

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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Siuslaw News

Published every Wednesday and Saturday at 148 Maple St. in Florence, Lane County, Oregon. A member of the National Newspaper Association and Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association. Periodicals postage paid at Florence, Ore. Postmaster, send address changes to: Siuslaw News, P.O. Box 10, Florence, OR 97439; phone 541-997-3441; fax 541-997-7979. All press releases may be sent to PressReleases@TheSiuslawNews.com.

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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; 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; Display classified ads, Wednesday 5 p.m. Soundings, Tuesday 5 p.m.

NEWSPAPER SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

In Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$76; 6-month in-county, \$52; 10-week subscription, \$23; Out of Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$99; 6-month out-of-county, \$65; 10-week subscription, \$29; Out of State — 1-year subscription, \$125; E-Edition Online Only (Anywhere) — 1-year subscription, \$65.

Mail subscription includes E-Edition.
Website and E-Edition: TheSiuslawNews.com

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

LETTERS

CALL TO ACTION

I strongly condemn Mayor Henry's partisanship and make an ardent call to action.

In the past, progressive issues brought to Mayor Henry for consideration by the City Council, such as sanctuary city status, gun violence prevention, climate change and support for educational upgrades, were

sharply rebuffed and in some cases demeaned by the mayor.

You can counter the mayor's blockade by going directly to the council and presenting your issue during public input period available at each meeting.

Requests to address the City Council can be made online or by downloading a speaker's card that can be presented at the meeting (preferred).

Speaker's cards will also be available at the meeting.

Check the City calendar for meeting dates and times. Meetings are generally every first and third Monday of the month at 5:30 p.m.

It's time to bring your issues directly to the council in a public forum.

That is democracy in action.

—Michael Allen
Florence

Clarifying the purpose of Florence Organizes (FOR)

(Editor's Note: Viewpoint submissions on this and other topics are always welcome as part of our goal to encourage community discussion and exchange of perspectives.)

Florence Organizes grew out of the Women's March in 2017 to create a positive movement of self-determination, dignity and respect. We have grown into a group with four central teams including Environmental, Human Rights, Health Care and Education.

These teams identify local and national issues as well as community needs and work to address them through education and direct action. For the most part, we have not directly supported candidates rather than being FOR women in politics who share its values.

In our first year, the Environmental Team began its work with Oregon Wild in presenting writing workshops to teach effective means of communicating with legislators and state officials for the protection of wolves, the Elliot Forest, Jordan Cove and similar environmental issues. They also implemented a program that works alongside SOLVE and records plastic garbage brands, sends that data to corporations such as Coca Cola to encourage them to reduce plastic waste.

In addition, the team has joined in sponsoring several functions such as the Forests & Waters program in

Yachats and the Earth Day Celebration earlier this year.

The FOR Education Team's first project was with the PTA and Band of Brothers to sponsor a drive for the school's emergency food and supplies program at the 2017 Power of Florence. They also worked with the PTA and other community members

GUEST VIEWPOINT

By FOR members:

Priscilla Washington, human rights

Leonora Kent, education

Judy Kinsman, environment

Patricia Burke, healthcare

to pass the recent option levy and are currently working on the school bond.

They joined with the Human Rights Team to create a fundraiser for local DACA kids to raise the required filing fee for the paperwork that allows them to retain their legal status.

The Human Rights Team also sponsored the "Gift of our Wounds" program at the Presbyterian Church this past August. Former Skinhead, Arno Michaelis, and son of the Sikh leader killed in the temple attack in Wisconsin, Pardeep Kaleka, spent an afternoon with over a hundred Florencians sharing their story of healing through love.

