

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.

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Siuslaw News

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Wilbur Ternyik's legacy is of constant relevance

A Remembrance

BY CINDY BRENT WOBBE

In the early '90s, when my husband, Gene, and I were first dating, we made plans to attend a large antique show in Portland. Gene asked if I'd mind if we met up with a friend of his who was also going and who collected Native American memorabilia.

"Maybe if we follow him around, we can pick up some pointers," he said.

We met in the parking lot early in the morning. Introductions were brief, as Wilbur was anxious to get started. He was wearing what I later learned was his signature attire, a beautifully fringed and weathered Cree jacket worth more than my sports car.

His wife, Joyce, walked quickly beside him and Gene and I trailed along behind for the next several hours, watching seasoned dealers greet him with respect and deference as they unearthed prized artifacts from behind their booths.

This was the serious stuff that didn't get put out on display for the public. A Navajo rug, a Hopi hat, a pair of beaded moccasins — Wilbur would examine each item carefully, say a few appreciative words, nod his approval and move on.

This scene was repeated throughout the day, without a single purchase made.

"Who is this guy?" I asked Gene.

"Wilbur..." he paused. "Well, I'm not sure where to start."

A year or so later, when Gene and I married and I relocated to Florence, Wilbur and Joyce were the first of my husband's friends to warmly welcome me. "I like your new wife," he said to Gene. "You should keep her."

And in 1998, when I opened Mon Ami, they quickly became regulars for lunch, often returning again in the afternoon for coffee and dessert. Wilbur was quick to let me know he wasn't allowed to order anything by himself. No, he was on a tight leash and Joyce was in charge.

Of everything. Just ask her.

"Wilbur," I'd say. "What are you hungry for today?"

"I don't know," he'd shake his head. "You'll have to check with my wife."

By this time, I knew a little of the backstory and that Wilbur Ternyik was kind of a big deal. I knew he'd been the mayor, more than once, and that he used a tomahawk for a gavel. I knew he'd served

were tell-tale signs of dementia and conversations would often focus on the past.

There were moments when he didn't think anyone remembered him, who he was or what he'd done.

And yet, he was still very much Wilbur. Still wanting to be relevant and informed, still wanting to contribute — and still wanting to matter.

But he was fading, and the window of opportunity to give him one last hurrah — one last public recognition while he could truly appreciate and revel in it — was quickly closing. His "good days" were becoming fewer and fewer.

In May of 2016, the Chamber of Commerce named him the Grand Marshall of the Rhododendron Festival and Grand Floral Parade. My husband drove a friend's vintage Mustang while Wilbur sat in the passenger seat, wearing his signature fringed buckskin jacket and waving his tomahawk to and fro.

Joyce and I hunkered down in the back seat and watched as the crowds along the highway cheered and waved and called out "Thank you, Wilbur! Thank you, Mr. Ternyik!"

They knew him, and they remembered. It was a definitely one of his "good days."

About that same time, writer Catherine Rourke wanted to write a feature article on Wilbur as part of Siuslaw News' "Extraordinary People" series and asked if I could facilitate an interview. Joyce and I chatted about it, neither of us sure it was a good idea.

But on another good day, we all met down at Bridgeport Market for what turned out to be Wilbur's final Q&A for publication.

He wandered a bit during the interview, and we all tried to help fill in the blanks, but at the final question it was all Wilbur, true to form, straight to the point.

"Tell me, Wilbur," asked Catherine. "What advice can you offer younger generations about the evils of war? If you could leave us just one little kernel of truth and wisdom about your experience in battle, what would it be?"

Wilbur sighed, smiled and then thoughtfully answered, "I don't recommend it."

LETTERS

NATIONAL SALES TAX

The national Constitution envisioned financially supporting the federal administration primarily with import tariffs and user fees. Citizens have the right to sell to the American market; it's a privilege for a foreigner, thus licensable, regulatable and taxable.

Any tax upon a business is passed through to its consumers.

Taxing foreign providers makes their goods and services cost more, compared to those not taxed. The presumed loss of business can be a punishment to that provider.

Congress delegated their taxing authority to the executive branch regarding tariffs.

China has been growing its domestic and global markets where a blip in business to one nation has little impact. It could be considered desirable giving pause to their massive business expansions. Tax avoidance is a global past time with items that once came directly now taking a detour.

The heavy bureaucratic hand of regulations and taxation remains the greatest expense imposed on domestic business; it's why we now import most of our goods and services.

The foreign vs. domestic price difference is not easily erased by the new tariffs. To add insult, foreign materials used here to produce product means domestic finished goods also increase in price, remaining non-competitive.

The national Constitution envisioned import and excise taxes uniformly applied. Its a national sales tax on imported materials and goods with some protection of domestic industry.

It becomes a punishment when applied to specific products from specific nations — but the new tariffs don't harm China while definitely harming Americans.

Essentially, it is just a great excuse for

additional taxes from Americans.

— Keith Stanton
Florence

VIOLENT ACTIONS CAN'T BE CONDONED

As a supporter of the aerial spray ban, I do not condone violent threats leveled against county commissioners. I abhor violence of any type. And in my heart and mind, I believe — and many others agree — that spraying toxic herbicides from helicopters is a particularly heinous type of violence.

Since we know that the county commissioners also don't condone violent behavior, why are they not acting to stop the violent actions against Lane County residents and the environment by industrial timber companies?

— Marge Holman
Eugene

KENT FOR POSITIVE CHANGE

It's been a long time since my husband and I have been so enthusiastic about a local political candidate. Her name is Nora Kent, and she's running for West Lane County Commissioner.

I've known Nora for over 35 years and can testify to her intelligence, competence and ability to make change happen.

As an instructor and administrator of LCC's Adult Basic Education Dept. in Florence, I feel she has an intimate knowledge of our county's resources. She lives in rural Lane County though, not in Florence, so she knows both worlds firsthand.

Her priorities are creating living wage jobs, implementing the state's Clean Energy Jobs Bill, increasing tourism (especially agritourism), building affordable housing, opening access to health-

care and protecting our forests and waters.

She listens and she cares. She's a team player with vision and energy.

I encourage those living in West Lane County to join me in voting for Nora Kent.

— Mary Moffat
Walton

EASTER EGG HUNT

The grass was damp, but the sun was shining bright for the 2018 annual Florence Community Easter Egg Hunt, hosted by the Siuslaw High School Interact Club and sponsored by the Rotary Club of Florence.

Hundreds of hardy youngsters were rewarded with nearly 4,000 colorful Easter eggs filled with treats and prizes to put in their baskets, bags and boxes.

The Siuslaw High School Interact Club, in conjunction with the Rotary Club of Florence, want to thank Grocery Outlet, Wind Drift Gallery, Siuslaw News, KCST Radio, and the Florence Rotary Club for their support of this annual community event. Without them, it would not be possible.

We also thank the Florence Police Department, Siuslaw Valley and Rescue Fire and the Easter Bunny for joining us this year.

Our area youth continually benefit from these and other generous businesses, organizations and individuals who support Florence.

In addition, thank you to the community for supporting our efforts by attending this event.

See you next Easter!

— SHS Interact Club,
Katie Prosser
and Jenna Bartlett,
Rotary Advisers,
SHS Interact

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.

Letters that are anonymous, libelous, argumentative, sarcastic or contain accusations that are unsourced or documented will not be published.

Letters containing poetry or from outside the Siuslaw News 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:
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