

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.

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.

Jenna Bartlett
Ned Hickson
Erik Chalhouh
Susan Gutierrez
Cathy Dietz
Ron Annis
Jeremy Gentry

Publisher, ext. 318
Editor, ext. 313
Consulting Editor 831-761-7353
Email: echalhouh@register-pajaronian.com
Marketing Director, ext. 326
Office Supervisor, ext. 312
Production Supervisor
Press Manager

DEADLINES:

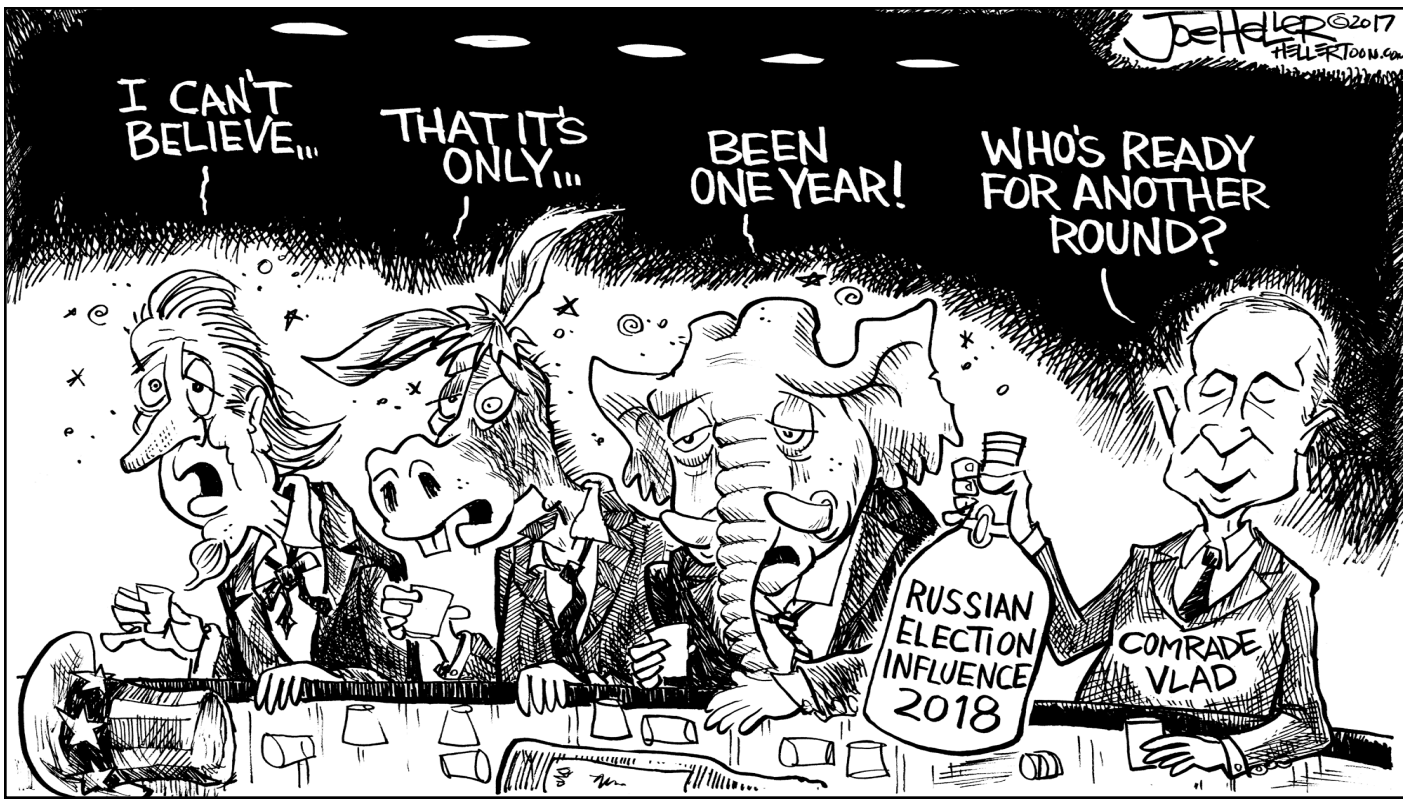
Wednesday Issue—General news, Monday noon; Budgets, four days prior to publication; Regular classified ads, Monday 1 p.m.; Display ads, Monday noon; Boxed and display classified ads, Friday 5 p.m.

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



Is it time for a new voting system?

Democracy has always been a work in progress, and Oregon has long been a pioneer in that progress, from the initiative and referendum a century ago to the mail-in ballots and “motor voter” registration of today.

Lane County voters now have a chance to pioneer a new phase of democratic reform by bringing the STAR (Score Then Automatic Runoff) system of voting to Lane County.

With STAR voting, a voter can score any of the candidates for an office on a scale from zero to five, with zero meaning “no support” and five meaning “full support.”

This gives voters the chance to express their views more clearly and eliminates the need to make a choice between candidates a voter likes equally, or between a candidate a voter prefers and a candidate that simply has a better chance of winning because of party affiliation or support.