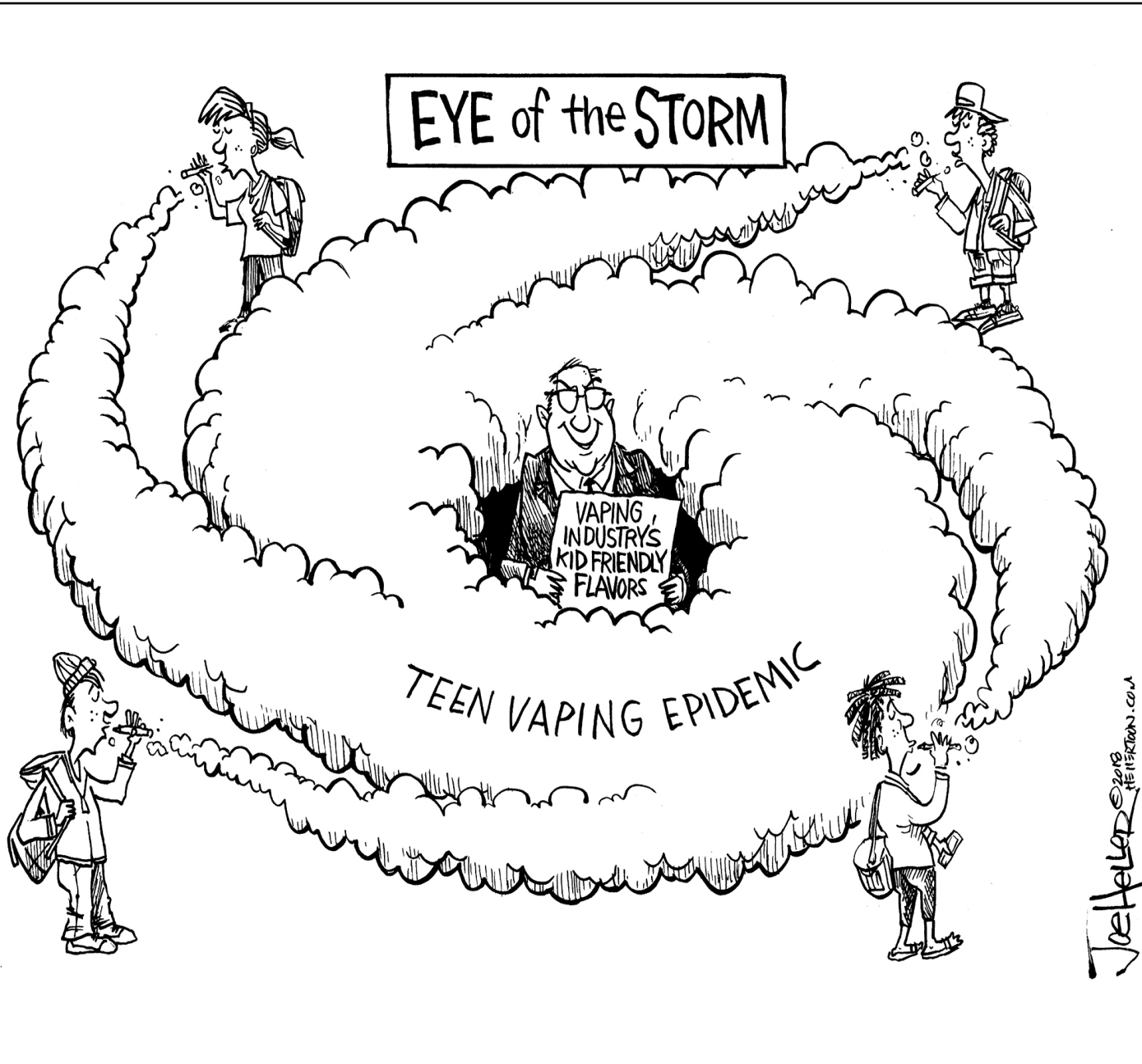
The Human Rights Team is currently connected to the Florence

Oregon Housing Coalition to find creative solutions to build workforce housing and encourage the development of Accessory Dwelling Units. Some members are also members of the First Step Transitional program and Florence Warming Center.

The Health Care Team joined the effort to educate the community regarding Measure 101 in January of 2018, which resulted in approximately 60 percent of the community voting "yes." The Health Care Team has also been instrumental in revitalizing the Florence Chapter of Health Care For All Oregon, which promotes the creation of a public plan for health coverage for all Oregonians, as well as protecting our existing health care services when threatened through legislation or ballot measures.

As other situations have arisen, such as China's rejection of most recycled plastics, FOR members have joined with other community members to create new entities to address needs. Precious Plastics, Master Recyclers, and FOR members have recently completed our first plastics round-up with great success.

FOR members also collaborated in the creation of the Siuslaw Climate Alliance, which will soon embark on a monthly forum to educate citizens on the local impact of climate change.



WHERE TO WRITE

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