

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)



Finding common ground in defying hate

Except for a relative handful of what I suspect were trolls looking for a reaction, members of our small community made it loud and clear that racially motivated hate speech had no place in our community — or as one member of the local veterans group Band of Brothers put it: "Not in my town. I fought against that kind of bulls--t abroad. I'm not putting up with it here."

From the Editor's Desk
Ned Hickson

Within a few hours of being discovered by a passerby heading to work, members of the community mobilized, contacting local media as well as city and county officials to demand the vehicle be removed.

Some offered to remove the car themselves, for free, although the current fire restrictions would have eliminated that proposal. As we worked here in the newsroom, making phone calls and getting help

from the city and county to determine who had jurisdiction to remove the vehicle and tracking down the land owner, there was a tangible feeling of unification between the combined efforts of citizens working together to essentially say what the veteran from Band of Brothers had said:

Not in our town.
 I've have always been proud to call Florence my home, but never more so than I was this past week. It was a wonderful reminder that, regardless of the political terrain we stand on, there are some places where we can still find strong, common ground.

With seemingly so much of our focus on the things that divide us, it was inspiring to receive phone calls, emails and have community members stop in to voice their universal disgust with the racial epithet spray-painted on the abandoned vehicle north of town (see page 3A). The response wasn't just from the far right or far left, Republicans or Democrats, liberals or conservatives, Chevy or Ford owners.

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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 partisanism 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:
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LETTERS

BLESSED TO LIVE IN THIS COMMUNITY

What a wonderful National Night Out we had in Florence. Free food, free face painting, free rock painting — free fun for all ages. Good will was everywhere. Thank you to our great Florence Police Department, Florence Fire Department, the Coast Guard and the emergency workers. Also thanks to Jamie Gorder, who was the coordinator for this fine event, and to all of the Florence city workers and citizens who volunteered their time to make sure that all went well. Special thanks to Bill Prosser and our terrific Mayor Joe Henry, both of whom stood over hot barbecues turning out hamburgers and hot dogs for the duration. What a community we are blessed to live in. The smiles on the children's faces lit up the sky!

—Pamela Richardson
 Florence

NEW COUNTRY PROGRAM HELP SMOKERS QUIT

Citizens of Lane County should know about a wonderful program to help people quit smoking called "Freedom From Smoking." It is held at the PeaceHealth Hospital campus from one to three hours a week for eight weeks.

—Sally Hubert
 Florence

The instructor is Karl Logan, a very knowledgeable, non-judgmental and patient presenter who helps each participant customize their medical aids, life changes and quit date. Feel better, live longer and save lots of money by quitting smoking.

— Brian Rutter
 Florence
 (For information, email klogan@peacehealth.org)

SAND OF TIME WILL REVEAL TRUTH

Until now, I've had no previous desire to express myself in the public broadsheet because I realize my opine is merely a grain of sand on the beach head.

Nevertheless, my innate compulsion remains undeniable, so therefore I feel I must speak my peace.

Humans may attempt — and have temporarily succeeded in — deception, destruction, removal, re-writing and flat-out in-your-face denial of the reality of any universal truths. Regardless, the sands of time will just as undeniably reveal those truths, even if the sand becomes a sheet of glass.

Hope, faith in the truth, and love to all in this lovingly and wonderfully growing community we all call home.

USE DEMOCRACY OR LOSE IT

We are all multi-dimensional beings. I think you will understand when I say, "We live in at least two worlds simultaneously, the material one and the spiritual one."

That is, a preponderance of scientists agree that we have evolved our bodies up through the animal kingdom. And the majority of religions all tell us we are "quicken" with an eternal soul.

I always say, "If you really want to know someone, figure out what their animal is." Because some people's animals are way more predatory than others.

Civilization occurs when laws are enforced to remind people to keep their animal instincts under control.

It is my belief that most people have lost consciousness of these two inherent driving forces and, in so doing, have abdicated their own free will — thus control over their own lives.

The solution: Wake up, take back your power by exercising your right to vote. If you vote, we can make this country a democracy again.

If you don't, we won't. It's like my grandmother use to say, "Use it, or lose it."

—S. B. Starlight
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