

Siuslaw News
P.O. Box 10
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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.



LETTERS

STATE GOVERNMENT SHOULDN'T BE OFF THE HOOK FOR EDUCATION

I voted "Yes" on the local school option levy, so I was happy to read that it had passed.

I also know people who voted "No" for good reasons.

I share their view, that good education for all Oregon cities should be adequately funded by our state government. Florence is fortunate because it is large enough for a local option levy to make a difference. There are many small towns where this is not the case.

However, by supporting option levies and bond measures we are in effect disadvantaging the kids in small towns as the quality of their education becomes a zip code lottery.

I voted "Yes" because I recognize that the kids in school need better quality education today. A year in the life of a student can make the difference between getting a good job or becoming reliant on the state's social programs.

My vote to subsidize the cost of education in the Siuslaw School District in effect lets our state government off the hook and creates a situation where there is no equality in education. I want this to change, so I will be writing to my representatives to urge them to make state funding for education one of their top priorities, as it is for parents in a typical household.

I invite everyone who believes in the value of education to do the same.

—Eva Pinkavova
Florence

RECOGNIZING AN URGENT NEED IN OUR COMMUNITY

Having read Siuslaw News editor Ned Hickson's editorial ("What will it take to assure coastal living as a community?" Nov. 15), he very clearly illustrated a community need. I remember being told that, when an urgent community need was recognized in Florence some years ago, the citizens of this area raised \$1 million to build a hospital.

I hope that a similar effort will be raised to form and fund a nonprofit organization to construct truly affordable housing using the data and guidelines being put together by our city government.

—Bill Durst
Florence

TOURIST TAX COULD HELP WITH LOCAL CHALLENGES

I am reading with interest about the challenges our region faces ("Is Coastal

Living in Jeopardy?" series, Nov. 15) and have two thoughts to share.

First, I want to suggest that somehow, somewhere, some way a community kitchen be started. People could bring their own food to prepare and eat it and take their leftovers.

Some staff could probably get hired, especially if the city or county were involved, to ensure smooth operations.

I'm sure there would be a lot of regulation and flaming hoops to jump through to get the kitchen going, yet elements of human dignity would be cultivated in this most basic service. From the launch pad of dignity, there is no telling where someone might land.

Second, isn't part of democracy the notion of tax revenues to help pay for services like parks and recreation programs, schools, roads and maybe community kitchens?

If the state is not ready for sales tax, perhaps the municipalities are. With tourism as one of the drivers of the financial engines in this area, even a one-percent tax could raise a significant chunk of revenue, which might improve many situations, including peoples' desperation.

I know Phoenix has what it calls a "tourist tax."

Sure, some tourists grumble about it, yet it doesn't slow the tourist trade. Instead, that revenue keeps the home fires burning in ways that good intentions alone cannot.

—Ivy Medow
Florence

NEVER SEEN MEETINGS LIKE THOSE AT OCHS

I have just returned home from another monthly meeting of the Florence Area Animal Humane Society (OCHS). I have been a member of many committees and boards, including as president of several, and I have never seen any meeting as disgusting as this one.

As a member myself, there are several reasons I classify this meeting as such — one being that about half the questions asked by members in attendance were never answered.

No excuse given, no reason given — just simply *no answers*.

Equally disgusting was board member Ed Gervais, who spent most of the meeting slouched in his chair playing or texting with his phone and seemingly unconcerned with the meeting or what members were saying.

One of the few answers given was regarding why the board felt the need to have a Florence Police officer in attendance. The reply was that they were advised to have one present.

By whom?

However, when asked how much of the money donated to the local humane society for the animals was being diverted to legal fees, again — no answer.

I and several members I have spoken to have the general feeling that the board president doesn't care what the members' concerns are regarding the animals.

There are many members of the Florence area that are sincerely concerned regarding the helping of unfortunate animals in our area. All that is being asked of the board is for answers to our questions, and a properly run board that feels obligated to the animals, the shelter and the community that support them.

—Tony Cavarno
Florence

NO ANSWERS BUT INCARCERATION FOR SEXUAL PREDATORS

In today's culture, we have heard the words "sexual harassment" applied — first to Bill Cosby, then to Harvey Weinstein and now Kevin Spacey, Roy Moore, Al Franken and others.

The list will go forward from corporations and, I expect, through the House of Congress. I think harassment has softened what has been happening over the years. It was, and should be called what it is:

Sexual predation.
Those like Cosby and Weinstein were predators.

We don't have to go back in time very far when the entertainment industry had talent agents who asked favors from male and females getting into Vaudeville or the early years of Broadway.

Then, along came the movie industry and the Hollywood studio system by the likes of MGM, Paramount and Warner Brothers. At that time, the studios had control over the personal lives of actors and actresses, and if you wanted to become part of the industry you had to go through a "talent scout."

There are many hidden stories about the "casting couch." So why did not anyone speak out?

Because that was their livelihood and everything was covered up by the studios. Today, women and men are finally coming forward and speaking out about predators in their workplaces.

I have no answer to the problem — other than incarceration.

—Win Jolley
Florence

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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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