it's not just talk for Woody. He is the real deal: an honest person who at his core is unselfish and treats others with respect.

Join me in voting to elect Woody Woodbury as Justice of the Peace for Lane County.

Joshua Greene  
Florence

### Meeting the challenge

I support wholeheartedly the election of

Judge Rick Brissenden to the position he holds by appointment, Lane County Justice of the Peace.

My respect for Judge Brissenden goes back to 2007, when I learned how he as judge of the Florence Municipal Court, was meeting the challenges caused by severe underfunding of Lane County law enforcement.

Challenge No. 1: In 2007, all driving-under-the-influence-of-intoxicants (DUII) offenders were required to go to Lane County Mental Health in Eugene to undergo evaluation. Once evaluated, they were usually assigned to complete on-going treatment or attend classes at a drug and alcohol treatment program.

Previous to the severe cut-back in county funds, Lane County Mental Health evaluators came to Florence to perform their assessments.

Approximately 14 percent of DUII offenders failed to report for their evaluations and evaluators stopped coming — and DUII violators had to travel to Eugene.

Since nearly all had had their driver's licenses suspended by the time they were referred for evaluation, close to 50 percent of them were not reporting as scheduled.

Challenge No. 2: Individuals sentenced to be incarcerated knew that the Lane County Jail was woefully understaffed.

Many misdemeanor offenders sentenced to 30 or more days in custody were being released from jail a day or two after they were admitted.

Consequently, many Florence offenders believed it was in their best interest to request that county jail time be imposed on them rather than fines or drug treatment.

Judge Brissenden used the threat of jail — and actual commitments in the city jail — as motivation to encourage DUII offenders to report to Eugene and to pay fines and complete drug treatment.

Those offenders released from Lane County Jail after a day or two of incarceration had to appear before Judge Brissenden in court on the first court day following their release, and they were returned to the county jail — as many times as it took — until a substantial majority of their sentence had been served.

I learned that Judge Brissenden and his staff were committed to holding each violator of the law accountable. I also recognized that the Judge and his staff were determined that each law breaker addicted to drugs and alcohol would receive rehabilitative treatment.

Judge Brissenden's service to our community should be rewarded.

Harold Titus  
Florence

### Warms the heart

A very special thank you to all those that attended the Van Fans luncheon and card party Oct. 19. It warms my heart to live in a community so caring and supporting as Florence.

These fund raisers are a labor of love and thanks to the Florence community so many people with cancer have a means to Eugene to receive radiation treatment.

Again, our appreciation for your support.

Karen Lee  
Van Fans President  
Florence

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