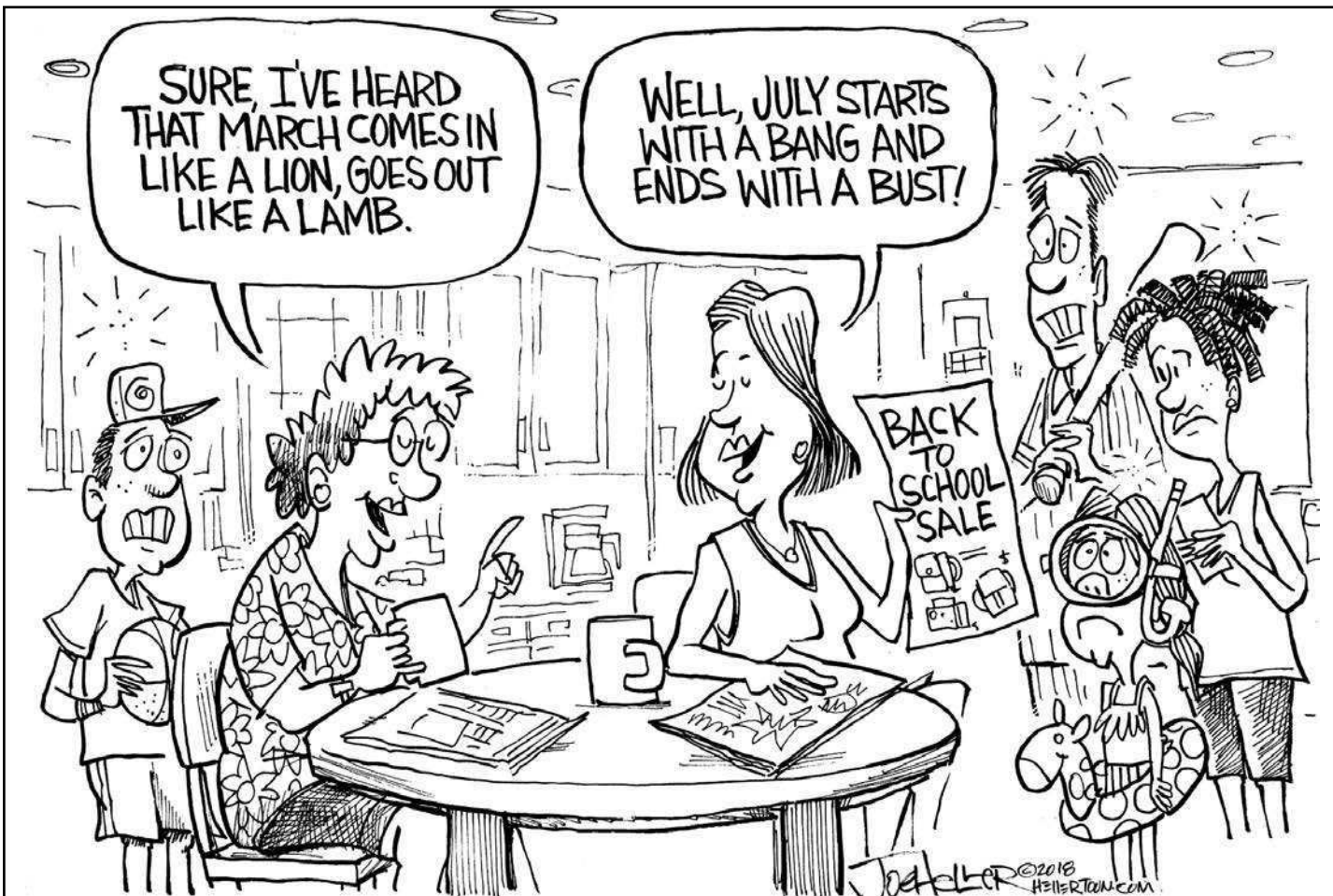


**Siuslaw News**  
P.O. Box 10  
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# Opinion

**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.

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



## LETTERS

### KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK

I am writing to thank you for the excellent "City of Florence, Oregon, 125 Years" supplement. As a relative newcomer to Florence, it was fascinating to read this historical year-by-year record and I especially liked the many pictures.

During my career, I have lived in more than 15 cities across six states and the Siuslaw News is definitely the best community newspaper I've found. The constant emphasis on all the good being accomplished by the citizens, civic organizations and churches is a very refreshing change from the negative content of so many newspapers today.

I especially appreciate the series of in-depth investigations on a variety of important community issues that frequently span several issues. Your coverage is always fair in presenting different approaches to the issues, and your editorials and Guest Viewpoints bring a good range of viewpoints to be considered.

Thanks to you and to all the writers. Also, thanks for the weekly "Kid Scoop" page. I frequently send copies to my own young relatives and to a social worker friend whose focus is on children. I'm sure all of the advertisers who support "Kid Scoop" are appreciated by a great many of Florence's kids, parents and teachers who enjoy and learn from the pages.

Keep up all the good work being accomplished for Florence by you and your staff.

