

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

# Opinion

## VIEW FROM UPRIVER



## Making sense of what makes us great

WESLEY VOTH  
 For the Siuslaw News

Lake Creek at Indiola, which in turn flows into the Siuslaw at Swisshome.

It is a part of the watershed where there have been recent disagreements between some local residents and the U.S. Forest Service over management and restoration plans.

Getting back to the eagle, the majestic bird was sitting — not standing — on a sunny, grassy knoll overlooking a section of spawning gravels. With eyes that can see into the water far more keenly than ours can, the eagle watched with patient fascination as the mystical dance proceeded below — and with it the hope of abundant food for many, many tomorrows.

As I write this it is the morning after. I am trying to get my head around what the election

results mean.

As the deeply divided American electorate appears to favor Hillary Clinton by popular vote but elects Donald Trump decisively by electoral vote; maintains Republican majorities in both houses of Congress; and Republicans win their not-strictly-by-the-constitution political gamble regarding the current Supreme Court nominee.

So, the American people have spoken.

Certainly, money — now that it is speech — has spoken pretty loudly, too. I do not, however, see that politics or politicians or the political system has changed at all; only that power has shifted yet again.

One thing I do understand is work, and that working together takes work. It's time to do that, to get to work to make America great.

It should start with fulfilling the promise of liberty and justice for all. That in restoring law and order, wherever it does not currently exist, be done in a way that does not trample civil

rights and does not look anything like a police state, which is antithetical to liberty and justice.

We cannot become great by taking health care away from people, by stripping consumer protections, by weakening federal agencies tasked with keeping water and air and food and pharmaceuticals safe, by taking away the rights of people to choose. We do not become great by being demeaning of anyone.

I, for one, am going to choose to believe that Donald Trump will rise to the shape of the office, that our system will work to bring out the best in him as we all struggle together to make this thing work.

And thanks, Oregon, for passing the measure funding Outdoor School. May it mean that a higher percentage of our children come to care enough to go outside, and to recognize both the eagle that I saw, as well as appreciate and understand the incredible majesty of what it was watching.

November continues to be the warm wet caboose of October, when the drying power and glow from a wood fire in one's own hearth trumps most alternatives as evenings darken ever earlier.

My most memorable moment on Election Day was watching a bald eagle as it scrutinized Chinook salmon spawning in Indian Creek. If you are not familiar with that part of the Siuslaw Watershed, Indian Creek flows into

## LETTERS

### Great vision for Florence

I do not live in the city limits of Florence, but if I did, my vote would have been included with the rest for Joe Henry.

I hope the readers of the Siuslaw News were able to read the write up on the Opinion page of Saturday, Nov. 12, paper. A wonderful write up about our town's Mayor.

His life from early childhood sets the example of what makes a leader for the average American people, someone who we can all relate to someone who has worked — actually worked — in a variety of fields.

I liked one comment in particular Joe made, "For some jobs, there simply are no training manuals or college curricula. You just dive in and tackle multifaceted challenges with hands-on approach."

Those have been my own thoughts all of my life. We are fortunate that Joe and Pam Henry chose Florence so we could choose them.

I believe in this 2016 election the American people have spoken clearly that we want to return to a conservative base of blue collar workers who serve this country and family values.

America is a great country to live in and we can all do our part to make it better.

Joe Henry has great vision for the future of Florence.

Donna Dobson  
 Florence



### Repeal the 14th Amendment

In response to Win Jolley's letter (Siuslaw News, Nov. 12)

Win, I'm with you. I didn't really understand how the electoral college worked until now, and I'm 65 years old.

When Gore lost the election, he actually captured a majority of popular votes. However, the Supreme Court chose Bush to be President.

Didn't seem fair then, but the electoral college didn't really have the impact on that election as it does now.

I confess, I didn't take the time to educate myself, I just accepted defeat. This time it's different.

Even with an attempt to understand the electoral college, I find myself still confused.

Apparently when we vote in a presidential election, we are actually voting for electors. Each candidate has his/her own electors. There are 538 electors and 270 are needed to win.

The electors selected by the party that wins each state become the electors that choose our president. Once again, we actually vote for electors, not the candidate.

