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as well, but it did appear that not as many people were staying out as late as in the past," he said.

The observations from Pitcher were reinforced by the emergency call and response numbers generated over the weekend.

Statistics provided by the police department show that there was only a single citation issued for DUII, seven incidents of disorderly conduct and four accidents occurred. This is down from similar weekends in the past.

The sense that this year's celebration was less volatile, and thereby less challenging for first responders, was echoed by Western Lane

Operations Chief Matt House.

"The weekend was great from a public safety perspective," he said. "We did not experience an elevated call level and there were no serious accidents and no fatalities. We responded to 24 calls over the weekend, which is close to a normal call volume for us."

The Florence City Jail also hosted fewer individuals than usual during the festival, with 20 people booked. There were only 23 other citations issued during the weekend by FPD.

Pitcher summed up this year's lighter call volume.

"To me, it looks like the trend of Rhody Days becoming more and more of a family event is continuing," he said.

MEDIA from page 1A

Cohen spoke with Siuslaw News about the film and the issues he sees in the current media climate.

At the heart of the film is a conversation about Stone, who was an independent, investigative journalist and writer who released a four-page weekly publication that covered topics from McCarthyism and racial discrimination. Stone's type of journalism, independent and free of corporate ownership, is what Cohen would like to see a resurgence in.

"Independent outlets have smaller owners, or they're non-profits," he said. "They don't have powerful corporate bosses telling the journalists what they can and cannot investigate."

Cohen stated he had seen media manipulation first hand in his career in cable news. He had been a media critic for years, starting FAIR in 1986. But after speaking out against bias and censorship, something odd happened — he was invited onto these channels to be a commentator.

"It was a fluke," he said. "I was someone who worked in mainstream media news, but was somewhat of an outcast, a critic of mainstream TV news."

Cohen's main argument against television news, along with major news outlets such as The Washington Post, is that stations are owned by massive media conglomerates.

"When I was in TV news, they would say you need the three V's: visuals, victims and villains," Cohen said. "But, villains are usually powers that be in society, especially greedy corporations. And corporations own the media. A lot of these exciting stories that have those visuals, victims and villains can't be told on television. But the villain can be a shark."

Cohen likened the current media situation to that of the Chinese. Democratic governments are often critical of the country because the party tightly controls its media outlets, and censors certain stories that could place the party in a negative light.

"By that same token, we have a society that's dominated by giant corporations," he said. "They dominate our economy, our politics and our culture. And you can judge mainstream media systems by how well it covers those dominant institutions, and I would say it fails. I would say the U.S. media systems covers the corporate state deficiently, just like the Chinese media system is deficient."

As an example, Cohen brought up his dealings with MSNBC, which at the time of his tenure, was owned by General Electric (GE). For almost 30 years, GE polluted the Hudson River by dispensing polychlorinated biphenyl (PCBs) in the water stream, causing harmful environmental effects.

"For years, if a kid fell in the river, you had to almost decontaminate them," Cohen said. "If

you caught a fish, you couldn't eat it. Mom-and-pop fishing shops were closing up. It's a dramatic story. It's got visuals on the river, it's got victims of

Cohen explained, "There are exceptions to every rule. I know that there were some references to the Hudson River. But if you find thousands and thousands

according to literature by NASA and the National Park Service, 97 percent of climatologists believe that the climate is warming and that trends point to human activity being "extremely likely" a cause. However, there are the three percent of scientists who disputed the findings. By giving voice to the three percent, Cohen felt it delegitimized the science.

Cohen also believes that mass media is preventing certain voices from being heard, particularly progressive liberalism, which he unabashedly claims as

his political leaning. While he believes that FOX is adept at showing the right's point of view, outlets such as MSNBC fit squarely in the left of center spectrum.

"Baby step of left of center," he said. "During the fight between Bernie and Hillary, with Hillary being a political centrist and a war hawk, and Bernie being an actual political figure on the left, NBC tilted toward Hillary. And so did Rachel Maddow. If they were a left-wing network, they would be going crazy about Bernie Sanders, but that's not what they were doing."

And then there's the coverage of President Donald Trump and accusations of Russian collusion, which networks like CNN cover on an almost minute-to-minute basis.

"The main reason that Hillary Clinton lost had nothing to do with Russia," Cohen said. "That's the left point of view. The left point of view is that the main obstacle of peace in the middle east is not Iran, it's countries like Saudi Arabia and the Israeli oppression of Palestine. But if you watch the news, all you hear about is Iran and Russia."

These are the topics that garner ratings.

In 2016, CBS Executive Chairman and CEO Leslie Moonves discussed how the often-chaotic Republican primary was good for the company's bottom line.

