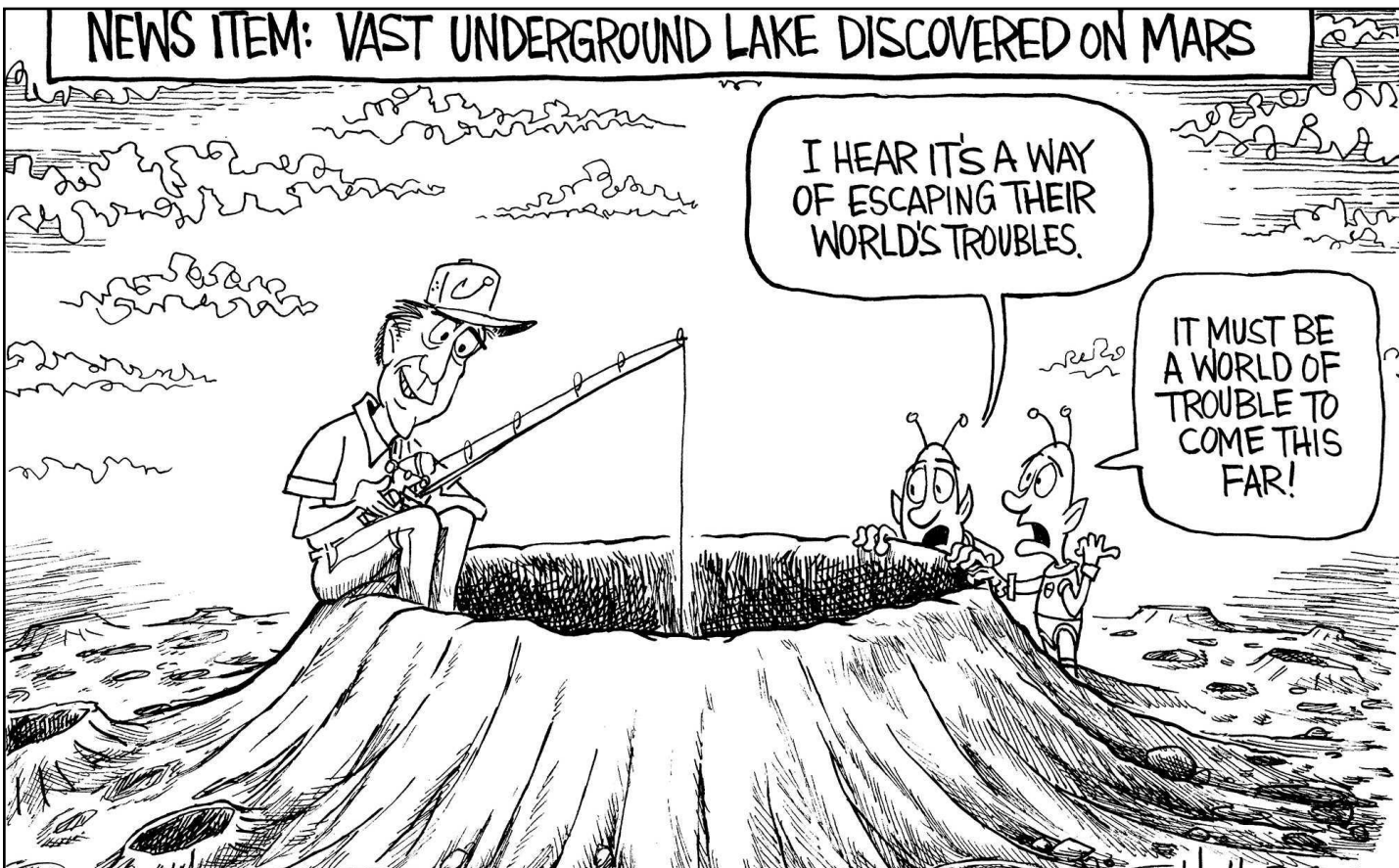


Siuslaw News
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Opinion

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.

"I never considered a difference of opinion in politics, in religion, in philosophy, as cause for withdrawing from a friend." —Thomas Jefferson (1800)



LETTERS

BE CAREFUL WHEN CASTING STONES AT ANIMAL SHELTER

"Let him among you who is without sin cast the first stone ..."

—John 8:7

What animal lover in this town has never had to choose euthanasia for their own family pet? It is a heartbreaking decision that can only be rationalized by knowing the loved one will suffer no more ... that this is a humane choice compared to the alternative.

Many of us still wonder, years later, if we did the right thing at the right time.

Our humane society is comprised of human people put in tough positions and asked by our community to carry out Herculean tasks with very little thanks. Its mission pledges to "... advance the goal of a no-kill shelter ..."

In my mind, this is different than claiming to be a no-kill shelter.

Death is part of life. Every living creature will face it, whether by gentle means in a supported setting or by some other means. An elderly, ill animal depends on its caregivers for mercy. It cannot plan its own check-out date, like we humans can here in Oregon — or perhaps it would?

I am amazed that all the good done by The Oregon Coast Humane Society is washed away by the fact of euthanasia.

Let's be kind and patient — and get our own pets fixed so that fewer of their offspring end up needing others to care for them.

—Ivy Medow
Florence

WHAT 'NO-KILL' MEANS

With the recent controversy of Oregon Coast Humane Society (OCHS) euthanizing two reportedly treatable dogs in the past few months, and two board members recently resigning due to "no-kill" issues, it is obvious that we need to explore what "no-kill" really is.

