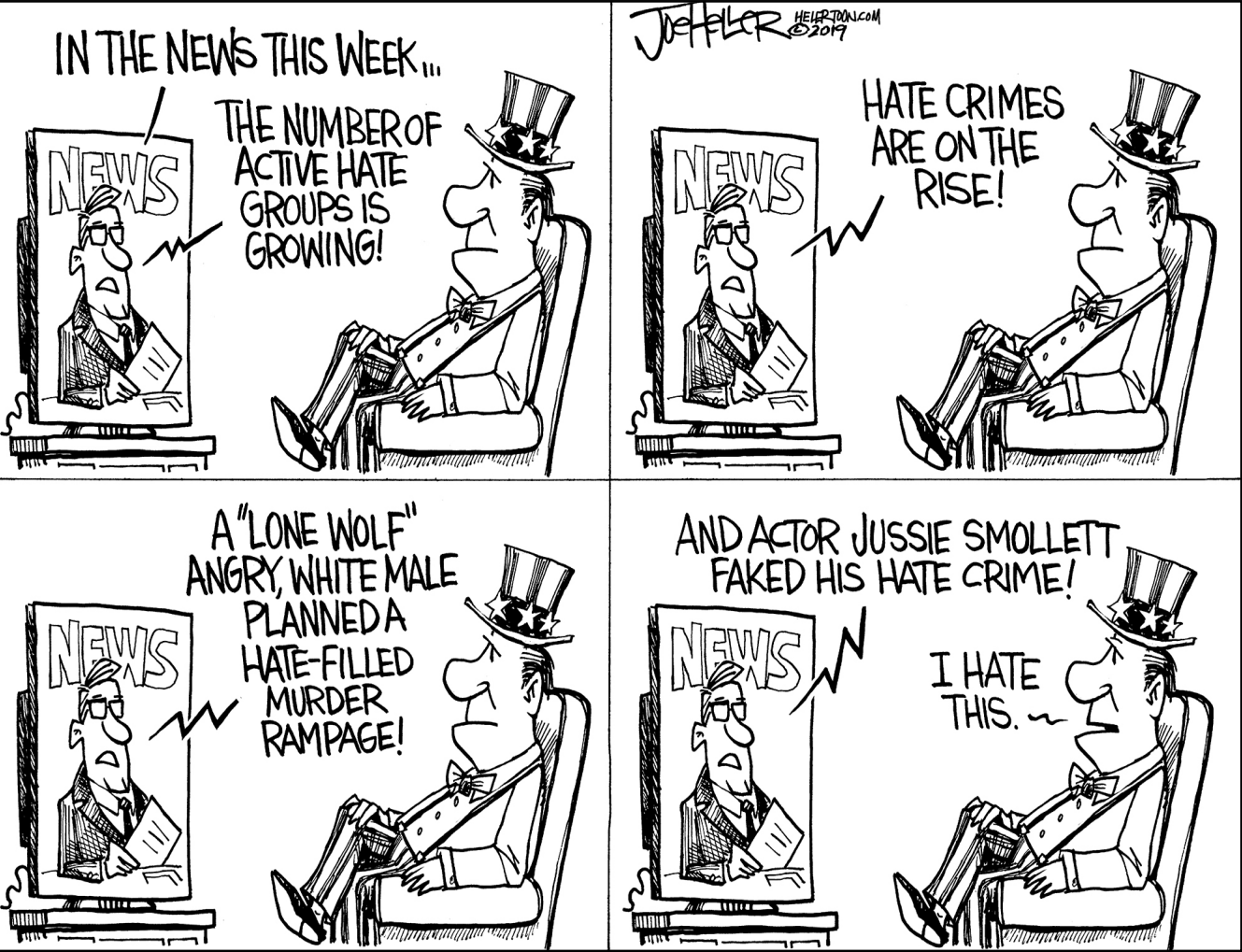


Siuslaw News
P.O. Box 10
Florence, OR 97439

Opinion

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



LETTERS

CLARIFICATION ON NEW CITY HALL, PUBLIC WORKS COSTS

There have been a number of confused letters and verbal comments on the cost of the new City Hall and Public Works buildings. Hopefully this will clarify what was proposed and budgeted for.

Our architect first came back with an estimate of between \$6.5 to 7 million for the Public Works buildings. City staff and council worked with him repeatedly to bring the cost down to the *budgeted* amount \$3.5 million.

The architect for the City Hall building proposed \$6 million for new construction or \$1.9 million for remodeling. We selected and *budgeted* \$1.9 million for the remodeling.

Later on in the process, the architect came back with a \$3.1 million cost — over a 50 percent increase. We had the architect back in another work session or council meeting (not sure which) and we were looking for ways to decrease the cost.

That process was cut short, unfortunately, and we had to add *that* cost to another bond issue — having to pay a higher bond rate as well.

Yes, we have a great number of people who love the “look.” We also have a large number of people who think it was too expensive.

Regardless, the layout will provide a safer environment and increased productivity as well as providing much needed upgrades for our IT department and staff.

—Ron Preisler
Florence City Councilor

CAN’T HOUSE OUR WORKFORCE

I am responding to an article that appeared in the Saturday, Feb. 16, edition of the *Siuslaw News* (“Florence Food Share names Monks Interim Director”).

