Siuslaw News
P.O. Box 10
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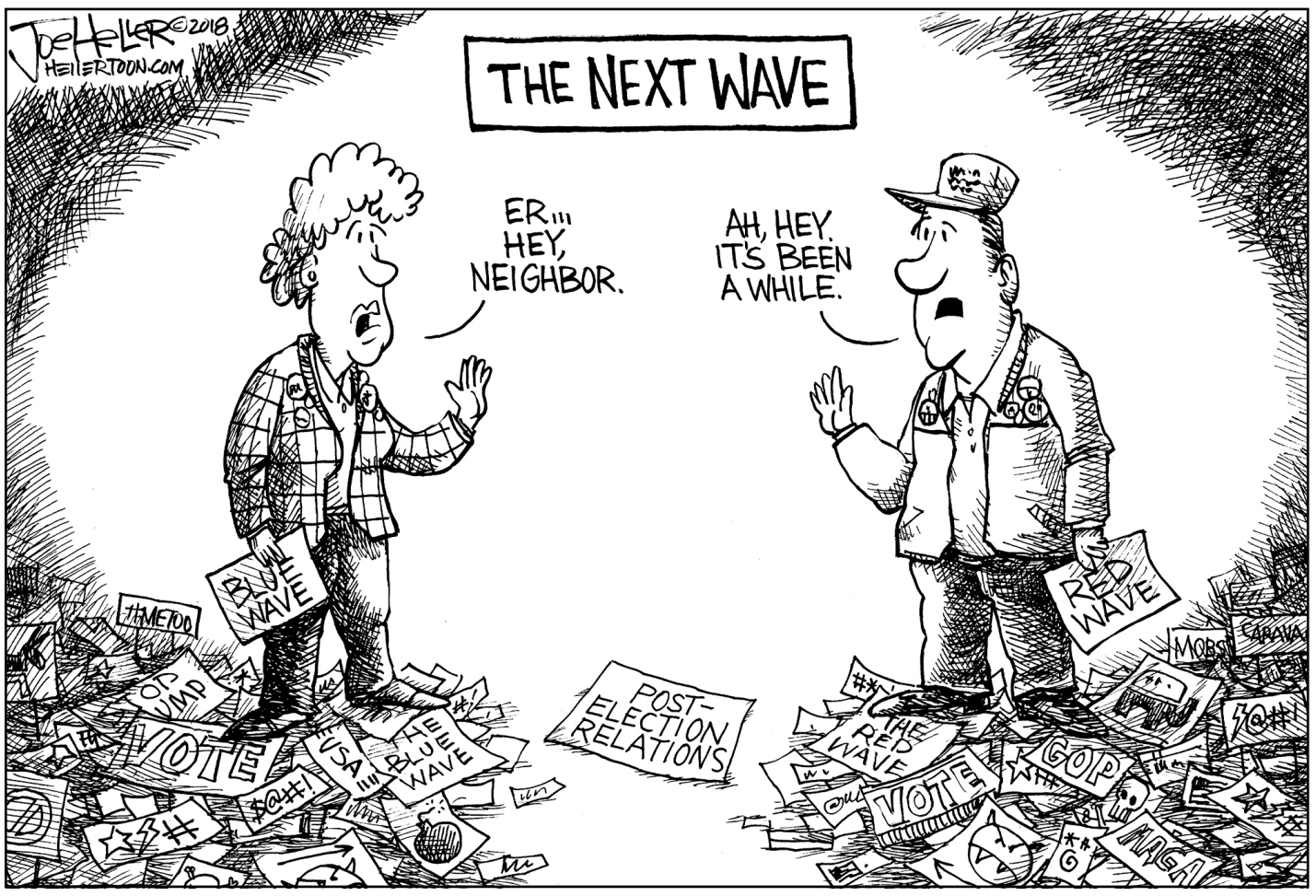
Opinion

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)*



We've voted. Now it's time to move forward together

From the editor's desk
Ned Hickson

There have been moments over the last several weeks where the thought of casting my vote for a candidate or measure left me shaking my head.

