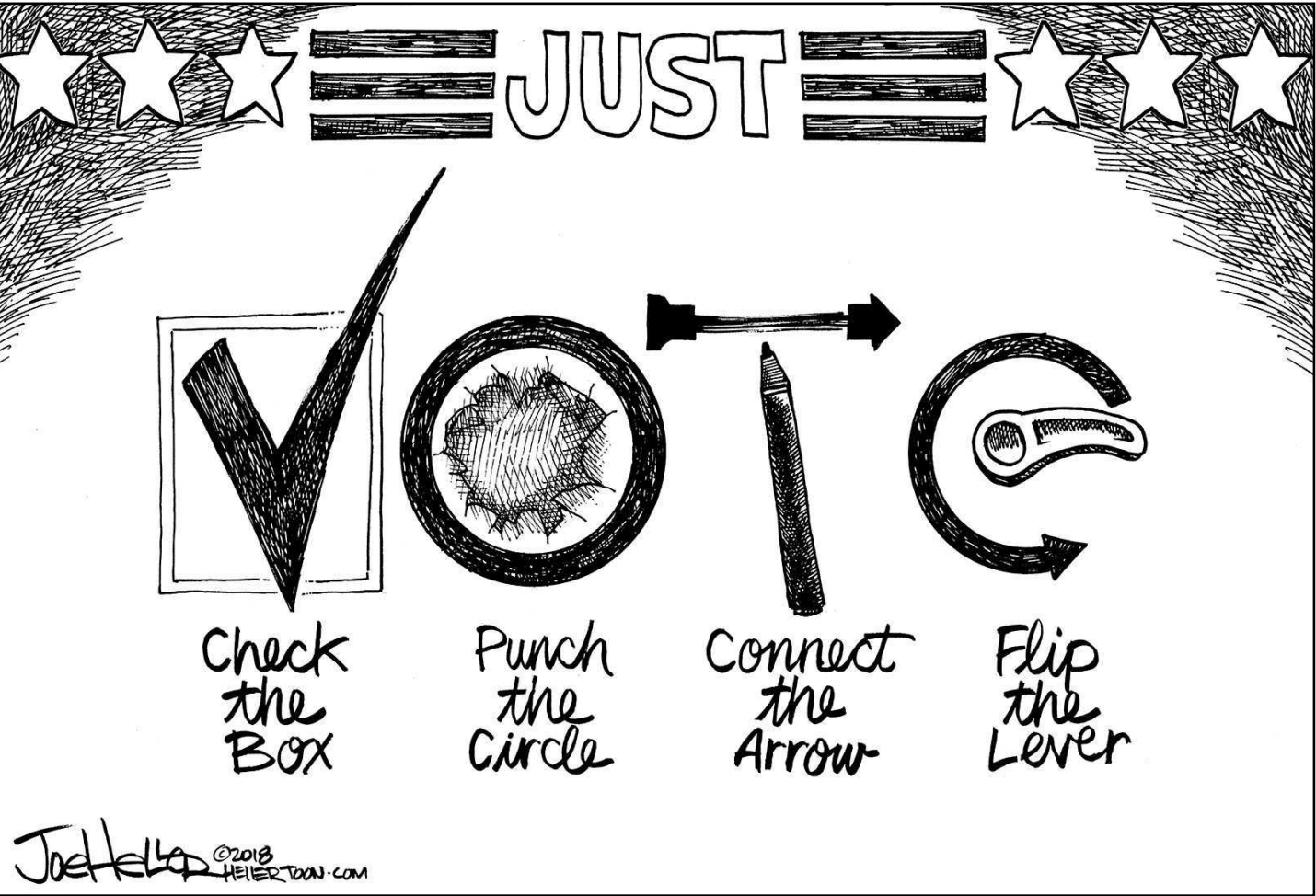


Siuslaw News
P.O. Box 10
Florence, OR 97439

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)



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Jenna Bartlett
Ned Hickson
Erik Chalhoub

Susan Gutierrez
Cathy Dietz
Ron Annis
Jeremy Gentry

Publisher, ext. 318
Editor, ext. 313
Consulting Editor 831-761-7353
echalhoub@register-pajaronian.com
Marketing Director, ext. 326
Office Supervisor, ext. 312
Production Supervisor
Press Manager

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Some final thoughts on the school bond

Outside of the time capsule that is Siuslaw High School, an educational and technological infrastructure within a globalized world has been developing at an exponential rate — and the current infrastructure at our high school is like trying to use a rotary phone in a digital network.

In all honesty, I have been on the fence about the school bond measure. I understand the concerns community members have over the enormous price

The .90 cents that is currently being paid on the 20-year middle school bond, which will expire this June — will *not* reduce \$2.72 down to \$1.82.

