

**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

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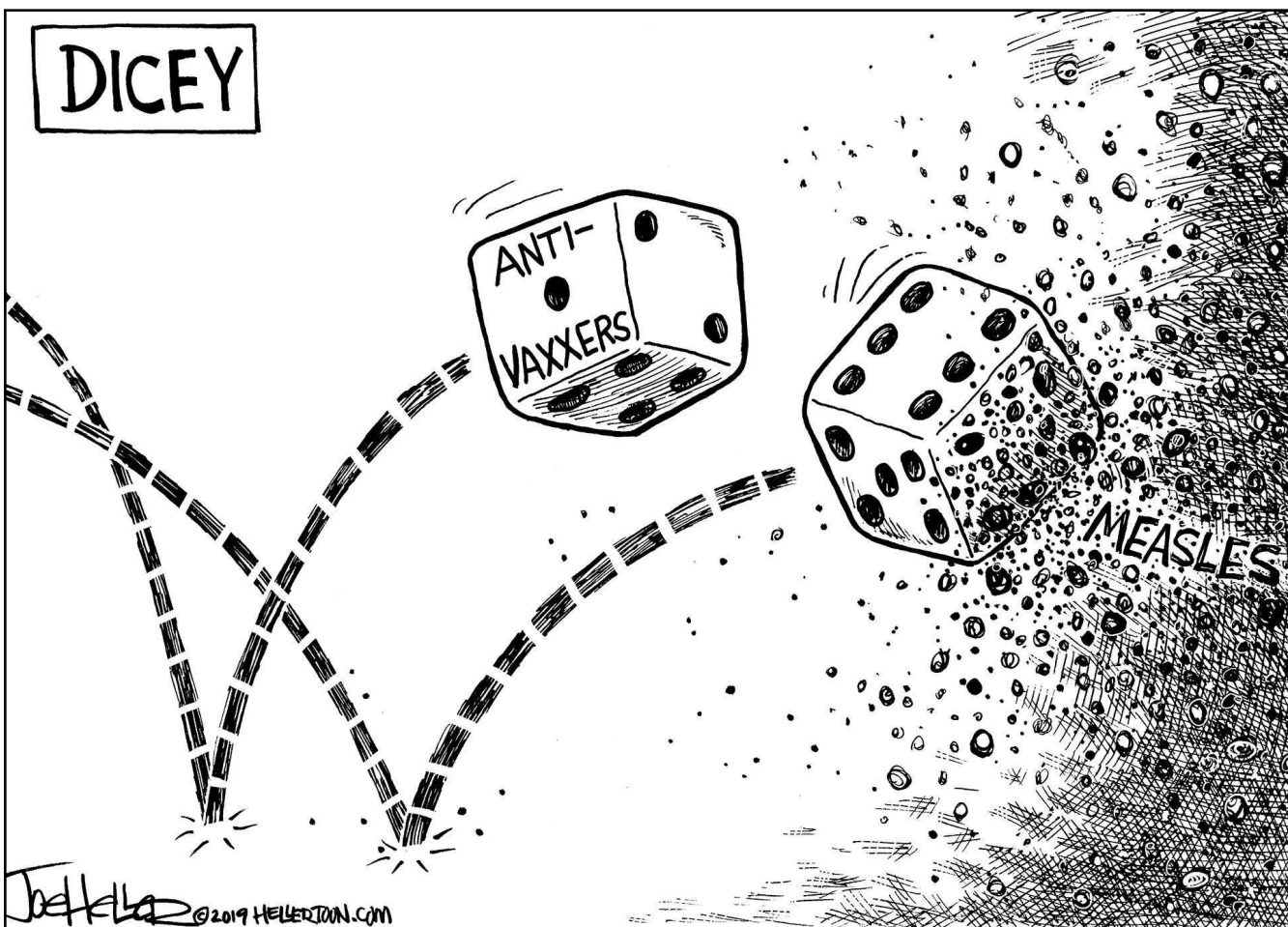
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## LETTERS

### THANK YOU FOR THE TOWN OF PARADISE

On Nov. 8, 2018, the Town of Paradise, Calif., was devastated by the Camp Fire. As we came together to mourn the losses of our homes, businesses and loved ones, we found ourselves embraced by individuals, communities and organizations from far and wide.

As a community, we are immensely appreciative of these efforts. As individuals, we are moved and deeply humbled by the outpouring of support for our town and its people.

Paradise is strong and resilient, and we know that we have the power to overcome the challenges presented to us through this unfortunate disaster. Knowing that we are not alone and that there are so many outside the Town of Paradise who are willing to offer assistance and support through donations, gifts, contributions of resources and more, gives us encouragement and will help us provide for the needs of our community as we work together to recover and rebuild our beautiful Paradise.

On behalf of the entire community of Paradise, we, the Council of the Town of Paradise, wish to express our sincere and heartfelt gratitude for your support.