I've spoken with several people who have told me that the the political rhetoric from both sides has soured them to the point that they would not vote in the midterms.

I understand this.

However, I have always believed that our right to vote is not merely a privilege we enjoy as Americans; it is an obligation. Most years, it has simply been a privilege as I went to the voting booth or mailed in my ballot in support of candidates or measures for different reasons.

Sometimes it was because I connected with the ideals of one candidate over another. Other times it was because I felt their vision or the purpose behind a particular measure suited our changing world politically, economically or socially.

Over the years, I have voted for Democrats, Republicans and Independents.

I even voted for Ross Perot, whatever he was. (Hey, I was young...)

In each case, voting was a privilege I enjoyed because, no matter who won, I still felt our country or state would be in capable hands.

This time, I'm not so sure as the importance of partisanship seems to outweigh the needs of those elected to represent us.

For that reason, this time it wasn't about enjoying the privilege of voting as much as it is about accepting the obligation I have, as an American and Lane County resident, to educate myself and make an informed decision — not by relying on spoon-fed rhetoric, headlines, carefully staged interviews, rants on social media or even some of the news sources that claim to be unbiased.

I had to roll up my sleeves, dig in and do the work so that, come Election Day, I could do the *right* thing instead of the *easy* thing.

It still means I will have to accept — and live with — the results, no matter who is elected to which positions or what measures do or don't pass

But to *not* vote would mean compromising my own ideals as an American, as well as the expectation our forefathers had for each of us when they established our right to vote in a democracy protected by the Constitution.

As I said, there have been moments where the thought of casting my vote in this mid term election has left me shaking my head. But when the votes are finally tallied, regardless of the results, I support the end result and majority vote of my community members.

Not as a Democrat.

Not as Republican or Independent.

But as Florentine, Lane County resident, Oregonian and, most importantly, as an American.

Write to Ned Hickson at nhickson@thesiuslawnews.com

LETTERS

A hopeful return to civility

As I write this, I have no idea who will win in the mid-term elections. But I hope one thing: Civility returns at every political level, especially in our community.

I hope what happened recently in Florence with the politics of character destruction doesn't continue.

We at least can be better than that if we stop and consider the full impact of our words.

I was watching the news this morning, election day, and heard my favorite historian, Doris Kerns Goodwin, quote Franklin D. Roosevelt:

"Human kindness has never weakened the stamina or softened the fiber of a free people. A nation does not have to be cruel to be tough."

I just love that. I hope you do too.

—Judy Kinsman
Florence

Please drive safely in our neighborhood

I submitted a Letter to the Editor a few months ago regarding the speed limits on Munsel Lake Road.

The speed limit is 35 mph from Highway 101, and is 25 mph starting at Ocean Dunes Drive (Golf Course) and Munsel Lake Road. It continues through the residential area all the way to North Fork Road (approximately 1/4 mile).

We have had numerous people moving into our area from out of state who do not abide by our speed limit and often laugh at us residents trying to help slow them down. We get people flipping us off and who are just downright disrespectful.

The police have made somewhat of an effort to police the area but they, too, are busy. There are several neighbors who have put many hours into this fight for keeping our neighborhood safe, continuing to send letters to city and county works trying to get solutions.

I call businesses who drive our road at high speeds, using this road as a short cut, and try explaining to them that the speed limit is 25 mph.

Someone is going to get hurt or have a pet run over.

We had a battery operated digital speed sign for about three weeks. Just when we started seeing a difference, it was taken down and moved somewhere else in Lane County.

There has been support from ODOT and Florence Public Works, but nothing permanent yet. So please use common sense and abide by the speed limit through our neighborhood.

We just want awareness of the speed limit and respect for our neighbors to keep them, their children and pets safe.

—Pamela Fox
Florence

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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 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.

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Washington, D.C. 20500
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Switchboard: 202-456-1414
FAX: 202-456-2461
TTY/TDD Comments: 202-456-6213
www.whitehouse.gov

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown
160 State Capitol
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