

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.

Problems and solutions for the OCHS

My wife and I moved to Florence in 2015 from Arizona, where I had retired ten years earlier from PetsMart working out of corporate and store management. One of the first things I wanted to do here was use some of my skills helping local groups working with dog and cat adoptions.

After checking out the Oregon Coast Humane Society (OCHS), I kept running into angry people who had issues with the way it was being run. So I started digging into what was really going on. I attended the November meeting and was overwhelmed with the anger in the room. I had seen this before and the outcome has never been good.

I took a tour of the shelter and I have to say the place was incredibly clean and the personnel were very friendly. From there, I went to the OCHS Thrift Shop and again I found incredible people, but also that it was very short of volunteers.

The elephant in the room is the question of "did this board create an unhealthy environment for the dogs and cats passing through its doors each day?"

My answer is no, and there are independent inspections to bear this out.

I went through the entire list of complaints from submitted by concerned members, item by item.

Being in the pet business as long as I had, I realize that every living creature has different needs. Can they get it perfect every time?

Of course not. That's why we re-analyze every issue and make custom changes to meet each incident.

In the November meeting, the board was offered many suggestions about care and some were even administered. However, in the end, it is really up to the ones serving on the board to make the

final decisions.

In fact, I believe every issue has been addressed with the exception of doing away with the current board and members of the shelter's management.

As a recent board member no longer serving on the board, I'd like to suggest what I think is best for OCHS and the animals entrusted to its care.

tion.

In other words, they have to transport the washed items to another location to be dried. Power usage is almost at its limit and blows fuses under heavy demand.

4) Food storage at the shelter is inside a very large metal shipping container. In the past, there have been rat issues. But several

In recent months OCHS has received some very large gifts and I'm sure everyone is asking when and what the money is going to be spent on

Answering that question requires addressing the second "elephant in the room."

The OCHS been damaged from all the posturing by some of its unhappy members. There is no filtering of facts on social media and the board remained quiet because of legal advice.

Almost daily, there are people on social media saying the present board is not honest. These angry remarks have nothing to do with the board's service. Instead, it only demonstrates personal revenge being taken on certain people.

As a result, the OCHS has lost volunteers.

That being said, I want nothing to do with the past because we can only change what's happening *now* and the future.

The board is committed to re-installing membership voting that was abandoned long before this board took office. I've met with some community leaders and they are concerned with what is happening at the shelter and how it affects our community.

I hope with all my heart the community will come together and support OCHS by becoming a member and voting for what's right.

Anger has no place around helpless animals.

Ask the hard question to those who will be running for the board: What is the future plan for OCHS and how can you make it work for the benefit of the animals and community?

(Editor's Note: Viewpoint submissions on this and other topics are always welcome as part of our goal to encourage community discussion and exchange of perspectives.)

GUEST VIEWPOINT

By GREG CARLTON
RECENT OREGON COAST HUMANE SOCIETY BOARD MEMBER

Problems:

1) First, a property review: After walking through the shelter and thrift store, it's obvious both facilities have poor building conditions. The layout at the shelter is simply wrong for the cats upstairs and the dogs below.

The facility isn't ADA (American Disability Act) compliant, and with the population of our area leaning so heavily toward seniors, it fails to provide many of them the opportunity to view kittens housed upstairs.

Also, the dog kennels are very small and need to be enlarged.

But the biggest problem is there are only 22 dog kennels with no room to expand.

2) The thrift store consists of two different buildings and neither are ADA friendly. One building was built in 1932 and still has part of the same plumbing, no heat to speak of, and is in dire need of a complete overhaul.

Given those conditions, I think the employees and volunteers have done an incredible job of making the place work.

3) The laundry rooms in two different locations; there are three non-commercial washers in one room and three non-commercial dryers in another loca-

months ago, five large metal lock boxes were installed that would stop a dinosaur from breaking them open.

However, it is still damp in the container and a new building is needed to help with food storage.

Solutions:

1) Stop investing in unusable properties and begin the search for a location that could support a larger, more suitable facility that meets OCHS's needs.

Getting grants is almost impossible when we do not own the property, and wasting money on the current facility is not a solution and

2) Create an opportunity for another veterinarian in Florence that will work part-time at the shelter and be willing to participate in a low-cost spay/neuter clinic.

3) Hire an executive director to oversee operations and outreach.

4) Hold board elections ASAP to bring the next board in compliance with the Oregon Department of Justice's instructions.

