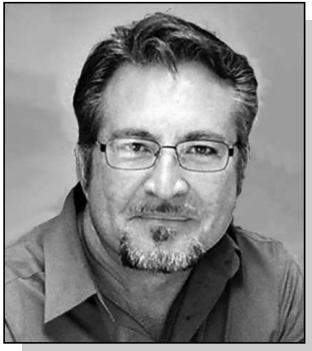


**Siuslaw News**  
**P.O. Box 10**  
**Florence, OR 97439**

# Opinion

## 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.



## A tapestry of compassion woven through centuries

We tend to think of iconic nurse Florence Nightingale as the beginning of an organized effort to provide care to the sick and injured. Stories of her heroic exploits into the night, attending the wounded by lamplight during the Crimean War (1853-1856), inspired the first steps toward professionalizing the role of nurses in modern medicine.

Her importance is reflected in the fact that the highest international distinction a nurse can achieve is being chosen to receive the Florence

Nightingale Medal — and that, for decades, nurses have been reciting The Nightingale Pledge as a part of their “pinning” ceremony.

However, even as far back as 268 B.C.E., Buddhist Indian ruler Ashoka recognized the importance of providing his people with medical care, utilizing what he described as “both skillful physicians and their assistants, who should be sympathetic and devoted to the sick” and made available within hospitals built along the routes of travelers.

In the Charaka Samhita, the Indian book of medicine written in about 100 B.C.E., it was said that “good medicine should always include a nurse that is knowledgeable, skilled at preparing formulations and dosage, and sympathetic

toward the ill.”

The first-known Christian nurse, Phoebe, was mentioned in Romans 16:1 when, in 50 A.D., St. Paul “sent a deaconess to Rome” to encourage other Christians to tend to the sick.

a compassionate protector to provide physical and emotional comfort when we’re ill or hurt; a Band-Aid may stop the bleeding of a scraped knee, but a sympathetic word from Mom or Dad seems to take the sting out of it.

In fact, the notions of sympathy and compassion are common threads that run through the historic tapestry of medicine, from the time of Ashoka through today, when nurses make the promise “as a missioner of health, I dedicate myself to devoted and compassionate service for human welfare” as part of The Nightingale Pledge.

Fittingly, this year’s National Nurses Week (May 6-12) comes less than a month after naming Sylvia Trent-Adams to the position of U.S. Surgeon General, the first time a nurse has become our nation’s highest medical authority.

As we approach National Nurses Day (May 6), which kicks off a week of recognition for all nurses across the country — from the ER nurse

that we likely never see, to the neonatal nurse that we entrust our infants to, as well as the RNs that care for us even when aren’t at our most pleasant — I encourage you to extend your appreciation to those within our own community who play such an important role in our lives when we need them most.

Thanks to the promise each of them makes to the rest of us, the care we receive also includes the kind of compassion and sympathy that takes the sting out of our ills.

*Write Siuslaw News editor Ned Hickson at nhickson@thesiuslawnews.com or P.O. Box 10, Florence, Ore. 97439.*

### From the Editor’s Desk

NED HICKSON

It seems that humanity, regardless of culture or time period, has always understood the importance and value of individuals within our society who are inspired to tend to the ill — not just on a physical level, but on an emotional one as well.

Perhaps it stems from our basic need as children to have

Over the last few decades, more men have entered into the nursing profession as well, with the number of male nurses jumping from 3.9 percent in 1970 to 8.1 percent in 2011 (U.S. Census Bureau 2011).

Like all the best human traits, compassion and the desire to help others isn’t gender specific.

### LETTERS

#### CONFIDENT IN BILL MEYER

I work along side Bill Meyer on a Neighborhood Watch group and Condo Association. I have seen his dedication to resolving issues while working with others in a positive manner.

His school district board experience is a true indication of his attitude, abilities and understanding of how to get things done. He recognizes the priorities the Port should be addressing and would bring an essential skill set to the

other members of Port Commissioners.

My wife and I are confident he would take the responsibility of the Port Commissioner seriously, and work on behalf of, and for, the good of the Florence community.

We casted our vote for Bill Meyer for Port Commissioner.

*Mike and Debbie Lobey  
 Florence*

#### FLEENOR WILL PUT FLORENCE FIRST

Bill Fleenor’s running for a spot on the Port Of Siuslaw Board of Commissioners is great news in my opinion.

Having watched his prior strong leadership as our Lane County Commissioner, and also during his prior stint on the Port Board, I am convinced that his experience and expertise are sorely needed.

I feel he has a proven record of being a watchdog for the public’s tax dollars and understands the ins and outs of the Port’s fiscal issues and long-range needs.

During his term as Lane County Commissioner, he held more than 198 town hall meetings and public coffee events. He made sure that County Commissioner Board meetings were live-streamed from Florence so that local residents could testify here rather than being forced to drive to Eugene.

As Port Commissioner, I believe Bill Fleenor will ensure that tight budgets are transparent and that docking fees are fair to all. I am confident he will put Florence first with his experience and deep knowledge of the Port and its needs.

