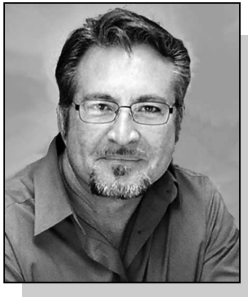


**Siuslaw News**  
P.O. Box 10  
Florence, OR 97439

# 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.



## Payment for convenience of plastic is quickly becoming 'past due'

The inclusion of plastic in our lives has grown exponentially over the past 70 years, making our lives easier, more convenient and often at a significant cost savings almost too good to be true.

As we have begun to realize, that's exactly what it was; the interest rate on the cost of convenience has come due with an unexpected balloon payment.

We produce nearly 300 million tons of plastic products each year, nearly half of which is designed for single-use purposes in what has increasingly become a disposable society. And despite our efforts to educate the public about the importance of "Reduce, Re-use and Recycle," each year more than 8 million tons of plastic is dumped into our oceans.

And that was before China, which has been the recipient of nearly a third of America's recycle waste, announced plans to ban the import of 24 different kinds of assorted waste — includ-

ing unsorted paper and several types of plastic.

When we lose electricity in our home, I still walk into every dark room and flip the switch because it's second nature. I'm so used to it being there that I don't even think about how often — and in how many ways — I use electricity without giving it a second thought.

- It's no small irony that the process of producing a water bottle actually requires *six times* as much water as there is in the actual container itself.

In Lane County, our goal was to recycle two-thirds of our waste products by 2025. We were making great strides, leading the state in this campaign by being the

plastic problem, we need to fully understand its scope and the ways it is intertwined not only among those of us who use it, but how any changes we make could impact us economically.

In that spirit, Siuslaw News and KCST/KCFM Coast Radio, along with sponsors Central Coast Disposal, the City of Florence, County Transfer and Recycling and Lane County Waste Management, are hosting a special screening of the documentary "A Plastic Ocean," along with a panel discussion at 12:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. today.

The event is free, and there are only a few dozen tickets still available at Siuslaw News (148 Maple St.)

The film offers a sobering look at the impact of plastic on our planet's oceans. We hope it will spur the kind of community conversation that will lead to solutions in dealing with what we once embraced as an element of everyday life that was too good to be true.

*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

The same can be said for our use of plastic. Here are a few statistics to help illustrate the scope of how plastic has become a second-nature element of our lives:

- Worldwide, more than 500 billion plastic bags are used each year, or more than 1 million bags every minute.
- The average "working life" of a plastic bag is 15 minutes, after which it "retires."

- In 1996, 3.8 billion plastic water bottles were sold in the U.S. By 2014, that number had grown to 57.3 billion.

only county in Oregon to sending more waste to recyclers than we did to landfills.

However, restrictions that we in the Siuslaw region began to feel late last year, and which became official at the beginning of January, are jeopardizing the progress we've made as a county, and ultimately as a society.

While our dependence on plastic is a global issue, the solutions will need to be implemented one community at a time, with the first step in that process being education.

Before we can solve the

## LETTERS

### LEARN THE ART OF COMPROMISE

In the late months of 1864, two friends met to discuss what could be done to end the terrible blood bath known as The Civil War. Gen. Robert E. Lee had come to visit Gen. U. S. Grant at his home in Galena, Ill., with a request which would greatly ease the tension between the opposing forces.

It seems that Gen. Lee's in-laws, who were very wealthy, owned a sizeable piece of property in the Washington, D.C. area, and were very concerned that should the Union forces prevail, this property would be claimed as Union held assets.

They had hoped that the property would benefit the entire country.

After much discussion, a solution was reached, and Gen. Grant made the commitment to recognize their wishes (Gen. Lee's in-laws' name was Arlington). This was one of the several moves which led to the end of this war that had pitched family members against family members, states against states and businesses against businesses, killing 620,000 in the process.

There were no other countries involved. The end was brought about through a series of discussions between two parties who really wanted a peaceful solution.

The technique was called *compromise*.

As the days go on, it seems our country is again becoming more and more fractured in more and more directions by name calling, lying, fabrications, etc., with no one being interested resolving any of these fractures peacefully.

My fear is that we now have another legislative body (according to Sen. McConnell) called the NRA, which will certainly not help reach an intelligent conclusion.

