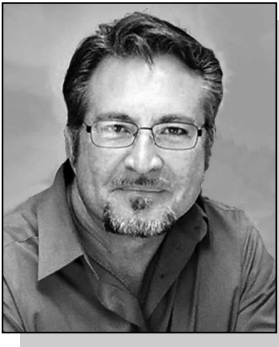


Siuslaw News
P.O. Box 10
Florence, OR 97439

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.



We don't mind taking our lumps when it leads to real discussion

community support for Malakai Kirk and efforts to address hunger for our Upriver neighbors.

These are the kinds of stories that offer hope and no small amount of inspiration.

But it's that first group of stories that tend to linger here in the newsroom, as well as in the minds of the community

also recognize when they connect to the county, state and even national level — such as the opioid crisis, teen suicide, Death with Dignity Act, Sanctuary City designation, etc.

The result has been front pages that sometimes include the juxtaposition of a story on student art alongside an inves-

I understand why some readers get frustrated when the gears of a story we're working on seem to grind much more slowly than on Facebook — or when the information they provided us isn't included in a story because we couldn't verify it beyond word-of-mouth.

Over the last few weeks, we've taken our lumps from readers on both sides of stories we've covered.

The fact that we needed to expand today's Letters to the Editor section to a second page I hope is an indication that the kind of community conversations that lead to solutions have begun to take place.

The fact that we have received both support and criticism for our coverage, I hope, is an indication that we're offering the kind of objective reporting that inspires real dialogue.

Because when everyone agrees with your reporting, chances are you aren't doing it right.

— 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

we serve. I say this because we are reminded on a regular basis — through emails, phone calls, letters to the editor, Facebook posts and anonymous notes left in our front door mail slot — when people are either happy or unhappy with our reporting.

Ironically, those same avenues have become utilized more and more often to relay concerns that people would like us to look into.

When I became editor nearly a year ago, my goal was to make our coverage more timely, comprehensive and relevant by exploring not only the impact of events and issues on a local level, but

tigation into teen homelessness.

Our objective is to remain just that: objective. It's not our job to sway opinion; it is to provide both sides of an issue with information verified through official documentation, direct quotes based on first-hand knowledge, or first-hand experience observed and documented on our own.

We can't report on what someone said they heard someone else witnessed; we need to talk to the actual witness and verify what they saw.

In this time of at-a-whim social media posting of speculation, rumor and accusation,

Maybe it's the eclipse. Maybe it's the heat. Or maybe it's a form of climate change that has nothing to do with melting ice caps.

In my 20 years here at Siuslaw News, I honestly can't remember a time when we've waded into as much controversial, polarizing or "hard" news reporting on a regular basis.

In the past three months alone we've covered issues dealing with teen hunger, homelessness, an attack on police officers, the justified killing of an active shooter, the termination of our Port Manager as well as three top administrators by the Tribal Council, a drowning, five accidental deaths and, most recently, accusations of neglect and abuse at the local animal shelter.

Along the way, we've also covered many of the positive things happening in our town, from local events like Wings and Wheels and new programs at the local Boys and Girls Club, to the amazing

LETTERS

COUGAR PROBLEM ISN'T GOING AWAY

A cougar was seen walking down my driveway at 10 a.m. yesterday. This is twice the cougar has been seen mid day, and the third time it has been seen by my house in the past few months.

Also, a cougar was seen at the dog park by the airport.

I lost one llama to a cougar attack in January and now have a baby llama that I believe the cougar is anxious to get.

Here is what the ODFW has to say to us regarding living with cougars: www.dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/living_wild_cougars.asp.

I called ODFW on Friday and they connected me with the Charleston office — who responded with: "Please contact the Newport office."

The issue is very troubling as cougars are very difficult to defend against because they generally attack from behind.

Years ago, while hunting with a buddy, I witnessed a cougar drop from a tree after my friend had passed and I witnessed the cougar stalking him. Fortunately I was able to shoot toward the cougar with my hunting rifle and scare the cat away from him.

I have also found cat tracks in my tracks in the snow while I was hunting.

It's not a pleasant realization that you could be being stalked in your own neighborhood.

—Brian Cole
Florence

BOARD SHOULD BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE

Referencing the article in Saturday's paper about neglect and mismanagement at the Oregon Coast Humane Society ("Past and Present Board Members, Volunteers Clash Over Care," Aug. 5), we, as volunteers in the thrift shop for three years, were witness to many mistakes and evidence of poor judgment by newly hired management and directors.

Case in point: Why would so many volunteer workers leave and several well-liked paid employees be "forced out" or fired?

Things went down hill quickly after the two-week closing to redo

the Thrift Shop. The prices also were raised at that time. In addition, the decision to begin closing on Sundays — with all the summer foot traffic downtown — was a mistake.

We found that many of the frequent customers were happy with the way it was and didn't like the new "boutique" treatment.

They want to shop in a thrift shop with some of the best prices in town. Nothing more.

As for self-appointed board member Ed Gervais, I feel he only offers excuses for these and other criticisms from ex-staff. Many of us feel that our suggestions as to the operations in the thrift store were ignored.