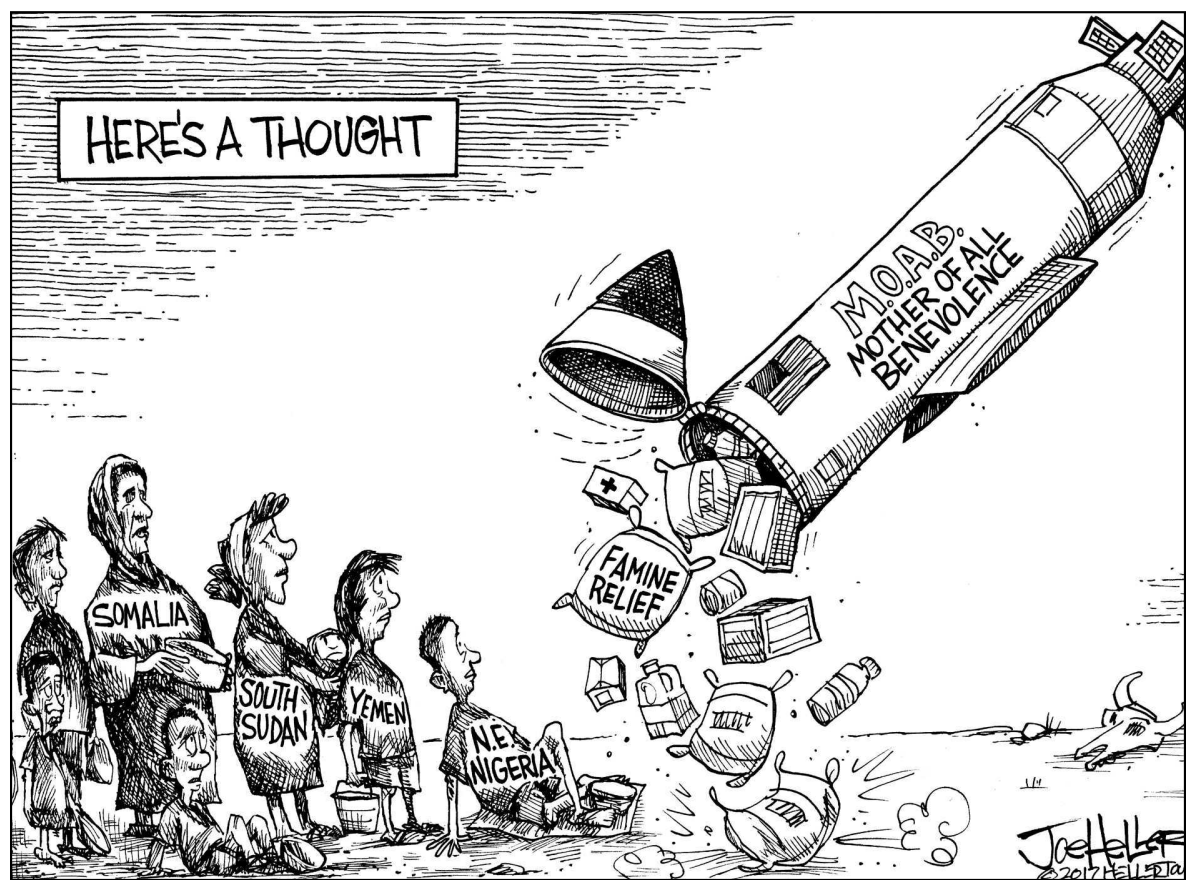
*Mia Li  
 Florence*

#### VOTING FOR CRYSTAL FARNSWORTH

I support Crystal Farnsworth for the Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue Board of Directors— Position 1. She was a volunteer firefighter at Station 4 for six years. We worked together on many fires and rescues during her time as a volunteer firefighter.

She has excellent people skills and cares greatly for our fire department and community.

She knows the importance of continued training for our firefighters, which I agree is important for our department as well as the community it serves.



Along with her experience as a firefighter, she has also served three years as secretary of the Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue Association, four years on the SVFR Scholarship Committee, and was also recently a member of the WLAD/SVFR Stakeholders Interview Panel.

I am voting for Crystal Farnsworth.

*Capt. Mike Barret  
 SVFR Station 4  
 Florence*

#### ADD YOUR VOICE TO THE PARKS DISCUSSION

I wish to thank Mark Brennan for his excellent coverage of the community workshop in Mapleton conducted by the Lane County Parks Division (Siuslaw News, April 29).

The workshop received important input from citizens about the county’s vision for a Parks Master Plan.

Another workshop will be held in Florence this Thursday (May 4), from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Siuslaw Valley Fire station on Highway 101.

The meeting will be engaging, fun and informative.

As a member of a county-wide task force representing the Coast District, I spent several months participating in a re-visioning process for the Parks. Task Force members and mem-

bers of the Parks Advisory Committee, along with Parks Division staff headed by Division Manager Mike Russell, are facilitating the workshops.

My involvement with Lane County Parks began three years ago when my wife and I spent a full year hosting at the beautiful Harbor Vista Park overlooking the Siuslaw River off of North Jetty Road.

While there I developed educational activities for children and interpretive signs to describe the nature and history of the park.

Harbor Vista Park is one of many parks and open spaces on the coast offered by the County for recreation and education.

These parks give us access to open land, rivers, lakes and the ocean.

We loved the Florence area so much we bought a home within walking distance of the park. Recently, we formed a Friends of Harbor Vista Park with many local residents to promote more educational opportunities.

The Parks Division in turn is working with us by providing an amphitheater and kiosks for interpretive signs.

The Parks Division is encouraging more community partnerships like our Friend’s group and wants to hear from the community at Thursday’s workshop.

*Michael Allen  
 Florence*

## 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, or letters from outside our readership area will not be published.

#### POLITICAL/ELECTION LETTERS:

Election-related letters must address pertinent or timely issues of interest to our readers at-large.

Letters must 1) Not be a part of letter-writing campaigns on behalf of (or by) candidates; 2) Ensure any information about a candidate is accurate, fair and not from second-hand knowledge or hearsay; and 3) explain the reasons to support candidates based on personal experience and perspective rather than partisanship and campaign-style rhetoric.

Candidates themselves may not use the letters to the editor column to outline their views and platforms or to ask for votes; this 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 letter that doesn’t follow the above criteria.

Send letters to:  
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