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**Place** from 1A

people to gather and talk freely, not encumbered by political correctness nor bullied by soundbytes from the liberal mainstream media," the website continued.

Florence resident Sherry Harvey has been deeply involved in the establishment of Patriot Place and is handling contacts with the media.

Harvey is effusive in her praise of Trump and is well suited in her role as media liaison.

"Patriot Place is a community meeting place, hangout and gift shop for 'All Things American,'" explained Harvey, who described the meeting place as being "like a living room on one side with a complimentary coffee station and a small gift area on the other."

In addition, there is free Wi-Fi and a computer to use, a large-screen TV, music and games.

"Due to the current election, there is an area where you can get candidate information and signs," Harvey added. "We are not sponsored by a political party, so we can choose whose information we provide."

One of the primary motivations for the organizers of Patriot Place is what they interpret as an unhealthy trend among the political opponents of Trump to diminish constitutional authority and the freedoms associated with that authority — notions expressed on the organization's website:

"The Constitution prevents the government from abridging our freedom of speech and assembly. But now we are faced with groups and organizations using ridicule and intimidation to limit those freedoms. Patriot Place was created for people to peacefully assemble and speak freely," the website stated.

Saturday's candidate forum was an example of the type of



MARK BRENNAN/SIUSLAW NEWS

**Patriot Place is a new venue for featured speakers, forums and other events.**

event Patriot Place organizers point to as necessary to a robust political dialogue and as a viable alternative to the policies offered by Democratic candidates.

Carpenter's platform underscores the concerns expressed by members of Patriot Place.

"Personal liberty, free enterprise and the American institutions that are the foundations of this great country are under assault," he explains on his candidate website, www.makeore-gongreatagain. "Everything from Christmas, to football, to how we worship, to now even the dignity of our fallen soldiers."

Carpenter explained that he "shares President Trump's vision of creating vibrant economic opportunity, with less government interference in our lives, (of course, custom-fit in our own unique Oregon way)."

He said, "I'm pro-life, rely on God's wisdom, revere our military and first responders, and want a limited government based on our U.S. Constitution."

Carpenter's short speech to the 100 or so community members at Saturday's event shared these thoughts.

Grier preceded Carpenter, speaking confidently about her

reasons for running against incumbent State Representative Caddie McKeown.

Harvey said she was appreciative that both candidates took the time to appear and speak, as well as with the response from the crowd.

"We decided to invite just one governor candidate and chose the one we felt best reflected our values," Harvey said. "Lots of people came. It was fun and exciting. Sam is definitely the blue-collar-turned-businessman/fixer we need in Salem."

She said that pictures of the event are already being watched and shared on Facebook.

Grier, who also spoke on Saturday, was "great as usual," said Harvey, who pointed out that Guy Rosenbaum, who ran against McKeown and Grier in 2016, stopped by as well.

"He heartily endorsed Teri and has put his support behind her," Harvey added.

Saturday's forum was the first of what organizers hope will be many speakers and events they will be able to offer moving forward.

Today, at 5 p.m., Loren Spivack, known as the "Free Market Warrior," will present a talk about economic literacy.

After the May 15 Primary Election, Patriot Place will invite candidates in the November election to speak. It will also host talks, seminars and other events during the summer.

Organizers also hope to host Navajo Elder Peter MacDonald, one of the few remaining, "code talkers" from World War II, and offer a private showing of the critically acclaimed film, "Windtalkers" at a theater in town.

Harvey said she is pleased with the initial reaction to the opening of Patriot Place and believes the work in which she is engaged is important and greatly needed.

"It feels good waking up each morning knowing you are doing something to protect what you love, and try to make a better place for your grand kids," she said. "It is sad that our leaders on the left and right get their power from polarizing us against each other, when people in Florence have so much common ground."

"We share an amazing desire to volunteer, to help others and our love of animals and nature. It would be great to have a 'Florence Place,' but first the intimidation and bullying have to stop."

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