My biggest fear is that we are building towards another Civil War rapidly. Sure, the colors are different (red and blue instead of blue and gray), the wealth lines are more definite and the artillery hasn't been fully placed yet, but the battle lines have been drawn with beliefs and attitudes.

I only hope that we do not have to go through another Civil War before we can get to the process of *compromise*.

—Charles Pennington  
Florence

### CLIMATE CHANGE UNDERREPORTED BY LOCAL MEDIA

A new report, "Carbon Omission: How the Media Underreported Climate Change in 2017," finds that the U.S. media has largely failed to connect the dots between our warming planet and extreme weather events (Read the report at <http://pubc.it/2IXlwq8>.)

When the Environmental Management Advisory Committee (EMAC) sent a request to Major Joe Henry to join forces with other climate mayors across our state and the country, he declined.

When I asked the Siuslaw News to follow up, there wasn't any.

Already in 2018, record cold and record snowfall, both consistent with our changing climate, have ravaged communities along the eastern seaboard.

As evidence of our warming planet continues to amass, I urge you to report on the climate crisis with the quality and quantity it merits.

Cover climate in 2018.

—Michael Allen  
Florence

### THANKS TO COMMUNITY FOR TIME AND TALENTS

On behalf of our team at Three Rivers Casino Resort, please accept our sincere thanks for all those in our community who gave their time and talents over this holiday season to serve others.

It was gratifying for so many of us to come together, collecting donations and working toward the common goal of ensuring that families in need had toys and gifts for their children to enjoy. Thanks to those efforts, hundreds of toys were donated to the Soroptimists of Florence who, working in collaboration with other local organizations and volunteers, helped bring food and toys to hundreds in our community.

In addition, over 1,000 pounds of food was donated to the Florence Food Share. Its staff and volunteers worked tirelessly to distribute food and other items that were generously donated from local businesses and individuals.

From all of us at Three Rivers Casino Resort, thank you to all those who worked so hard to ensure that so many others could enjoy the holidays.

—Rich Colton  
Director of Marketing  
Three Rivers Casino Resort

### WAR ON THE WORKING CLASS

In July of 2017, the Oregon legislature quietly passed as a declared emergency what was framed as a transportation improvement tax (HB 2017). This bill was declared an emergency in order to prevent public discussion. More than 50 percent of the bills passed in the last long session were declared an emergency for this reason.

The anticipated revenue from this tax is estimated to net about \$5.3 billion to the state of Oregon, or roughly \$1,200 from every man, woman and child living in Oregon. Carefully written into this legislation was a small increase in the state income tax.

Other components of this bill included the Bicycle Excise Tax, Vehicle Privilege Tax and Vehicle Use Tax, a statewide transit tax.

In addition to what I feel is this onerous increase in taxation on Oregonians, we are now being asked to agree to an additional tax on the healthcare benefits of working Oregonians in the form of Measure 101.

Measure 101 will levy an additional 1.5 percent tax on the value of healthcare benefits provided to the working people of Oregon. Elected officials have specifically exempted themselves as well as Medicare recipients from this legislation.

Thus, this becomes a tax on the working people of Oregon.

The state of Oregon already has the second-highest income tax rate in the country, with California being the highest. If you read the language in these bills, it is easy to see that they represent the beginnings of a targeted sales tax on working people in Oregon.

This legislation and the continuing tax increases targeted toward the working class highlight the disconnect between the political class in Salem and the working people of Oregon.

It's time for a change in Salem. As working Oregonians, we need to hold our elected officials accountable for how they are spending the money we earn. We can start by voting "no" on Measure 101 — but that's only a start.

It's time for the working people who fund our state government to insist their money be spent wisely, not in the dead of night. If our elected officials are unwilling to do this for the people of Oregon (their employers), we should replace them with people who will be better stewards of the people's money.

—Katie Prosser  
Florence

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](mailto:PressReleases@TheSiuslawNews.com).

James Rand  
Jenna Bartlett  
Ned Hickson  
Erik Chalhouh

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: [echalhouh@register-pajaronian.com](mailto:echalhouh@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, \$76; 6-month in-county, \$52; 10-weeks subscription, \$23; Out of Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$99; 6-month out-of-county, \$65; 10-weeks subscription, \$29; Out of State — 1-year subscription, \$125; E-Edition Online Only (Anywhere) — 1-year subscription, \$71.

Mail subscription includes E-Edition.  
Website and E-Edition: [TheSiuslawNews.com](http://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](mailto: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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:Jay.Bozievich@co.lane.or.us)