It would seem, if there are monies available, that some of it should be made available to correct some of the problems at the shelter. It is the OCHS Board's responsibility to make the wise decisions for the animals and should be held accountable.

Let's get a good, reliable board in there to do the job. Volunteers are there because they love animals and can't stand by while hearing of them getting anything but the best possible care.

—Jeanie Raiser, Sue Hale
OCHS volunteers
Florence

NOTHING BUT LOVE AND AFFECTION

Since moving to Florence 10 years ago, I have walked dogs at the shelter — at first seven days a week, now three to four days a week.

For one year I cleaned the kennels one day a week; for a year I drove my own vehicle to Eugene once a month with cats and dogs to show the animals for adoption.

During this time, I have never seen the staff treat the dogs with anything but love and affection. I have never had a dog shy away from returning to the shelter other than a dog that wants to keep walking.

With one exception, I know of no discord with staff at the shelter,

although the thrift shop may be another matter.

I am not familiar with board members but have not noticed any change in the way the dogs are treated. To me, the kennels are of adequate size. I might mention that I have never been named as volunteer of the month but the company of the dogs makes up for any oversight.

—Frank Keavy
Florence

CLEAR UP 'CONFUSION' ABOUT PRES. TRUMP

Our country is divided and there certainly is a lot of "Fake News" adding to the confusion. Our president is president of the entire country and was elected correctly by our laws.

Thanks to the people who voted for Donald Trump, I feel the president has been keeping the promises he made. Just look at some of the many positive things that have been accomplished under President Trump.

1. Illegal immigration down to lowest level in many years
2. Consumer confidence highest since 2000
3. Mortgage applications for new homes rose to a 7-year high
4. Keystone pipeline approved
5. Over 600,000 jobs created
6. Stock market at highest level
7. Many billions saved in regulation rollback
8. Targeting MS 13 gangs
9. Signed 41 bills to date
10. Unemployment lowest since 2007
11. Promoted businesses to create American jobs
12. Highest manufacturing surge in 3 years
13. \$700 million saved with F-35 renegotiation
14. Saved \$22 million by reducing white house payroll
15. Signed Executive Order to promote energy independence and economic growth

In my opinion, President Donald Trump is off to a very good start and we are in good hands.

—James Perry
Florence

MORE LETTERS 5A

USPS# 497-660 Copyright 2017 © Siuslaw News

Siuslaw News

Published every Wednesday and Saturday at 148 Maple St. in Florence, Lane County, Oregon. A member of the National Newspaper Association and Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association. Periodicals postage paid at Florence, Ore. Postmaster, send address changes to: Siuslaw News, P.O. Box 10, Florence, OR 97439; phone 541-997-3441; fax 541-997-7979. All press releases may be sent to PressReleases@TheSiuslawNews.com.

James Rand
Jenna Bartlett
Ned Hickson
Erik Chalhoub

Susan Gutierrez
Cathy Dietz
Ron Annis
Jeremy Gentry

Oregon Group Publisher 541-265 8571
Publisher, ext. 318
Editor, ext. 313
Consulting Editor 831-761-7353
Email: echalhoub@register-pajaronian.com
Marketing Director, ext. 326
Office Supervisor, ext. 312
Production Supervisor
Press Manager

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.

NEWSPAPER SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

In Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$71; 10-weeks subscription, \$18; Out of Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$94; 10-weeks subscription, \$24; Out of State — 1-year subscription, \$120; Out of United States — 1-year subscription, \$200; E-Edition Online Only (Anywhere) — 1-year subscription, \$65.

Mail subscription includes E-Edition.
Website and E-Edition: www.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 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.

Send letters to:
nhickson@thesiuslawnews.com

WHERE TO WRITE

Pres. Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
NW
Washington, D.C. 20500
Comments: 202-456-1111
Switchboard: 202-456-1414
FAX: 202-456-2461
TTY/TDD Comments:
202-456-6213
www.whitehouse.gov

Gov. Kate Brown
160 State Capitol
900 Court St.
Salem, Ore. 97301-4047
Governor's Citizens' Rep.
Message Line:
503-378-4582
www.oregon.gov/gov

U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden
221 Dirksen Senate Office
Bldg
Washington, DC 20510
202-224-5244
541-431-0229
www.wyden.senate.gov

U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley
313 Hart Senate Office
Bldg
Washington, DC 20510
202-224-3753/FAX: 202-228-3997
541-465-6750
www.merkley.senate.gov

U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio
(4th Dist.)
2134 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515
202-225-6416
541-269-2609
541-465-6732
www.defazio.house.gov

State Sen. Arnie Roblan
(Dist. 5)
900 Court St. NE - S-417
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1705
FAX: 503-986-1080
Email: Sen.ArnieRoblan@state.or.us

State Rep. Caddy McKeown
(Dist. 9)
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1409
Email: rep.caddymckeown@state.or.us

West Lane County Commissioner Jay Bozievich
125 E. Eighth St.
Eugene, OR 97401
541-682-4203
FAX: 541-682-4616
Email:
Jay.Bozievich@co.lane.or.us