

Letters to the Editor:

Editor@TheSiuslawNews.com

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OPINION

SATURDAY

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The First Amendment

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

FOSTER HOPE, FOSTER TEENS

Lane County Child Welfare is looking for people with the right skills to parent teens. More than 130 teens are living in Department of Human Services (DHS) certified non-relative foster homes, and there are about 37 certified families. In order to best meet the needs of those 13 to 20 year olds, DHS must have additional safe, stable and caring foster parents.

A campaign called "Foster Hope. Foster Teens" is launching in Lane County with a goal of certifying 10 new foster families

GUEST VIEWPOINT

BY LOIS DAY
DIRECTOR, OREGON DHS CHILD WELFARE

exclusively for teens. The addition of 10 homes will improve DHS's ability to make the best fit, enhancing the teens' experience in care.

When children cannot safely reside with their parents, DHS strives to place them with safe relatives. If that is not possible, we look to non-relative foster parents

trying to keep them in their home community and school. Like any child, teens need a loving family in which to learn life skills.

Being a foster parent for a teen is different than fostering a younger child, and yet, much the same. These adults-in-training need life coaches and role models who provide stability and can

become lifelong relationships.

Most of us remember the advice and support we received from our own families growing up. We all need someone with whom to share our life dreams and achievements. Every child needs someone who will help them see how special they are.

Are you that someone? Please consider becoming a foster parent.

For more information on how to become a foster parent in Lane County, call 541-726-6644, ext. 2248, or e-mail holly.a.steer@state.or.us.

YESTERDAY'S NEWS

MOMENTS IN TIME
The History Channel

• On March 24, 1765, the British Parliament passes the Quartering Act, outlining the locations and conditions in which British soldiers are to find room and board in the American colonies. The New York assembly refused to comply with the law.

• On March 28, 1774, upset by the Boston Tea Party and other blatant acts of destruction of British property by American colonists, the British Parliament enacts the Coercive Acts, which included closing the port of Boston and giving immunity to British officials in criminal prosecution.

• On March 26, 1804, President Thomas Jefferson attends a public party at the Senate and leads a crowd in consuming an enormous loaf of bread. The giant bread was baked to go with the remnants of an enormous 1,200-pound block of cheese given by a group of Baptist women two years prior.

• On March 25, 1958, Sugar Ray Robinson defeats Carmen Basilio to regain the middleweight championship. It was the fifth and final title of his career. Robinson is considered by many to be the greatest prizefighter in history.

• On March 23, 1962, Pakistan's governor, Ayub Khan, gives first lady Jacqueline Kennedy a horse named Sardar because of their common interest in horses. In her memoirs, the first lady referred to Sardar as her "favorite treasure." She nicknamed the jet gelding "Black Jack."

• On March 27, 1973, Marlon Brando declines the Academy Award for Best Actor for his performance in "The Godfather." American Indian actress Sacheen Littlefeather attended the ceremony in Brando's place, stating that the actor could not accept the award, as he was protesting Hollywood's portrayal of Native Americans in film.

• On March 29, 1982, the University of North Carolina wins the NCAA men's basketball championship with a 63-62 defeat of Georgetown University. With 15 seconds on the clock, Georgetown point guard Fred Brown accidentally threw the ball to Carolina's James Worthy, mistaking him for a Georgetown teammate. Worthy dribbled out the clock.

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LETTERS

Family history of immigration

For whatever reasons, the Republican powers to be in Washington are against immigration reform or allowing those that have been in our country for years to be legalized. They should look back on their own family histories.

Immigrants have come to our country legal or illegal for years. First came the Europeans on the East Coast that brought us the Italians, Irish and Jews who introduced the country to both new foods and crime. On the West Coast we imported the Chinese who brought their food and were exploited to do hard labor on our railways and in our goldmines.

Later on, and especially in California, we imported Mexicans who introduced us to their food only to do the low-paid manual labor in the California fields and orchards. I will not go into the exodus of Japanese from Japan to our shores and the incarceration of Japanese Americans.

My father, as an 18-year-old young man, escaped the Oklahoma Dust Bowl in 1932 ahead of the rest of his family. He ended up in the San Joaquin Valley in California and was fortunate to find work around Visalia and Tulare where he worked in the fruit orchards and picking cotton.

His parents, sister and three younger brothers followed him and they all worked the orchards and fields and actually found a shack to live in. At that time I think my older sister and myself were conceived beyond a sheet that separated the rest of the family from my parents bed. Proud to be an Okie was a mantra.

Fast forward. Just after World War II in 1945, the extended Jolley family moved to Ventura, Calif., and found work in the oil patch and in the trucking industry. In 1952, when I was 12 years old, it was not uncommon for kids my age to pick and bag walnuts from a local orchard and get stained fingers or pick avocados for a bit of spending money. I ran around with Mexican kids, and I soon discovered that their grandparents and parents were still working in the fields and did not speak English.

The Mexican kids I grew up to know and went to school with were not only friends but worked as busboys in restaurants and were the best dressed guys in school and also good students. There was still a bit of Mexican in the air and our slang and dress was based on the fringe.