With the .90 cents property tax payers have already been paying, the new bond will “only” be felt as a *net increase* of \$1.82 over what property owners have already been paying.

That puts the *actual* cost at \$2.72 per \$1,000 of assessed value, or just under \$550 per year for a \$200,000 home.

owners. Also, the bond measure includes a 10 percent contingency in addition to the inflation costs already anticipated within the bond. Because of that, there’s a good chance the contingency won’t be needed — and property owners will see that 10 percent cut from their tax burden.

I certainly understand why some would choose to vote against this additional tax payment, regardless of the factors I’ve mentioned; more money is more money.

However, the core issues our aging school facilities face aren’t going to get better. In the meantime, as our community grows, so will the number of students graduating from Siuslaw High School with an education based on limitations rather than options.

When you add in factors such as structural concerns regarding seismic activity, and a lack of safety measures in the event of an active shooter situation, the notion of “going home again” seems less important than the idea of creating a home that is safe and productive one for future generations of our students.

From the Editor’s Desk

Ned Hickson

tag of this project.

In my mind, property owners regularly have to shoulder an unfair burden of cost for these types of projects — which is the subject for a future editorial.

That being said, I’d like to clarify a few things.

To begin with, the final cost of the bond will be \$2.72 per \$1,000 of assessed value. Period.

There seems to be some confusion on that, and a misunderstanding between the *net increase* and actual cost.

That is still a lot of money. That being said, bonds will be issued as needed for construction. Considering the first year to year-and-a-half will be dedicated primarily to planning, that means taxpayers should see little change until 2020.

Here are some things to consider. Given our current push for additional housing development, it stands to reason that more property owners will be able to share the tax burden — meaning smaller bond payments for individual property

LETTERS

ISN’T FLORENCE BETTER THAN THIS?

It’s unfortunate that the discussion surrounding Councilors Joshua Greene and Susy Lacer has been blown out of proportion in the community. I’ve known Joshua Greene for many years and have worked with Susy Lacer. They have both contributed enormous time and energy to serving the Florence community and care deeply about its growth. The hostility toward them is unwarranted. I believe their interest in communicating with a candidate who has been unwilling to enlighten the public about why she is running or how she envisions her role in the future of the city was motivated by caution and concern for the City of Florence and for the electoral process. If, as suggested, there are outside influences at play, this muddies the waters of what could be a good faith process. And more, the wanton attempts to pick apart the public service of Maureen Miltenberger, a woman who is native to Florence and has dedicated much of her life to working for the benefit of the

communities she has served, is also disturbing. Is Florence better than this, or are we going to be swept up in the divisiveness currently affecting the nation?

—Joanna Henderson
Florence

CAN’T HAVE PEOPLE TAXED OUT OF THEIR HOMES

After perusing my current property tax bill, I noticed that over half has already been allocated to education (schools). I decided to do the math on the proposed increase to \$2.72 per \$1,000 of assessed value and was aghast at an astounding \$1,000-per-year increase. For those of us living on fixed incomes, this is no small, paltry amount in my view. Going from .90 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value to \$2.72 per \$1,000 of assessed value is simply outrageous — and all of this for over 30 years. Oregon has now been rated sixth as the most taxed state in the union. No wonder people get taxed out of their homes.

With all the technology going on today, is this the only option we have for funding schools?

—Camille Nesbitt
Florence

WORK TO DO ON CONCEPT OF NOT LITTERING IN OUR TOWN

I have heard people talking about confronting strangers in traffic about trash being thrown out of the car and off the motorcycle. Yet it occurs to me, as I pass the high school almost daily along Oak Street and also along 27th Street, that we have work to do with our own community members on the concept of not littering. Food wrappers, cups, bags, clothing, school supplies and even the occasional syringe can be found with alarming regularity along this route. How can we foster community pride in them, so they will use trash containers at the school or in their homes, as most of us do?

—Ivy Meadow
Florence

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 partisanship 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

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PRES. DONALD TRUMP The White House 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW Washington, D.C. 20500 Comments: 202-456-1111 Switchboard: 202-456-1414 FAX: 202-456-2461 TTY/TDD Comments: 202-456-6213 www.whitehouse.gov	U.S. REP. PETER DEFAZIO (4TH DIST.) 2134 Rayburn HOB Washington, DC 20515 202-225-6416 541-269-2609 541-465-6732 www.defazio.house.gov
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U.S. SEN. JEFF MERKLEY 313 Hart Senate Office Bldg Washington, DC 20510 202-224-3753 FAX: 202-228-3997 541-465-6750 www.merkley.senate.gov	WEST LANE COUNTY COMMISSIONER JAY BOZIEVICH 125 E. Eighth St. Eugene, OR 97401 541-682-4203 FAX: 541-682-4616 Email: Jay.Bozievich@co.lane.or.us