

Siuslaw News
 P.O. Box 10
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Opinion

LETTERS

“PEACE IS OUR PROFESSION”

General Ben King retired to a home sitting on a quiet cul-de-sac in Florence. In that home is a book, “Air Commando Chronicles,” written by Ben’s friend, Col. Robert L. Gleason.

In his book, Col. Gleason quotes General Curtis E. LeMay, Ben’s commanding officer of the time:

“LeMay was a person dedicated to a single mission: The prevention of nuclear war through the power of deterrence. Yes, he wanted to be victorious in the event of an actual war, but I heard him say on several occasions that if we ever had to go to war, we in SAC (Strategic Air Command) had failed in our mission. The SAC motto, ‘Peace is our Profession,’ was emblazoned on each aircraft.”

The city of Florence is blessed with a large retired military community, men and women who offered up their lives and made the necessary sacrifices to keep our country free. If the purpose of the park is to honor the military, then shouldn’t it be that same military community have the larger say in the formation of that park?

Perhaps an aircraft emblazoned with “Peace is our Profession.”

Mary Jo Wood
 (Gen. Ben King’s niece)
 Florence

TIME FOR PEACEHEALTH TO INVEST IN COMMUNITY

Our nurses need our support. They have been in contract negotiations with PeaceHealth since November 2016.

In my opinion, PeaceHealth isn’t being fair. It was eye opening to hear the nurses’ stories at the recent Florence community meeting (April 4), which was attended by more than 100 concerned residents.



They are paid 4.9 percent less than nurses in Eugene. Several must commute from Eugene because of the lack of affordable rentals in Florence.

Then, after working a full shift, some are expected to be ready for another day bright and early in the morning — even after being called out in the middle of the night from as far away as Deadwood.

Some departments are short staffed while still handling the same patient load.

Our community invested in Peace Harbor to build the new emergency room. It’s now time for PeaceHealth to invest in our community.

Healthcare does not function without the nurse. Show your support to let our nurses and local members of PeaceHealth know you care.

Consider writing to PeaceHealth’s lead negotiator, Debra Miller, at: PeaceHealth Vice President, Debra Miller, 1115 SE 164th Ave., Vancouver, Wash., 98683, call her at 707-494-1420, or email: DMiller6@peacehealth.org.

Our local healthcare could depend on it.
 Jacquie Beveridge,
 Florence

DECIDING WHO GETS TO SHARE OUR BOUNTY

Early in the last century, all four of my grandparents escaped the grinding poverty of their homelands, poverty generated by endless wars and the unending desire for more and more power by the rulers of eastern Europe.

While there is still some question which countries they emigrated from — due to constantly shifting borders based on who won the last war — on my mother’s side they spoke Polish while, on my father’s, it was Ukrainian.

My father’s parents landed in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and settled in the wheat-growing province of Manitoba. My mother’s parents came through Ellis Island, passing by the Statue of Liberty with its plaque bearing the words of poet Emma Lazarus:

“Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”

While they were unable to read or speak English, these words certainly applied to them and, as they passed by that shining lamp of Lady Liberty, they looked forward to a new life in a welcoming land.

Now, as I observe a nation that appears to be hopelessly divided about so many things that are important to us as a country, nothing is more divisive than our attitudes on who we want sharing the bounty of our nation.

Though it starts at the national level, it has now even invaded our wonderful small town.

The attitude “I’ve got mine, too bad about you” prevails in many quarters. Perhaps it is time to remove the plaque, extinguish the lamp, put a “no admittance” sign on the golden door and face the reality of who we have become.

Kenneth Janowski
 Florence

NURSES ARE PRICELESS RESOURCE

During the April 4 meeting hosted by the registered nurses of Peace Harbor Medical Center, the attendees were updated on the status of contract negotiations with PeaceHealth’s corporate office.

It was disheartening to hear about the continued rigid stance of the PeaceHealth bargaining team and its unwillingness to budge in favor of granting what seems to be reasonable and customary requests of our nurses.

The dedicated nursing staff is a precious resource in Florence. They stand ready to care for and help patients day or night, on a holiday or weekend, or whenever someone is sick, injured or facing a health emergency.

They are here for us, regardless of how weary they may be from the demands of their shift, or if an emergency situation required a return to the hospital or hospice patient in the middle of the night.

What many people don’t realize is we have many long-tenured nurses with knowledge and experience to draw upon, instinctively knowing the right thing to do in a crisis or avoiding a serious health problem.

Isn’t that exactly what we want when we’re sick or injured? This priceless resource is dwindling due to nurses leaving for better wages, better working conditions and affordable housing elsewhere.

The nation is experiencing a shortage of physicians and nurses. This problem exists here in Florence — and it is scary.

A house cannot stand without a foundation, and a hospital cannot stand without nurses.

I hope all who have heard about this issue will support our PeaceHealth nurses by helping take care of them — because they take care of us.

We have the ability to advocate for the nurses and help persuade the PeaceHealth corporate office to do the right thing in granting our nurses’ reasonable contract requests, which includes wages equal with those in Eugene/Springfield.

Our nurses have the right to work in a satisfying, safe environment with the means to pay their bills.

That request is not unreasonable.
 Julie Jarvis
 Florence

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT FLORENCE FEST

I want to commend everyone who was involved with the outstanding Florence Fest. The combination of Oregon wine, Oregon art and Oregon jazz was first-class.

The room was arranged in such a way that we could be seated while we were entertained by the great jazz, but we were also free to wander around to the wine booths for tasting and enjoy the art on display. I loved that everything was in one large space rather than having the music in the auditorium.

I have to admit that not only did my friends and I thoroughly enjoy ourselves, we all bought food and bottles of wine. I even purchased a beautiful photograph.

We hadn’t intended spending the whole day there, but it was so enjoyable and the music was so wonderful that we found ourselves staying until almost closing.

The meticulous planning was evident. We’re already looking forward to next year’s fest.

Congratulations on such a successful event.

Barbara Giles
 Florence

FABULOUS AUDIENCE AND COMMUNITY

On behalf of the Dallas Brass, who performed at the Florence Events Center on March 29, I must share with you what a wonderfully positive experience we had. We travel all over the United States and are given a warm welcome wherever we go — but in Florence, it was extra special.

We were treated like royalty by the Seacoast Entertainment Association (with show producers Sandy Kuhlman and Carl Miller), the Florence Events Center staff, and numerous volunteers who were ready to help us at every step.

And the audience was fabulous, not only giving us an enthusiastic response throughout the show, but giving the guest students an immediate standing ovation with lots of cheers and bravos. We also had a standing-room only crowd for a pre-concert discussion.

We discovered the warmth of Florence went beyond the stage door. The Waterfront Depot stayed open for a post-concert reception. The next morning, fans greeted us at Fresh Harvest Restaurant (best breakfast ever), and our accommodations at The Riverhouse were perfect. We never did view the ocean, because we met more interesting music enthusiasts at the Siuslaw Coffee Roasters and chatted until it was time to leave for the airport.

I need to give a special shout out to Siuslaw schools band director Chris Rowbotham. His hard work with the students was obvious, and he worked alongside us in the afternoon rehearsal. Chris personally transported the drum set, xylophone and auxiliary percussion from the schools. We were tempted to take him with us.

Thanks also to Rachel Pearson for setting up the student component, as well as to the Seacoast Entertainment Association selection committee for choosing The Dallas Brass.

It was truly heart-warming to see how the arts are alive and well in Florence.

Michael Levine,
 Founder and Director
 The Dallas Brass

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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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.