The article introduces Ed Monks as the new interim director. First, I’d like to welcome him to the wonderful community of Florence. I would also like to disa-buse Mr. Monks of his impression “that a greater percentage of the low-income population in Florence is at least housed.”

Eugene has a population of over 160,000, which I believe does not include University of Oregon enrollment (somewhere around 30,000.)

Florence’s population is around 9,000. That would indicate that Eugene has more than 20 times the population of Florence. Mr. Monks needs to understand that the Flor-

ence area is suffering a housing *crisis*.

I suspect percentage-wise that Florence’s “unhoused” is much higher than Eugene’s. Our crisis is not one of just the typical “homeless” folks that he might see at Food Share; we cannot house our workforce.

Couples, retirees, single-parent families that are working and don’t qualify for food assistance or are too proud to accept it. Given the average hourly wage in Florence, rental rates are beyond the reach of workers.

Remember: Florence is a tourist town. That means that workers whose jobs cater to the tourist trade are lucky to work nine months a year. Too many workers and retirees are living in their cars, vans, campers and old motorhomes.

I don’t mean to contradict Mr. Monks, only to inform him.

—Eric D. Hauptman
Heart of the Coast Housing Alliance
Florence

GOVERNOR SHOULD LET OREGON BE OREGON

Governor Brown should immediately cease and desist from the lawsuit joined by 15 other states concerning the emergency measure taken by our Chief Executive.

The emergency is the porous nature of our southern border. As a sanctuary state, Oregonians are keenly aware that we need *more* protection from undocumented workers or illegal migrants — not less.

I take umbrage that I am coerced to pay taxes for a lawsuit concerning federal jurisdiction of the executive and legislative branches. Could not Oregonians benefit by money being spent in Oregon instead of for attorneys? Our national sovereignty is very important, but lets let Washington handle that responsibility, not Oregon.

The U.S. Constitution calls for immigration issues to be authorized by articles one and two, not the 10th Amendment.

Governor Brown has taxing and spending challenges, particularly with PERS deficits to deal with locally. Emergency monies have been called on from the executive branch 56 times since the 1974 statute, and since then we have never heard a whisper concerning lawsuits and unconstitutionality until now.

Let’s let Oregon be Oregon and stay out of DC. Our financial house has many unfunded liabilities, not

unlike Congress. However, lets take the beam out of our eye first before we put a lawyer in Washington’s eye.

God bless America.
—Joel Marks
Florence

“WORK” IS KEY WORD IN HELPING END HOMELESSNESS

I’ve been following the *Siuslaw News* articles on homeless people. I see them on our street corners with signs all the time. I noticed in a recent article a line that caught my eye:

“One of the major problems facing those who work to alleviate the issue of homelessness is finding exact numbers.”

That is the key word: “Work.”

If you spend the taxpayers’ money to do these surveys, why don’t they find and put to work these people who have no homes? I worked hard all my life, often at jobs I didn’t like — but I liked getting a paycheck.

It is so nice of our community to have churches that feed the homeless and give them rides to warm places during cold weather. But why don’t they put them to work cleaning the church and church grounds, or doing dishes for the food they eat?

I truly feel for all these people, but America is a great country with all kinds of opportunities to get someplace in life. My dad was a coal miner and I was a coal miner’s daughter who grew up in a coal-mining town. I believe I know what hard work was for my family and none of us grew up to be homeless.

It’s a thing called “pride.”
—Bea Vanderpool
Florence

CITY HALL SOMETHING WE CAN ALL TAKE PRIDE IN

Forget about past complaints of cost and design. The grand reopening of City Hall on Feb. 19 was absolutely fantastic.

I wasn’t expecting it, but I sensed an excited and prideful posture in all of the staff members as they eagerly showed off their new modern surroundings, computers and office equipment to the public.

This has to be a huge morale and efficiency boost for them, from which we will also benefit from and can take pride in.

Congratulations Florence and all its city staff.

—Bill Craig
Florence

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.

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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.

Jenna Bartlett
Ned Hickson
Susan Gutierrez
Cathy Dietz
Ron Annis
Jeremy Gentry

Publisher, ext. 318
Editor, ext. 313
Marketing Director, ext. 326
Office Supervisor, ext. 312
Production Supervisor
Press Manager

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.
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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.

Email letters to:
nhickson@thesiuslawnews.com

WHERE TO WRITE

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

OREGON GOV. KATE BROWN
160 State Capitol
900 Court St.
Salem, Ore. 97301-4047
Governor's Citizens' Rep. Message Line: 503-378-4582
www.oregon.gov/gov

U.S. SEN. RON WYDEN
221 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20510
202-224-5244
541-431-0229
www.wyden.senate.gov

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

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

STATE SEN. ARNIE ROBLAN (DIST. 5)
900 Court St. NE - S-417
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1705
FAX: 503-986-1080
Email: Sen.ArnieRoblan@oregonlegislature.gov

STATE REP. CADDY MCKEOWN (DIST. 9)
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1409
Email: rep.caddymckeown@oregonlegislature.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