"It may not be good for America, but it's damn good for CBS," Moonves famously said. "Man, who would have expected the ride we're all having right now? ... The money's rolling in and this is fun. ... I've never seen anything like this, and this going to be a very good year for us. Sorry. It's a terrible thing to say. But, bring it on, Donald. Keep going."

Whether or not one believes Cohen's politics, gaining a wide variety of perspectives is vital to a healthy democracy. So far, mainstream media outlets on television is not fitting the bill.

"I don't blame the viewers because I'm one who believes if cable TV news was talking about the big issues facing the citizens in democracy, and doing it in an exciting way, it would get bigger ratings than shark attacks," Cohen said.

To get broader viewpoints, Cohen believes that audiences should turn to other forms of media, including radio, print and online blogs.

And the public should also look at multiple points of view.

Cohen points to the National Review as a prime example of a publication that differs from his political beliefs that he reads on a regular basis. Even though he disagrees with many of the viewpoints, he has maintained a friendship with the editor.

"We can get into bubbles," he said. "I encourage people, whether they see themselves as right, center, left or none of the above, to always consult media sources that are diverse. That's my main concern is that we just consume information that's just your worldview."

Cohen's film, "All Governments Lie," will be shown on Friday, May 25, in the Bromley Room at the Siuslaw Public Library, 1460 Ninth St. The event, which was organized by local resident Rand Dawson, will begin at 6:30 p.m. with a meet-and-greet with Cohen, followed by the film at 7 p.m. A Q&A will follow the presentation.

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— Jeff Cohen
media critic, journalist, professor and
"All Governments Lie" documentary producer

fishing operations closing and it's got a villain. But the villain owns the television station."

Of particular concern was GE's attempts to delay the river's cleanup. In 2001, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a study regarding PCB contamination in the Hudson, and the cleanup project would cost GE hundreds of millions of dollars. But the dredging of the river didn't take place until 2009.

"The real crime was that they spent decades preventing Washington, D.C. from cleaning it up," Cohen said.

The report was released around the time Cohen was working for MSNBC. But the network did not cover the issue.

"I go to the president of MSNBC, and we're making small talk," Cohen recalled. "I said that MSNBC was not telling the truth about the Hudson River. (The president said), 'I know they're lying, and we both know that we're not going to go on NBC and say that GE is lying.' It's how people talk. They talk privately about the crimes of their boss, and they know that story will never get on the air."

The Siuslaw News reached out to MSNBC for comment about Cohen's claims, but did not receive a reply by press time.

However, actual directives do not come down from media owners to squash these stories.

"I'm not a conspiracy theorist," Cohen said. "I don't believe there are 10 evil people running the world. Institutions are very subtle, and the people who get promoted are very diplomatic and soft, and the people who don't get promoted are the toughest journalists. They're not encouraged, not 'disallowed' (from covering those topics)."

It should be noted that while the Siuslaw News is owned by News Media Corporation, an entity that is independently owned and not influenced or owned by larger corporations. Journalists for this publication have not been asked to alter or suppress coverage, and are autonomous in their selections of stories.

"Your company is not owned by General Electric," Cohen pointed out. "You're not trying to do a story on the Hudson River. Your boss is a small, regional company. My boss was one of the most powerful corporations on planet earth. That's the difference."

MSNBC did cover the river clean up in a smattering of articles throughout the years, particularly after GE sold the company to Comcast.

Port Seeks Commission Applicants

The Port of Siuslaw Board of Commissioners will appoint a district citizen to fill the Position 2 vacancy created by the recent resignation of Nancy Rickard and Position 4 vacancy created by the recent resignation of David Huntington who became Port Manager. The term of the appointee will expire on 30 June 2019 at which time an elected successor will be seated. Persons wishing to be appointed to the Port Commission vacancy should obtain an application from the Port Office at 100 Harbor Street, or the Port's web site www.portofsiuslaw.com. Applications will be accepted until 5:00pm Friday, 15 June 2018. Applicants must be registered voters residing within the Port of Siuslaw district. Applicants may be invited for interviews.

The Port of Siuslaw is a Special District authorized by Oregon law to help sustain the economic vitality of western Lane County. The district boundary encompasses most of the Siuslaw River watershed, including the coastal communities of Florence and Dunes City, and extending upriver to Mapleton, Walton, Lorane, and Blachly. The Port is the sponsor of the federal maritime investment in Lane County for maintenance of the channel, harbor, jetties, and navigable ocean bars. The Port also has significant authority under Oregon statute for local economic development and infrastructure projects that encourage job creation and tourism.

The Port of Siuslaw Board of Commissioners meet regularly at 7:00pm on the third Wednesday of each month in the Port office at 100 Harbor Street in Florence. Regular Port Commission meetings are open to the public.

Questions should be directed to the Port office at 541-997-3426.

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