In the early 1950s, Ventura County still had places like Oxnard, Santa Paula, Camarillo, Fillmore and Saticoy, where the farmers still had sub-par housing and low wages for their workers. Then came along Caesar Chavez and the struggle still continues.



Now, I am not for an open-door policy because it is no longer individuals from across the border but from South America who have invaded our country, and we are no longer able to cope with the influx. I do think that we should accept those who have been here, were born here and have been good non-citizens.

What we really need to do is not build walls along the San Diego border or those like in Palestine or something like the Berlin Wall. The Near East seems to be in the forefront of all discussions, but on our doorstep we have a larger problem with drug cartels and a corrupt Mexican government that we have supported for years.

How about putting sanctions along with Iran and on Mexico and actually pay attention to our neighbor.

Win Jolley
Florence

Unscrupulous building contractors

My sister recently answered a "cold call" from a construction company that asked if she needed any new windows, roofing or siding. She is a 69-year-old widow whose husband passed last year. Before he passed, he had a new roof put on the house and my sister had new energy efficient windows installed earlier this year.

The salesman persuaded her into letting him give her a bid for new siding and, since she arranged to have the windows installed (with my help in contractor selection), she felt confident that she could arrange for the siding job "on her own." Did I mention that I am a retired general contractor, having been licensed for over 40 years?

Long story short; she ended up paying, by taking out a loan, \$37,000 for a job that should have cost \$18,000. When she told me, I thought she was joking. When I found out about it, the job was already done (it took them four days, start to finish) and she had paid them and they were gone.

So this is what I want to say to anyone even

thinking about having construction work done.

First, never sign a contract with any contractor without getting at least two other bids. Any legitimate contractor will be glad to give you a free estimate/bid, it's part of doing business.

You can go to the Oregon Construction Contractors Board and check on a contractor's license. They list any complaints against a contractor, but still be diligent. Listen to your gut. If it doesn't feel right, it probably isn't.

Always ask for at least four references that you can check out. Ask friends and neighbors if they have heard anything about the contractor, good or bad. Check the Better Business Bureau website, it can't hurt, but don't rely on it for the final say.

Check out the specifications in the contract as to what material the contractor is going to use. It needs to be spelled out as "CDX plywood or OSB," not "underlayment," and it should read like "Underlayment to be CDX plywood, nailed per building code."

Siding should read, "Hardiplank with (6") reveal," not "siding to be installed." It may sound like nitpicking but, believe me, it's worth the time, and everyone involved needs to have no misinformation or confusion as to what the "scope of work" is.

There is no set amount for a deposit, although one third to one fourth of the contract price is common practice. I prefer to spell out the payment schedule: this amount of money when such and such is completed. Make sure you don't pay ahead of the work that is completed. Personally, I don't like to pay more than \$1,000 as a down payment and then refer to the payment schedule.

Finally, have someone you trust look over the contract before you sign it. That person should be an attorney or, at the very least, a retired contractor.

Lord knows there are enough of us around with time on our hands.

Mike Nielsen
Florence

Valentine success

The Peace Harbor Volunteers' Valentine's Day fundraiser, held at the local Bridgeport Market, was a great success again this year.

The wine, food and raffles were wonderfully received by all in attendance. The function was sold out in advance. Even a few other people stopped by, while shopping in Old Town, and joined in the festivities.

Thanks to everyone for helping to make this a fun event. Hope to see you there next year!

Brittany Goldberg
Peace Harbor Volunteers Publicist
Florence

The Siuslaw News welcomes letters to the editor on subjects of general interest to its readership.

Brevity is mandatory, and letters are subject to editing.

Libelous letters and poetry will not be published. Thank-you letters are generally inappropriate.

Publication of any letter is not guaranteed. Handwritten or submitted letters via mail must be signed over the writer's name. All letters must include an address and phone number of the writer for verification.

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Editor

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John Bartlett
Jenna Bartlett
Ryan Cronk
Susan Gutierrez
Cathy Dietz
Ron Annis
Jeremy Gentry

Publisher, ext. 327
General Manager, ext. 318
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WHERE TO WRITE

Pres. Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20500
Comments: 202-456-1111
Switchboard: 202-456-1414
FAX: 202-456-2461
TTY/TDD Comments: 202-456-6213
www.whitehouse.gov

Gov. Kate Brown
160 State Capitol
900 Court St.
Salem, OR 97301-4047
Governor's Citizens' Rep.
Message Line 503-378-4582
www.oregon.gov/gov

U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden
221 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20510

202-224-5244
541-431-0229
www.wyden.senate.gov

U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley
313 Hart Senate Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20510
202-224-3753/FAX: 202-228-3997
541-465-6750

U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio (4th Dist.)
2134 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515
202-225-6416/ 800-944-9603
541-269-2609/ 541-465-6732
www.defazio.house.gov

State Sen. Arnie Roblan (Dist. 5)
900 Court St. NE - S-417
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1705

FAX: 503-986-1080
Email:
Sen.ArnieRoblan@state.or.us

State Rep. Caddy McKeown
(Dist. 9)
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1409
Email:
rep.caddymckeown@state.or.us

West Lane County Commissioner
Jay Bozievich
125 E. Eighth St.
Eugene, OR 97401
541-682-4203
FAX: 541-682-4616
Email:
Jay.Bozievich@co.lane.or.us