With sincere appreciation,

—Ann Lathrop,  
Professor Emeritus  
California State University,  
Long Beach

### WOMEN'S RIGHTS CAN'T BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED

I read with impending dread Mr. Joel Marks letter regarding "Divine Creator"-given rights vs. women's rights (Roe Vs. Wade a Masterpiece of Obfuscation," July 28).

His words remind me that we women must guard our rights with every breath as they can — and would — be taken away by those who see themselves (usually men) as superior in decision making about women's issues.

It reminded me that, when I graduated from college, as a woman I was not allowed to get even a library card in my name. Then, five years later, after putting my husband through law school and eventually divorcing, he got all my credit and I was left with none — even though he did not work during those law school years.

Since Roe vs. Wade, I at least thought I have a right to privacy as well as a right to my own body. I see now that both of these rights are in jeopardy and might be taken away — not by due process but by disavowing those rights.

Many young women assume that

women's rights have always been there, and that we have always been able to make our own choices, whether legal, financial or health related.

Not so.

So take heed those of you who were not a part of that difficult struggle for freedom. Even though we have a secular constitution and Bill of Rights, there are many who want us to be ruled by religious teachings instead.

Is this the Christian version of Sharia Law? Mr. Marks' words would seem to imply that.

—Judy Kinsman  
Florence

### BLOCK PARTY HIGHLIGHTED WHAT OUR CITY IS ABOUT

The City of Florence Celebrated its 125th anniversary last Friday (July 27) with a rousing block party in Old Town. On behalf of the City, as well as personally, I want to thank all our sponsors who helped support this effort along with the Merchants of Old Town (MOOT) for its support.

To make it even better, the Oregon Mayor's Conference was in town during this event and it made me very proud to hear the applause and comments praising our celebration.

They were amazed at what our city is all about.

I would like to especially thank Erin Reynolds, our city manager, and her fine staff, who went above and beyond the call of duty in coordinating both events at the same time. It took a lot of hard work on the part of many people.

And in just two weeks, another great outdoor event is happening. On Aug. 7, the Florence Police Department is hosting a National Night Out Event at Miller Park from 6 to 9 p.m.

National Night Out is a community-police event held throughout the United States meant to increase awareness about police programs in communities, such as drug prevention, town watch, neighborhood watch and other anti-crime efforts.

This is going to be a lot of fun for everyone with free burgers and hot dogs.

Yours truly will be at the grill.

Come out and bring the family.

—Joe Henry, Mayor  
Florence

### COME SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT PARKS

Lane County Parks has been working with a community-led task force to update its Parks & Open Space Master Plan since 2016. As the coordinator of the Friends of Harbor Vista Park, I was appointed to the task force to represent the Coast District.

I invite you to attend a forum to discuss the draft plan this Thursday, Aug. 2, from 5:30 to 7 p.m., at the Siuslaw Valley Fire Station (2625 Highway 101). This

is one of six forums to be held throughout the county and will be conducted by county parks staff.

The newly released draft plan incorporates the feedback from community members last summer — as well as guidance from the community-led task force — to create a draft Parks & Open Space Master Plan that reflects the values and priorities Lane County residents have for their parks now and into the future.

Two community workshops were held on the coast in Florence and Mapleton. Both were well attended and provided valuable input unique to our community. Ultimately, the final plan will guide how Lane County maintains and invests in its parks for decades to come.

The draft plan is available online at [www.lanecounty.org/parksplan](http://www.lanecounty.org/parksplan), along with additional information about the scheduled forums and a brief comment form. Lane County's parks and open spaces are crucial to the community's economic vitality, quality of life and public health. They also provide an important legacy for future generations.

Join me in helping to create the best possible plan for our parks.

—Michael Allen,  
Task Force Member  
Florence

### CELEBRATING FLORENCE'S PAST IMPORTANT PART OF APPRECIATING FUTURE

Around this day, 125 years past, the town of Florence as we know it emerged. So the fair folk of Florence had a party Traffic was stopped on Bay Street to allow for the celebration as infants and the seasoned alike mingled to take part.

History was celebrated and future envisioned.

The abundant sounds, sights and flavors were refreshing from the heat and the free ice cream lent a helping hand. Inside an eatery, music from an old upright piano forced the capture of attention.

Rebecca was working the keys.

With expert and exact technique she delivered song after song from memory. That old piano, along with Rebecca's vintage, surprised most observers. Surprise quickly turned to inspiration when it's discovered that Rebecca is completely blind.

Sunset while the street was swept and celebration was neatly packed away for another day. It was then that the connection became apparent whether we choose to see it or not.

It's only through appreciative grasping of the past, along with careful inspiration from the present, that we'll find vision for the future.

—Scott Olson  
Portland, Ore.  
Frequent Florence visitor

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## Siuslaw News

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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:

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## 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 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.

Email letters to:

[nhickson@thesiuslawnews.com](mailto:nhickson@thesiuslawnews.com)

## WHERE TO WRITE

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