A no-kill community is one that acts on the belief that every healthy, adoptable dog and healthy cat should be saved, and that its focus should be on saving as many lives as possible through comprehensive adoption programs, rescue partnerships, active volunteer programs, public relations/community involvement, functioning foster programs, spay/neuter programs, trap-neuter-return of feral cats, pet retention advocacy, medical and behavioral rehabilitation programs, a dedicated/capable/compassionate shelter director, and other community support programs rather than achieving a specific numerical outcome.

No-kill does not mean that shelters haven't reached no-kill; that their employees are willing killers; that dangerous or sick animals will be released into the community; or that shelters will start warehousing animals indefinitely.

This is why I believe OCHS is not a no-kill shelter. It warehouses animals, some for more than 10 years, meaning it lacks the basic foundations of the no-kill equation as stated above. It also euthanizes what are arguably adoptable animals. For example, Karma needed a leg amputation, but her medical records

state "because of age and disposition euthanized." This is not defined as no-kill if her long-term prognosis was good.

I'm certain Karma would never have been killed under Barb Hall's true no-kill leadership. Donors need to know that OCHS is no longer no-kill anymore.

—Julie McDonnell
Eugene

APOLOGIES FOR "HANOI JANE?"

In light of President Trump's recent endorsement of the Putin government's illicit invasion of U.S. elections, I believe that GOP voters and others who harbor hatred and condemnation of Jane Fonda for her 1972 visit to wartime Hanoi, owe her a heartfelt apology for their unrelenting traducement of her honor and reputation.

I vividly recall the visit when it occurred. While I was actively against the war and convinced of its fraudulent, unjust basis, I did not approve, and felt very uncomfortable about her visit to an active wartime foe of the USA.

I did not condemn her, as I believed she acted from conscience. But I personally felt that U.S. citizens should not give support to our nation's avowed and manifest enemies.

In the case of president Trump, no credible defense can be offered that he has given aid and support for a proven enemy of the U.S. from any cause other than personal vanity and venal self-interest. However, reams of evidence and terabytes of data have clearly demonstrated that military personnel of the Russian Federation under the direction of Vladimir Putin have attacked the U.S. with the aim of subverting our electoral processes.

And yet our president, despite the counsel of his own appointed intelligence chiefs and law enforcement leaders — along with all the information they command — has chosen to side with Putin and against those charged with the protection our nation and its vital interests.

This is unforgivable and decisively invalidating. Yet President Trump's supporters along with his lackeys in Congress persist in seconding him in this betrayal of U.S. security and sovereignty.

This too is unforgivable and arguably treasonous. I understand that there are grievances among the largely white, middle-aged demographic that makes up president Trump's "base."

But there are also grievances among the female, the young, the African-American, Latino, Asian and other elements of our great, diverse American citizenry. Grated, grievances alone are not a permissible pretext for treason.

Who knows? Perhaps the president himself has grievances over his lack of recognition, access to bank credit or other slights he believes he may have suffered in his travail through life.

These are immaterial, however. When he swore to "protect and defend the Constitution," he was required to set these aside. And there can be no excuse for him or his supporters in selling out our

national interests to the Russian Federation in what appears to be an attempt to vindicate a sense of injured self-pride.

So, at the very least, if the president and his supporters persist in their support of an avowed U.S. enemy, they at least owe an apology to Jane Fonda for her significantly less egregious offenses.

—Steven P. Bidlake
Reedsport

ROE VS. WADE A MASTERPIECE OF OBFUSCATION

Marybeth Marengo wrote an extremely engaging letter on our rights as individuals and a nation ("Rights Under Fire," July 14). All our rights come from a Divine Creator and I believe Marybeth is mixing up her desires and what is lawfully allowed by society's moral code.

For instance, she said, "women's rights are under direct attack" by taking away a "woman's right to choose" given under the Supreme Court decision known as Roe vs. Wade.

Is the choice legal and moral? If not, it is still a choice but not necessarily a good choice. If a man or a woman ingests drugs into their bloodstream it is generally illegal.

There is no right there.

Also, a woman or man cannot do anything they want with their bodies like drink, drive and have an accident or DUII.

Roe vs. Wade should be read by one and all and it would then be understood that Justice Blackmun and six other Justices on a 7-2 vote wrote a convoluted history on health by hospitals, Greeks, Persians, U.S. history, etc., having nothing to do with the abortion as it applies to constitutional jurisprudence.

Since there is no mention of this so-called right in the Constitution, it has been made up by nine lawyers in black robes. Roe is a masterpiece in obfuscation and a justice trying to be intellectually relevant without citing any constitutional certitude. The law clerks were astounded at the literary deals the justices were making as if they were a super legislature.

If or when Roe is ever overturned, each state legislature would decide "yea" or "nay" on woman's health.

No rights would be lost.

On the First Amendment freedom of the press and the president, he or she has every right to do to the media what the media does to the them.

It's about time that our presidents use their right to state bluntly what the press is doing. By the way, they have just as much constitutional rights as the pompous press. The First Amendment is not unlimited and certainly slander by the news is on the margins.

We have great constitutional rights. Let's learn and preserve them for as long as we and our posterity live. The Constitution is a formidable document that has — and will stand — the test of time for we the people.

1787 was a very good year.

—Joel Marks
Florence

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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.

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 partisan-ship 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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