

Opinion

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

WHAT EXACTLY IS AN ‘INDEPENDENT’ VOTE?

Sometime during the past week we received a flyer prepared from Art Robinson’s election committee, delivered by the USPS. Not being a supporter of Robinson in the past, I sat down to read his accusation that Peter DeFazio’s lawyers (Meek and Williams) have co-opted Oregon citizens who are registered “Independent” (as am I).

I thought “what an accusation?”

Our ballot arrived this past weekend, also per USPS. Lo and behold, the Independents are rolled into DeFazio’s vote.

As an Independent, I am disturbed by this and plan to take my time thinking about where to place my vote.

Whatever happened to “cogito ergo sum?”

—Elenor Sullivan
Florence

A QUESTION OF ETHICS

I have read the lengthy and informative article in The Siuslaw News headed “Chaos in the community” (Oct. 24)

I found it ironic and coincidental that both Councilor Lacer and Councilor Greene, who are each sitting councilors, found it convenient at virtually the same time to advise candidate Geraldine Lucio that maybe the City Councilor position was “not for her.”

Ms. Lucio was hardly known by councilors Lacer and Greene, according to them, yet they found it was essential that they advise her to withdraw. To me, this sounds like partisan politics and bullying. What happened to helping someone younger and less experienced become more efficient in any endeavor when we have the opportunity?

Additionally, voters have the right to cast a vote before the choice is edited for them.

My suggestion is to put this before the State of Oregon’s Ethics Committee and have them determine whether either Councilor Lacer’s email or Councilor Green’s “heart to heart” with candidate Lucio violated Oregon’s Anti Bullying Law.

—Pamela Richardson
Florence

HOW TO ACHIEVE BALANCE ON CITY COUNCIL

I am told that Florence has always been liberal leaning. I looked up some party affiliations and it is true that Ron Preisler, Joshua Greene and Maureen Miltenberger (current candidate) are all registered Democrats, and Joe Henry and Woody Woodbury (current candidate) are registered Republicans.

Only Geraldine Lucio is registered as a non-affiliated voter. I have observed her as truly non-partisan in actions and words as have so many of her friends and customers in Florence.

Only in the past year or so have polarizing topics been mentioned or proposed to the Florence City Council such as: Designate Florence as a Sanctuary City; a hate-free zone; a gun-free zone; support of the Mayors’ climate agreement; etc.

Let’s not fool ourselves that in these days there aren’t people on both sides pushing radical agendas.

So, the perfect balance would be Joe and Woody on the right, Ron and Joshua on the left and Geraldine in the middle.

I trust them all to vote for what is in the best interests of Florence.

—Sherry Harvey
Florence

I KNOW FLORENCE IS BETTER THAN THIS

I’m writing in support of Maureen Miltenberger who is running for a seat on the Florence City Council.



She has the experience to work in this position from day one and previously served on a city council in Canby, Ore.

She has been serving as Chairperson on the City of Florence Environmental Management and Advisory Committee (EMAC) and the Siuslaw Climate Alliance. She also organized the 2018 Earth Day Celebration in Old Town.

She is a volunteer tutor in Adult Basic Education at Lane Community College in Florence. She has not been campaigning in a partisan way and will not. The city council positions are non-partisan for a reason — so that people will do the work of the city they live in and work for the good of *all* citizens.

Maureen has made every effort to be available for town halls so people could meet her. Most have been cancelled because the other two candidates could not, or would not, participate. One town hall was at the Florence Elks, where she could not participate because she was asked to pay to enter; she had already spent the limit for her campaign (\$750) and could not legally spend any more.

Come on people, we are better than this.

Florence is better than this.

—Nancy Rickard
Florence

DISAPPROVE OF INTIMIDATION TACTICS IN ELECTION

We are in support of Geraldine Lucio for City Council. As stated by many, we are shocked and dismayed on how this non-partisan election has become political. In addition, we disapprove of the apparent intimidation tactics used by current council members encouraging her to drop out of the race.

I’ve never heard of one’s politics being a consideration in their election for city council. I think before people believe what they read about Geraldine, they should meet and talk with her directly.

It is shameful for her to be experiencing this sort of hostility when she should be applauded for caring to make a difference in her community.

She is a young, intelligent and successful business woman with a positive vision for our future. She is a good listener and able to calmly consider all sides before formulating her decisions.

We will be voting for her for the city council and allowing her to live up to the job for which she is capable.

—Leo and Christine Duwell
Florence

VERY DISAPPOINTING

The idea that two of the three candidates for Florence City Council chose not to participate in City Club’s

Open Forum is very disappointing. Neither Woody Woodbury nor Geraldine Lucio apparently thought it was important for the voting public to hear their views on any number of issues facing our city.

As voting citizens, are we not entitled to as much information as possible directly from the candidates themselves? The Open Forum is an example of direct democracy, something perfectly suited to our small coastal community. I certainly appreciated the opportunity to hear what candidate Maureen Miltenberger believes she can bring to our city council, but without the appearance of the other two candidates it will be very incomplete information when I fill out my ballot.

There are a plethora of road signs telling Florence voters whom they should vote for, but they provide nothing to help the voter who wants information and do much to lure the uninformed with advertisements that are meant to make one believe that more signage equals a more qualified candidate for city council.

The Siuslaw News has done its part as a neutral conduit for information about the candidates and election. But their reporting is not a substitute for the chance to hear from the candidates themselves and have them answer questions from the community.