—Jody Jones, Mayor  
Steve Crowder, Council member  
Mike Zuccolillo, Council member  
Greg Bolin, Vice-Mayor  
Melissa Schuster, Council member

### WHAT WAS THE SCHOOL BOARD THINKING WITH ITS BOND?

To the youngster who asked in a previous editorial about why the city hall gets a new building but not the school district, there are two simple reasons in my opinion:

- 1) \$108 million vs. \$2.5 million, and
- 2) The city hall building budget was approved by fewer than 10 councilors while the school bond had to be approved by several thousand voting citizens.

What was the school board thinking when the results came in from the original voting several years ago and many millions of dollars less, and was shot down by a slim margin? Were they thinking that it was so close they could then ask for \$400 million instead?

And what else could have been done with the money that was spent for architectural drawings for both proposed bond issues?

Architects don't work for free, even if a building does not get built. How much were those two services?

—Dana Rodet  
Florence

### TIME IS RUNNING OUT FOR MAPLETON FIREWORKS

It is getting close to the communi-

ty deadline for fireworks in Mapleton. We only have until March 1.

We've had many people donate but we are still lacking a bit.

Thanks to everyone who has already contributed to this fun "cause." It's a great way to get together and celebrate as a community. Anyone who would like to donate can do so at Banner Bank in Mapleton.

It will be our last chance to get this going again, so if you enjoy our community fireworks, please think about being part of this.

—Linda Jensen  
Mapleton

### SELF-GOVERNMENT RIGHTS ARE WORTH FIGHTING FOR

It is no wonder that Judge Chanti rendered a judgement against OCOR (Our Community Our Rights) on the initiative "Rights of Local Community Self-Government." The guys in the \$1,500 suits were there arguing the case for industry. The same type of corporate lawyers were there representing the railroads back in the 1860s, when the 14th amendment was made law.

Back then, the railroad's cadre of lawyers argued that the amendment's second reference to the term "persons" applied to corporations.

Fast forward to 2010 where they successfully argued before the supreme court for "Citizen's United," declaring that corporations are people.

There is fertilized ground for corporate hegemony. The system constructed over time is not broken.

For the guys in the \$1,500 suits and their clients, it is a finely tuned and fully functioning machine.

Regardless, the great ideal of democracy and the consent of the governed is worth fighting for and must be founded.

—Richard Gross  
Deadwood

### NEW CITY HALL REFLECTS COMMUNITY PRIDE

The continuing written attacks on the expansion and aesthetic improvements to City Hall are tedious, divisive, irresponsible and uninformed.

For example, the most recent tirade on the subject bordered on the ridiculous. The relatively modest amount spent on the project was a bargain. Diverted to some other purpose, the funds used would not put a dent in the budgets required to complete the projects these detractors pose as better alternative uses.

Yes, straight lines are cheaper to build. That's why every city in the country is filled with ugly, monotonous boxes, including their new city halls.

Every citizen of Florence should be celebrating the new look and functionality of our city hall building.

Municipal buildings have historically made a statement about the kind of community for which they stood. Our renovated city hall does — and should — do just that. The pride we have in our city is embodied in this building.

That pride should be shared and cherished by every resident of Florence. Our namesake city in Italy is a jewel box of long functioning public buildings in which aesthetics were just as important as function.

The people who decry the use of public funds for well-designed government buildings are out of step with history and human desire for beauty. It would have been a real shame if a contractor had won out over the architect, with his low bid, and built a square Jefferson Monument or left the Capitol with a flat top.

Public buildings are by their nature symbols of public pride. They command respect for those they represent and those who conduct affairs in them.

Our City Hall should be and is no less for us.

—Fred Miller  
Florence

### MORE CHOICES NEEDED FOR DEATH WITH DIGNITY

I am a retired California educator now happily settled in Florence and glad to be under the umbrella of Oregon's very progressive "Death with Dignity" law.

I recently completed an Advance Directive form including instructions that I choose to end my own life when I am no longer able to recognize my loved ones or to take care of my own bodily functions.

I have had friends and relatives in memory care facilities, and I do not ever want to live in such a helpless condition.

To my dismay, my doctor told me the Advance Directive was valid *only for physical disabilities*, and only then if doctors would certify that I had *six months or less to live*.

I was in despair until I met Bruce Yelle of Florence, chair of the End Choices organization.

The goal of End Choices is to "expand end-of-life choices in Oregon." They are working to raise public awareness and support for a new Oregon law that allows an individual to specify conditions of mental disability that would be intolerable — and therefore a reason to legally end a life that is no longer felt to be worth living by an individual.

If this is important to you, I encourage you to learn more about the limitations of existing laws and support End Choices' efforts to expand the current limitations within the existing Death with Dignity laws.

We need to get this done.

—Ann Lathrop, Ph.D  
Florence

## WHERE TO WRITE

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