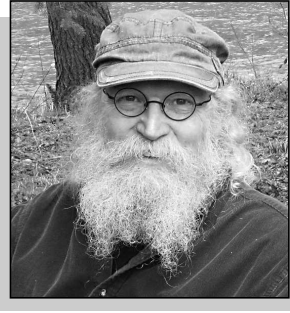


Siuslaw News
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Opinion

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.

VIEW FROM UPRIVER



Our future is downstream

WESLEY VOTH
For the Siuslaw News

Or good for the planet.

They have sown doubt — not really within the science community but within what is publically accepted and agreed on — in much the way that the tobacco industry did with smoking and the dangers of second-hand smoke.

This is not to the public benefit.

This is not good for anyone or anything downriver from us; our children and children's children will surely judge us critically when they suffer the consequences of our willful complacency, ignorance and stupidity.

Available right now to anyone with Internet access is a document produced by 13 federal agencies (paid for with our tax dollars) called the U.S. Global Change Research Program Climate Science Special Report.

It is a "draft" only in the sense that it hasn't been

signed off on by politicians who may have no interest in doing so. As a result, the report had to be "leaked" to reach the people who paid for it.

I would encourage everyone to read the explanation on page 10 of the varying confidence levels attached to the findings, and the Executive Summary (pages 12-37) of the 673-page report.

Even just reading the bold headings in this summary is sobering.

Where can we go to escape?

Alaska or Hawaii or some other islands are generally considered "Planet B" in most of our minds. Yet, as this report points out, Alaska is suffering negatively at a much higher and faster rate than the rest of the U.S. In fact, any island in the ocean will suffer from rising sea levels, changing seawater chemistry that destroys reefs and threatens anything with a shell, as well as larger and more frequent hurricanes.

Anyone who lives on a river, near the ocean or eats food grown on soil is at risk.

This report was written by our nation's best and brightest, compiling studies and analyzing measurements and conclusions; it was produced for Congress and the American people, including local planners who need to know:

How high the bridges and seawalls must be;

What sorts of emergency planning are needed;

What to expect and what to do to prevent even greater disaster.

This is not about liberal or conservative, or what political party controls what for how long.

It is about our future.

It is about our present.

It is about our children and our survival as a species.

Let's stop quibbling while our home burns.

We must leave a place downriver where life is still possible on this planet.

LETTERS

FAR FROM BEING

'WILLFULLY IGNORANT'

I take exception to several statements David T. Eckhardt made in his letter "Supporting the Law Isn't Being a Hater" (Aug. 5), which was critical of Judy Preisler's letter "Hoping For a Hate-Free City" (Aug. 2) regarding the Trump administration's change of ICE policy that permits its agents to arrest — seemingly without exception — unauthorized immigrants.

I did not appreciate Mr. Eckhardt's insult that the Lane County commissioners, the state legislature and citizens like Mrs. Preisler (and me) are "willfully ignorant of the facts" and "make judgments based on feelings."

"I do not support unfettered and unrestricted hordes of people just coming here," Mr. Eckhardt declared. This statement infers that immigration across our southern border prior to President Trump's inauguration was just that: "unfettered" and "unrestricted."

He is wrong.

An August 2016 NPR article (www.npr.org/2016/08/31/491965912/5-things-to-know-about-obamas-enforcement-of-immigration-laws) discussed President Obama's immigration enforcement policy, encapsulated in this statement: "The Obama administration says it doesn't have the resources or the desire to deport millions of immigrants whose only crime was entering the country illegally. So, it has focused its enforcement efforts on particular targets — namely, those caught near the border, those who've committed crimes and those who appear to have arrived in 2014 or later."

Justifying his opposition to the sheltering of unauthorized immigrants, Mr. Eckhardt wrote: "... we are a nation of laws. ... It is not our duty to ignore the law or subvert the law as is currently being done in our state and cities."

My "ignorant-of-the-facts" response is laws are as good or as bad as the politicians who make them. Our country has suffered awful laws that have cried out for repeal — slavery, Jim Crow legislation, segregation of schools and voter disenfranchisement, to cite just a few examples.

An additional GOP Senator's vote two weeks ago to repeal Obamacare would have led to millions of people being deprived of their medical coverage.

There is something very wrong about

ICE agents in the middle of the night or any time seizing for deportation unauthorized immigrants who entered this country to escape certain death; who have lived here five or more years; who are the parents of children born here; who become contributing participants in a strong American economy; or who have never committed a crime other than having entered the country illegally.

In a democracy, high-minded civil resistance to bad laws and executive branch policy must occur. Especially now, with our current President fomenting what I feel is so much hate.

—Harold Titus
Florence

BEHAVIOR OF PORT

IS SHAMEFUL

I was sickened when I learned of the sexual harassment claim that was used in what I feel was a vendetta against Port Manager Steven Leskin as what I would guess is payback for exposing certain behaviors by individuals in your community.

Even now as the headline in the Aug. 9 Siuslaw News article states, the sexual harassment claim was unsubstantiated. However, Steven's life as he knew it is pretty much over. I hope those responsible come to realize what a despicable thing they have done.

The behaviors of some are shameful. It's no wonder that state legislators shake their heads about ports and port commissions after reading articles like this.

The end result of that, as stated by one port commissioner, is that Steven should have taken his money for payment and none of this would have ever happened.

Really?

I have known Steven for three years, as an employee and now as a friend. I've worked in a public port environment for 29 years. Steven wanted what was best for the port he was hired to manage and, more importantly, for the taxpayer and facility users who support it.

I encouraged Steven to apply for the Port Manager position there. Knowing what I know now, I wish I hadn't.

—Gina Dearth
General Manager
Port of Bandon

THINGS ARE GETTING DONE

BUT OVERLOOKED

In response to Win Jolley's letter "Never Seen Things Worse Than Now" (Aug. 9) statement "I am confused on how we got to this point:"

The media gave Trump billions in free publicity and were unable to stop the juggernaut once they'd got it rolling. Now, they're mad as hell and determined to bring down the very man they helped elect.

They have abandoned almost all pretense of impartiality. It's an old joke, but if Trump walked on water, it would be headlined "Trump Can't Swim!"

We are an ill-educated, self-absorbed populace. How many times have you seen people at dinner all checking their smartphone and not a single word passes between them?

We are held incommunicado in the thrall of communication technology.

Recall Andy Warhol's words that, "In the future, everyone will be world-famous for 15 minutes."

We live in a celebratocracy.

Every loony pronouncement by people who fake it for a living is immediately scrolled for our consumption. And we keep gobbling it up.

The previous administration, loved by the media, spent a trillion dollars in stimulus and gave us eight years of stagnation — yet not much was said.

I say things are being accomplished by the Trump administration, but one has to search because they won't be listed on Page 1 of the paper of record.

Specifically:

- Illegal immigration is down
- Employment rising
- Food stamp enrollment is down
- Some NATO partners are committing to paying 2 percent
- Gains against ISIS
- VA Reform
- Stock Market rising

HUD Secretary Dr. Ben Carson said "Let me put it this way, I'm glad that Trump is drawing all the fire so I can get stuff done."

Joseph de Maistre wrote in 1811: "Every nation gets the government it deserves."

Or, put another way:

"We have met the enemy and he is us." — Walt Kelly, POGO cartoonist

— Ian Eales
Florence

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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 only be published at the discretion of the editor.

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.

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