Again, what a disappointment.

—Judith Preisler
Florence

LOOSE WITH THE TRUTH

I am a retired state worker and recent Florence transplant. I have been following the current city council election and am concerned about some of the claims made by Maureen Miltenberger.

People applying as candidates for city council sign a form, which states in part, “Supplying false information on this form may result in conviction of a felony with a fine of up to \$125,000 and/or prison for up to 5 years.” (ORS 260.715).

The application also states that, “All information provided by me on this form is true to the best of my knowledge.”

Yet on two occasions, Ms. Miltenberger signed this affidavit knowing there were at least two willful misrepresentations in her application.

She stated on her application that she served from 1991-1994 on the Canby City Council. Based on a *Seattle Times* article (Dec. 15, 1993), Ms. Miltenberger was recalled by the voters for failing to represent the interests of her constituents.

Ms. Miltenberger failed to disclose her recall on two separate applications for candidacy. I learned about the recall from her recent interview

on Coast Radio and did some inquiry after that.

Ms. Miltenberger also stated on two separate applications that part of her occupational background was as a social worker. During the radio interview, she stated that someone from the state told her it was ok to use the title “social worker” since she supervised social workers.

Surely she is well aware of the state law regarding this title: According to the department of social work for the state of Oregon, Ms. Miltenberger has never been licensed as a social worker in Oregon. The title “Social Worker” is protected under Oregon Rules and Statutes (ORS 675.520). In order to represent yourself as a “Social Worker,” you must be licensed, certified or registered with the Board as an LCSW, CSWA, LMSW or RBSW.

The application is available for all to see on the city website. Can the city of Florence really afford to elect someone who has shown she will not represent the interests of her constituents and has a history of misrepresentation and outright falsehood?

—Ruby Norris
Florence

WHO STANDS TO BENEFIT?

Thanks to the Siuslaw News for its informative article, “Chaos in the Community” (Oct. 24).

It seems to have been fairly written, and I look forward to reading the second part. I hope in the next segment that Siuslaw News will keep its promise to address, in-depth, the story behind the external funding coming in for Geraldine Lucio’s campaign, as mentioned in the article:

“Lucio has a strong conservative base, is financially backed by Republican donors and, as the Siuslaw News has found, is receiving help from a conservative campaign manager and treasurer — both of whom live and operate outside the Siuslaw region.”

The article also states that Lucio has a press agent.

Really? Doesn’t that seem a bit odd for a first-time candidate in a small-town election?

There are several assertions in the article that the two council members who spoke to Lucio did so because they were partisans, and there is also the implication that Maureen Miltenberger is running as a partisan candidate because she works with the local Democrats.

Yet there is no reference to Lucio’s association with Patriot Place, which appears to be a rather hyperpartisan group that I’ve heard (and perhaps can be verified or dispelled) is also funded — at least in part — by donations from outside our community.

All of this is very troubling, especially in light of known huge outside

donations coming to Republicans running in some of Oregon’s statewide and even national races.

We have to ask ourselves: Who stands to benefit from this outside interference in our elections?

Certainly not Oregonians.

—Vicki Dunaway
Florence

BE REALISTIC ABOUT SCHOOL NEEDS

I would like to address the school bond issue 20-291 that appears on the November ballot. We are being asked to fund construction and improvements to the school facilities in Florence in excess of over \$100 million.

I do not believe this request is realistic.

I agree that we need to support proper facilities, safety and sound curriculum for all children. However, the complete redevelopment of the school properties is unnecessary.

The school district needs to plan in terms of realistic needs rather than such extensive rebuilding at the expense of our community in exorbitant property taxes. Many of our families with children are low income. How will they stretch to pay more in taxes to support the suggested needs in this bond issue?

How will senior citizens support an inordinate increase in property taxes?

Then there are other needs for public funds like the fire district, library, ambulance, police, road repair, etc.

If we incur the tax increase for schools, how will the rest of our community needs be met when they arise? I am a retired school teacher. I know from past experience there are school district expenditures that can be curtailed.

Let’s be realistic about what needs to be done and what may be nice to have. Educating children goes way beyond having state-of-the-art facilities.

What happens in classrooms makes the difference in the long run.

I am going to vote wisely.

—Ada Fowler
Florence

OVER AGE 65 AND SUPPORTING SCHOOL BOND MEASURE

I, like many other seniors, have moved to Florence from out of the area. My own children are grown and live elsewhere. However, I still see the importance of supporting our local school district.

In fact, I am a member of the Florence Community PTA because I want to be part of making positive changes in our schools.

The PTA is endorsing the Siuslaw School Bond Measure 20-291. All of our schools need to be upgraded to make them seismically safe. With regards to building a new high school, it will actually cost \$3 million less to put a new high school than to remodel the current building.

There will also be a large savings in utility costs with energy-efficient systems. Larger classrooms and enhanced technology will support the 21st-century instruction and career education our students need to succeed in jobs and college.

Why do I think supporting schools is important? I know that educating children helps us all. Supporting schools is a sound investment in the future of our community. A vibrant school system attracts new businesses, as well as professionals.

The doctors we so badly need here certainly want good educational opportunities for their children.

Make a choice to make a difference. Please support the schools and vote “Yes” for the Siuslaw School bond. It will benefit all of us.

—Nora Kent
Florence