It does not matter if a candidate gets the most popular votes; Hillary Clinton has received over a million more votes than Donald Trump, perhaps as many as 2 million — the votes are still being counted.

It's time we consider repealing the 14th Amendment and elect our presidents by popular votes rather than a group of just 538 people who represent more than 140 million registered voters in the United States.

We go through this discussion every four

years, regardless of the winning and losing candidates.

Let's not let four years pass again only to act so surprised if the candidate that loses actually captures a majority of the popular votes.

Gail Katz  
 Florence

### Indications of temperament

I appreciated Arnold Buchman's last two letters, and I would like to elaborate on the one of Nov. 12.

David Brooks, the well-known conservative columnist for the New York Times and commentator for PBS' "The News Hour," noted a few months ago how the Republican Party had lost its compass and strayed from Burkian conservatism — a philosophy grounded in a rational, measured and incremental approach to policy, as opposed to the more "extremist" ground in which Brooks believes the Party has now planted itself.

He suggests one of the reasons for this transformation is the Party's tendency, over the last decade or so, to spin events and issues into an "Armageddon" type scenario that requires an all-or-nothing attitude toward preventing possible horrendous "catastrophes" from materializing.

I think another component to this transformation comes as a result of the Party's alignment with certain fear-mongers in talk radio over the last 25 years.

This new orientation, coupled with a deep — and justifiable — dissatisfaction with govern-

ment and a political system that includes out-of-control lobbying and special interests, has provided fertile ground for the rise of a true demagogue.

And with it has come a demagogue leader in the form of President-elect Donald Trump, a man who wields a juvenile-level vocabulary reliant upon exaggeration, strong adjectives and repetition to communicate.

For example: "...a disaster, a complete disaster," or "our country is in a crisis, folks, a crisis worse than we've ever seen..."

My concern is that all these mannerisms serve to compensate for a lack of knowledge or understanding when clear, rational details for a plan, policy or remedy are presented.

To me, they are indications that he does not have the temperament to be a thoughtful, responsible politician-statesman.

At any rate, all is done now.

This letter is a reflection of my hope — along with Mr. Buchman's hope — that President-elect Trump will morph into a clear-thinking, adult-minded leader of the free world.

This may well be a tall order in the wake of his choice of Steve Bannon as chief strategist, a man who formerly headed the openly racist and misogynistic Breitbart News.

I can only hope that the weight of our soon-to-be President's latest venture will humble into following through on his promise to represent all Americans, and not just those within the demagogue.

Curt Buttko  
 Florence

### How can we help?

I told a homeless friend recently that I would share his story. What he wants is a safe place to sleep each night.

He fears being rousted from his tent and told to leave. This is what often happens in Florence and in many other places; if you are found sleeping in your car, you are told to leave, even if you are parked in a church parking lot.

A fine may be imposed as well.

This homeless kind man vacuums the carpet in the Methodist Church dining area after free lunch is served. He has more to offer and is willing to work if given an opportunity.

What can we do?

As a first step, let's consider providing a safe and legal place for our homeless brothers and sisters to be, right here in Florence.

Janet Hirsch  
 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.

Write to: Editor@TheSiuslawNews.com

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## Siuslaw News

Published every Wednesday and Saturday at 148 Maple St. in Florence, Lane County, Oregon. A member of the National Newspaper Association and Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association. Periodicals postage paid at Florence, Ore. Postmaster, send address changes to: Siuslaw News, P.O. Box 10, Florence, OR 97439; phone 541-997-3441; fax 541-997-7979. All press releases may be sent to PressReleases@TheSiuslawNews.com.

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 Saturday Issue—General news, Thursday noon; Budgets, two days prior to publication; Regular classified ads, Thursday 1 p.m.; Display ads, Thursday noon; Boxed and display classified ads, Wednesday 5 p.m. Soundings, Tuesday 5 p.m.

### NEWSPAPER SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

In Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$71; 10-weeks subscription, \$18; Out of Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$94; 10-weeks subscription, \$24; Out of State — 1-year subscription, \$120; Out of United States — 1-year subscription, \$200; E-Edition Online Only (Anywhere) — 1-year subscription, \$65.

Mail subscription includes E-Edition.  
 Website and E-Edition: www.TheSiuslawNews.com

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