

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

# Opinion

## LETTERS

### THANKS FOR FLORENCE FEST

The artists of Backstreet Gallery commend the planning committee of the recent Florence Fest for creating a fabulous event weekend for us all to enjoy.

Florence Fest featured arts, including music, painting, photography and sculpture, and a wonderful selection of wineries.

The ambiance of the venue was spectacular. It felt as though we were transported to a night on a patio in wine country.

We hope it's possible for the committee to plan another similar event. Events like these are marvelous ways to bring our community together for a wonderful weekend.

— Stephanie Ames  
 For Backstreet Gallery  
 Florence

### VOTE FOR WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT

Although we only have 3 days left, more than 85 percent of registered voters had not yet cast a ballot (as of May 10).

Are they indecisive? Or just don't think it's important?

So, "What is most important?"

For me the answer is easy:

Safety.

The races that affect our safety are for board positions in Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue and Western Lane Ambulance. We all hope we won't need these services. But when we do, we want them to be well-trained, fast, efficient and cost-effective.

I attended the candidate forum put on by our radio station and was struck by the vast differences I saw in the candidates. I felt that Crystal Farnsworth and Ron Green were experienced, professional and supported the well-run organization being created by Chief Langborg.

They both have the disciplined backgrounds needed to spot issues and act quickly in their advisory role. I feel their opponents are both good guys, but in the boardroom, where key strategies, calm temperament and administrative expertise is essential, I am more comfortable with Crystal and Ron.

I think that the difference between Larry Farnsworth and Anne Stonelake was even more profound. Larry spoke with experience and ideas that inspired confidence that we would have a disciplined, well-managed emergency capability at an effective cost to the community.

Stonelake seemed steeped in the old way of doing things and very uncomfortable with changes that were being made for the good.

I just dropped off my ballot, voted for Crystal, Ron and Larry. I feel safer now.

— Sherry Harvey  
 Florence

### THE REST OF THE STORY FOR CHAPMAN

I attended the KCST "Our Town" forum (May 3) and listened to it on the radio. We appreciate the effort of our local radio station and newspaper to educate the people. But since it is difficult to cover such a large range of positions and content in a newspaper summary, I would like to add a few key points made by school board position 6 candidate, Jesse Chapman.

In addition to his concern about cutting school sports, Jesse Chapman shared at length some of his ideas, including consideration of charter schools.

He mentioned the 6 percent increase in charter schools, success in Reedsport and Triangle Lake, and that the new administration (in Washington, D.C.) was increasing funding for charter schools across the U.S.

The key reason charter schools seemed to work is that they get the community and taxpayers involved in solving problems together with the schools. It gives "parents more say-so," Chapman said.

Regarding the topic of illegal immigrants, he mentioned twice that he strongly supports the decision of the superintendent and school board on this topic and that Florence needs to move on.

I'm excited about the fresh ideas Jesse Chapman can bring to the school board, which is why I voted for him.

And now, you have heard, "the rest of the story."

— Jeff Ashmead  
 Florence

### SUPPORT MANN-HEINTZ

As a retired educator, I unequivocally support Suzanne Mann-Heintz in her bid for re-election to the Siuslaw School District board. I feel she brings unparalleled experience to her position as a board member. With over 35 years experience in the classroom, she understands the challenges that teachers, students and families face at this time in our country.

Mann-Heintz has committed her life's work to ensure that children have a safe and successful childhood. In addition to her work on the school board, she is involved in a variety of volunteer works that impact children and families, including the 90by30 Initiative in Lane County, which is working to reduce child abuse and neglect by 90 percent by the year 2030.

She is a founding member of the Siuslaw Education Foundation, which is in its infancy but working to establish an on-going foundation that supports both the Siuslaw and Mapleton school districts.

Her volunteer work in the classrooms allows her a "boots on the ground" opportunity to see what is working and where improvements can be made. She brings an inclusive vision to her role as a school board member and understands that children should feel safe and supported, no matter their background, family economic situation or interests.



I'm voting for the future of our children by casting my ballot for Suzanne Mann-Heintz.

— Becky Goehring  
 Florence

### ENTRUSTING A TREASURE TO MEYER

Bill Meyer is the sort of person to whom I can wholeheartedly entrust a rare treasure, the future of the Port of Siuslaw.

He is a demonstrated leader, a person of vision and integrity.

Meyer merits my support for position 5 on the Port of Siuslaw Board.

— Dick Smith  
 Florence

### GREEN IS THE MOST QUALIFIED

As Vice President of the Board of Directors for Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue, I have decided not to run this term. Therefore, I encourage others to vote for Ron Green for the SVFR Board of Directors, Position 2.

I have known Ron on a business and personal level for the past 7 years. I have the utmost respect for his integrity and compassion for our Florence community.

Beyond a doubt, he is the most qualified person to run for our fire board. His experience and qualifications in banking, strategic planning, and his drive for our community will make him a great board member for the fire district.

He understands how an effective board operates and will always promote the needs of taxpayers and citizens of the district ahead of everything else.

He exemplifies honesty, fairness and thoughtfulness in all he does. He will use these qualities to create a better balance between the fire department and taxpayers.

I feel we need him on the board.

I have voted for Ron Green for the Siuslaw Valley Fire Department Board of Directors, Position 2.

— Lori Gates,  
 board member SVFR  
 Florence

### BACK UP WORDS WITH DEEDS

This afternoon, upon opening the Siuslaw News (May 10), I once again read PeaceHealth's glowing tribute to our local nurses. This half-page ad follows at least three other full pages of laudatory comments in recent editions of Siuslaw News.

As a retired healthcare professional with about 45 years experience, I totally agree with all the lovely descriptive words PeaceHealth is using to describe this community's nurses.

However, we have reached a point where

deeds must begin to supercede words. If not, then words ring hollow and have no valid meaning. I was very disappointed to learn that, as of the most recent mediation session last week, PeaceHealth has again failed to recognize the validity of our local nurses' requests.

At issue is wage parity in which Peace Harbor nurses are paid between 4 and 5 percent less than nurses at other regional hospitals. Also at issue are call-back and extended working hours rules which have nurses being required to report for a full shift the next morning.

Another issue that has the potential to affect the entire community is security. Nurses, hospital employees and patients should feel — and be — secure. In the past, as a small quiet community, problems have been few.

This is no longer the case, as we have seen from what happened at the Florence Justice Center.

— Del Neeley  
 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.

### POLITICAL/ELECTION 'LETTERS' POLICY

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:  
 nhickson@thesiuslawnews.com  
 jbartlett@thesiuslawnews.com

### 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.

Send letters to:

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John Bartlett  
 Publisher, ext. 327  
 Jenna Bartlett  
 Gen. Manager, ext. 318

Ned Hickson  
 Editor, ext. 313  
 Susan Gutierrez  
 Marketing Director, ext. 326  
 Cathy Dietz  
 Office Supervisor, ext. 312  
 Ron Annis  
 Production Supervisor  
 Jeremy Gentry  
 Press Manager

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