Operations:

It wasn't long ago that the shelter was going to have to close its doors for lack of funds; the fund raising didn't meet the needs of operations.

LETTERS

GO BACK TO PAPER BAGS TO AVOID 'PLASTIC OCEAN'

I just attended the documentary film "A Plastic Ocean" and read Siuslaw News editor Ned Hickson's opinion piece regarding plastic.

I agree plastic is suffocating all of us. I just don't know how to get our coastal communities to pass local legislation to ban plastic straws, plastic bags and plastic bottles so we can reduce our stamp on the ocean.

Maybe we can go back to paper bags, paper straws and glass bottles?

Regarding water bottles, having grown up in Oregon I found it crazy when I was a teen that anyone would purchase bottled water versus tap water. Oregon has the best water and maybe publishing monthly "Things You Should Know" could help those moving here from other states to learn that the tap water will be better than bottled water.

They could learn that those bottles have estrogen growth contaminates, whereas a glass of water from the tap doesn't.

And banning plastic bags, not all bags, would be helpful and should be looked into.

—Catherine Caudle
Dunes City

FLORENCE MUST ACT

LOCALLY, THINK GLOBALLY

In response to the letter by Mayor Joe Henry ("Focusing on Local Issues has Broader Impact," Jan. 13), one of our city goals is Livability and Quality of Life. We are obviously a coastal community, dependent on tourism, business and being a popular place for people to retire.

Our climate, clean air and water are very important to all the above. One of the most important factors affecting these issues is global warming. We must, as individuals and as a community, come together to recognize that global warming and climate change can destroy civilization as we know it.

Over 95 percent of environmental scientists agree about this dire problem. However, our Mayor declined to partici-

pate in the EMAC effort concerning global warming because he believes that its purpose is partisan in nature.

Additionally, he said he does not think he can have much impact on global warming.

I wonder if he doesn't understand the idea of thinking globally and acting locally?

—Ron Preisler
Florence City Councilor

CLIMATE CHANGE IS

A CONSTANT, NOT A CRISIS

In reference to Michael Allen's letter ("Climate Change Underreported by Local Media," Jan. 10), in my opinion Climate Change is actually *over-reported* by all media.

"Unstoppable Global Warming: Every 1,500 Years" by Singer and Avery, first published in 2007, gives ample evidence the climate is in constant change. The climate changes as our solar system passes through the radial arms of the Milky Way Galaxy due to change in cosmic ray levels.

The interactions affecting climate are complex and some are still unknown. Pinning it solely on CO2 is risible but readily swallowed by the ill-educated.

None of the computer projections for the past 20 years are even close to actual changes; none of the computer models are remotely capable of running in reverse from today to model the weather as documented over the last several hundred years; and no species has gone extinct from climate change in the past 20 years. Alarmists invent nonsensical terms like "local extinction" to describe natural and normal migration as animals adapt.

Cold weather kills more people than warm air; food grows better in warm, CO2-rich environments.

Polar bears will survive. They last adapted by changing their teeth 10,000 to 20,000 years ago in response to the last ice age. Their DNA is intermingled with their brown bear ancestors with whom they have mated over millennia when driven landward in prehistoric warmings.

Climate change is constant and merits as much ink as sunrise and sunset.

—Ian Eales
Florence

MEDICAID FUNDING IMPORTANT FOR OUR COMMUNITY

I recently relocated to Florence and am getting accustomed to my new home. I love it here and want to stay for the remainder of my career and into retirement. I am a family physician and have already seen the impact that Oregon Medicaid makes in our community. It funds care for disabled individuals and supplements the care for lower-income seniors.

If Measure 101 fails, I believe there would be a significant negative impact on the overall health of our community. For instance, I have a patient with severe respiratory illness. Because he has Medicaid, he is able to see me for treatment before he becomes critically ill.

This certainly saved money as it prevents potential hospitalization.

A majority of my patients are retired seniors who do not have an income other than retirement savings. Without supplemental Medicaid, many of them would not be able to afford needed assisted living facilities and memory care. They would instead be living in their homes and would decline rapidly.

The favorite part of my job is providing care to women and children. I love obstetrics and newborn care. Medicaid helps fund care for pregnant women and young children, which supports healthy mothers and babies. It also assures access to preventative services like mammographies and cervical cancer screenings.

Medicaid funding is important for our community, so I will be voting "yes" on Measure 101.

—Jacquelyn L. Serrano,
MD, MPH, FAAFP
Florence

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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.

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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.
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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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