

Siuslaw News
 P.O. Box 10
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Opinion

LETTERS

NEED TO BE IMPARTIAL

As a fellow human, I need the same requirements (i.e. food, shelter, clean water and safety). I am not left or right as I make the effort to decipher through the press and media to make an intelligent, objective and non-partisan search in order to arrive at a well-researched conclusion.

Extreme posturing from either side just heightens the divide and politicizes issues which need to be dealt with for all citizens' welfare.

If you are on one side or the other, listening to partisan rhetoric and sound bites — then you are part of the problem. We all have a responsibility to extrapolate the truth from various media and print news sources.

Please don't label me as one way or another because I make my own decisions based on multiple sources of media.

People that espouse partisan dialogue in media often have their own agenda and it is every citizen's responsibility to impartially look at all sides before reaching their own opinion for the good of everybody — not just one side or the other.

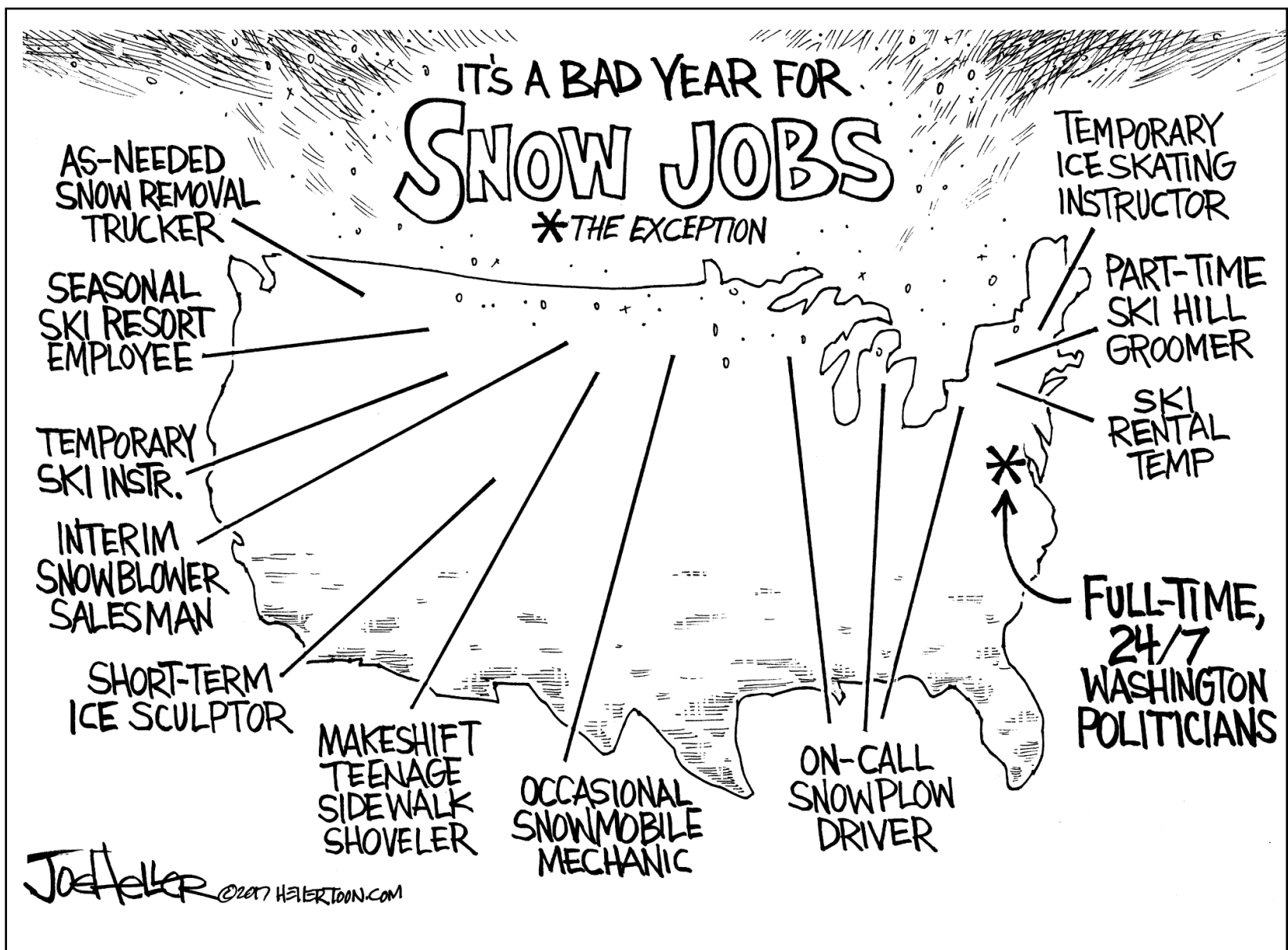
Jon Tipple
 Florence

MONEY-MAKING EDUCATION

Ian Eales's Letter to the Editor (March 1) was essentially an attack on teachers, their unions, public education, the Democratic Party and the building of a new high school in Florence. In his letter, he asserts the following:

"Schools are failing because they [teachers] expect nothing of the students — and that is what the students deliver..."

"Spending \$40 million on a new school will



not improve academic performance. ... The building will be a monument to mediocrity..."

"Today's education system is a bloated bureaucracy. Teachers unions overwhelmingly contribute to the Democratic party; the same party responsible for failing inner cities within Chicago, Baltimore, Detroit, Washington D.C., et al..."