The ballots are then counted in a unique, two-step process.

The first count determines which two candidates received the highest overall scores from voters; the second count is the “Automatic Runoff” between these two finalists, with each candidate receiving a vote from each voter who scored them higher.

election get no other choice. This comes despite the fact that the voters who participate in the general election vastly outnumber those who participate in the primary.

If no candidate gets a majority in the primary, the “top two” candidates with the most votes go on to the

associated with holding a primary for these nonpartisan offices, reducing the amount of fundraising necessary.

It also gives every voter a say in both steps of the process and produces winners with broad overall support from voters rather than just financial resources.

It is fair to all candidates and gives voters the ability to have their say on any candidate they have an opinion on.

For those frustrated by today’s politics, this is a chance to change the process.

A petition has already been filed to bring STAR Voting to elections for Lane County offices.

To learn more, visit www.starlane.us.

Alan Zundel and Mark Frohnmayer are the chief petitioners for the STAR Voting initiative for Lane County. Zundel is a former political scientist and Frohnmayer is a local entrepreneur. Both have been active in election reform efforts for several years.

GUEST VIEWPOINT

By ALAN ZUNDEL AND MARK FROHNMAYER
STAR VOTING INITIATIVE

The candidate who gets the most votes in the runoff wins.

So why replace our current election method?

Lane County elections currently use the “top two” system of a primary election in the spring that narrows the field to two candidates — or many times only a single candidate — for the general election in the fall.

If one of the candidates gets a majority in the primary, that candidate wins and the voters in the general

election, even though each received only a minority of voter support.

This two-election process (primary and then general) makes for a long campaign season, which wears both voters and candidates. It also gives the advantage to the best-funded candidates because long campaigns cost more money.

STAR Voting would replace the two-election process with one election in November. It eliminates the problems and extra costs

LETTERS

‘FORTRESS’ COULD BECOME SHOOTING GALLERY

In response to Becky Goehring’s Letter to the Editor “Safety is Important Part of Education” (Feb. 17), any shooting is tragic.

But I feel the letter writer is using them to gin up support to build what amounts to a prison.

The defensive measures suggested all have serious liabilities that may manifest themselves in unintended consequences.

A lockout system is not foolproof. A shooter, knowing that such a system exists, could make the control his first target. Once engaged, the shooter could roam at-will with little to fear. By the time responders get the doors open, I shudder to think what mayhem will have occurred.

When seconds count, the police are only minutes away.

In the recent shooting, the FBI was notified a year prior but chose not to investigate. Social media did nothing about the shooter’s disturbing posts.

Police had visited the Cruz home more than 30 times, but nothing was done. The supreme court has ruled the police have no obligation to protect us.

Sun Tzu wrote in “The Art of War” that “... attack is the secret of defense; defense is the planning of an attack.”

It is as true today as when written 2,500 years ago.

In the recent shooting, the shooter was not a martyr. He escaped with the students.

Instead of attempting to make our

schools fortresses in “gun free zones” wherein a security system failure could turn that “fortress” into a shooting gallery, it makes sense to have trained and capable armed staff to deter these lunatics inside.

—Ian Eales
Florence

THANKS FOR THE SUPPORT

The Friends of Florence Van Fans wants to thank everyone that contributed to the success of its Feb. 21 game day and luncheon fundraising event.

The Elks Club of Florence was very generous in allowing us to hold this event there this year. Many people donated gifts for our raffle table. The food was delicious and a good time was had by all.

As most of the community knows, the Van Fans is a support group of the Friends of Florence which operates the bus that takes cancer patients to the Willamette Valley five days a week, 52 weeks per year.

The community of Florence is always very generous in its support, and we want to thank everyone involved.

—Sharon Grove
Events Coordinator
Friends of Florence
Van Fans

OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF BABES

Kudos to Becky Goehring for her Letter to the Editor published Feb. 17

(“Safety Is Important Part of Education”).

I heard a politician on television say we need guns in the classrooms. Most people couldn’t shoot a person. Most of the gun accidents in the home are caused by a gun that someone bought to protect their home.

To kill something, even an animal, you have to be raised in an environment such as a farm, where chickens or other farm animals are killed for food.

I was raised on a farm and learned to shoot a gun at a young age. I have hunted game most of my life. I taught my children gun safety. Even when kids take a gun safety class, it doesn’t mean they are safe hunters.

One day, I was hunting with a friend and his son, who had passed his Hunter Safety Class. I asked the son what caliber his gun was and he said it was a 30-30, then jacked a shell out and handed it to me.

I told him he just put a shell in the barrel, and he insisted he didn’t and had only closed the lever.

I took the gun from him, aimed it at a stump and pulled the trigger, firing the gun.

Taking a class doesn’t make a person savvy enough to handle a gun safely.

There are other ways to protect classrooms. Three Siuslaw High School students suggested fire extinguishers, stronger classroom doors and automatic lockdown systems for exterior doors.

Also, mace and tasers could be helpful.

—Virgile Bechtold
Florence

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@oregonlegislature.gov

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