"Throwing more money at the problem will not solve it. It is time for a change."

I suspect Mr. Eales knows little about teachers and public education. However, having been a public school teacher for 32 years, I know how dedicated the vast majority of teachers are in their work.

Teachers know the complexities of student learning better than Bill Gates, Mitch McConnell or any person who is not a present or past educator.

I loathe what critics say about teachers. Corporate know-it-alls and their paid political allies excoriate low student achievement test scores. They blame bad teachers, teacher tenure and unions as the reasons for failing schools, asserting that standardized test scores are the best way to determine a teacher's effectiveness.

Never mind the deleterious societal effects of poverty, especially in inner cities, where students face terrible living conditions, malnutrition, family dysfunction and parental disengagement on a daily basis.

Never mind the considerable, widespread underfunding of schools that makes teaching ever more difficult.

A certain percentage of the general population has always had (and always will have) a negative opinion of the teaching profession.

They believe that teaching is easy and that teachers are coddled and overpaid. The old saying "If you can't do anything else, teach" goes back to when I began teaching in 1957. Teachers have had to battle these perceptions for decades.

How easy it has been for the champions of privatization — who have produced the films "Waiting for Superman" and "Won't Back Down" and who have never themselves actually taught in a classroom — to rally uninformed, innately critical people to their cause.

Corporate-funded "reform" activists are bent on ridding communities of veteran

teachers, privatizing public schools, making education a money-making enterprise for niche businesses, and indoctrinating children with a corporate, agenda-driven, by-the-numbers culture emboldened by the appointment of Education Secretary Betsy DeVos.

Don't fall for it.

Harold Titus
 Florence

REVIEW YOUR POLICY

I'm not quite sure what the editorial policy of the Siuslaw News is any more. It used to be that when I read the letters to the editor that there was a balance of letters on social issues, but lately it appears that has changed.

While I am not a fan of Donald Trump, I tend to lean to the right of center and I don't see a balance of opinion in that way.

It is particularly distressing when the editor supports, in editorial pieces, those issues which are to the left of center.

This is especially evident in those issues which affect the city of Florence. Perhaps you could review your policy and publish a fair and balanced number of letters.

Donald Frerichs
 Florence

TOP-NOTCH CREW

I was surprised to see my brother's house on the front page of Siuslaw News (Feb. 25). I would like to tell everyone how lucky we are to have a Public Works director like Mike Miller. I first talked to him when I checked my brother's house after a neighbor contacted us that the garage was flooding.

It actually got up to 5 inches at one point. I went down to the Spruce Street office to see what could be done and the gentleman I spoke with showed me the situation on their map; it was not good.

He gave me Mike's number and I spoke to him about our concerns regarding damage to the house if the water got much deeper.

He had no quick answer but said he would look at it. Then, to my surprise that day, I believe he had his crew set up the pump and go to work. It should be noted that I did not ask for it; he took it upon himself to help save the house.

I feel this is a special kind of commitment

to his duty that you don't see often and it is much appreciated.

My brother bought the house to retire in and it was almost lost to damage that was not expected. I think Mike and his crew are top notch in my book.

David T. Eckhardt
 Florence

UNNECESSARY SUFFERING

I would like to thank Siuslaw News and reporter Mark Brennan for the excellent job in presenting my cause (Feb. 15), as seeing the value in my story.

By the year 2031, the first wave of baby boomers hits 85 years old. It is projected that more than 3 million Americans will have Alzheimer's or related diseases. Combine that with the number of cases involving autoimmune diseases, cancers and other debilitating conditions, and the numbers multiplied many times over.

Unless a cure is found by the year 2050, more than 60 million Americans are projected to have Alzheimer's and related diseases. Right now, about 60,000 cases of Parkinson's are being diagnosed each year. These numbers will overwhelm senior medical and memory care units that are already at capacity.

There is going to be a lot of unnecessary suffering involved.

We do not let our animals suffer — why do we make our people?

Also, thank you to Winn Jolley for his letter to the editor regarding the newspaper's three-part series. I am hoping more people become interested in this important issue.

Bruce Yelle
 Florence

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.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The Siuslaw News welcomes letters to the editor as part of a community discussion of issues on the local, state and national level.

Emailed letters are preferred. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed. All letters need to include full name, address and phone number; only name and city will be printed. Letters should be limited to about 300 words. 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, argumentative and anonymous letters or poetry will not be published.

POLITICAL/ELECTION LETTERS:

Election-related letters must address pertinent or timely issues of interest to our readers at-large. The newspaper does not publish partisan letters that promote or endorse local political candidates based solely on their record, reputation and qualifications; this constitutes paid political advertising.

Candidates themselves may not use the letters to the editor column to outline their views and platforms or to ask for votes. This also constitutes paid political advertising.

As with all letters and advertising content, the newspaper, at the sole discretion of the publisher, general manager and editor, reserves the right to reject any such letter.

The newspaper is particularly sensitive to organized "letter-writing campaigns." The newspaper reserves the right to reject any such letter.

Write to: editor@thesiuslawnews.com

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DEADLINES:

Wednesday Issue—General news, Monday noon; Budgets, four days prior to publication; Regular classified ads, Monday 1 p.m.; Display ads, Monday noon; Boxed and display classified ads, Friday 5 p.m.
 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.

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Website and E-Edition: www.TheSiuslawNews.com

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