

**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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**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that are anonymous, libelous, argumentative, sarcastic or contain accusations that are unsourced or documented will not be published.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](mailto:nhickson@thesiuslawnews.com)

## What is Multiple Sclerosis and 'MS fatigue?'

**(Editor's Note: March is National Multiple Sclerosis Awareness month, with March 10-16 designated as National Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week)**

During our latest Multiple Sclerosis (MS) support group meeting, one member, Sue, described MS fatigue. Before I share with you her description, I will give you the short version of what MS is.

Your body is regulated by your central nervous system (CNS). The CNS is made of the brain and spinal cord. Sensory nerves travel to your brain. What you see, hear, feel, smell and touch use the CNS. Once a sensory nerve signal reaches the brain a response via a motor nerve is activated.

For example: If you touch a hot stove, the sensory nerve ending in your finger sends a message to the brain. The brain analyzes the input and responds with a message through the motor nerves and you move your finger.

The nerves are protected with a myelin sheath similar to the insulation on electric extension cords. MS is an auto immune disease, which means it is caused by our own immune system. MS attacks the myelin coverings of the nerves. This causes scars often referred to

as "lesions." Nerves affected by these scars make communication to and from the brain disjointed or not at all.

**GUEST VIEWPOINT**  
 By Lloyd Little  
 Florence resident

If your extension cord gets damaged you can buy a new one; if our nerves get damaged, they are ineffective transfers of information.

Sue describes MS fatigue, one of the most common conditions of MS, as "Our brains steering messages around pot holes in our brains." When the area of the brain responsible for reading has lesions, or potholes, the brain will work harder to interpret the words on the page. This extra brain activity requires more energy and is tiring.

My fatigue theory is related to the shortage of muscle stimulation by motor nerves. You and I have an equal number of muscle fibers. Each muscle in our legs has many nerve stimulating junctions to contract muscles for movement. When you walk, 100 percent of the muscle needed to walk is engaged through nerve stimulation.

Lesions in the brain of a person with MS may disrupt the cycle. If only 50 percent of the muscles get

stimulated, the MS person will need to work harder and tire sooner.

If all five of your sensory nerve endings are affected, imagine how difficult and tiring it is to find the right pathway for the seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching we do every day.

A person with MS has no visible sign of disability. The scars and lesions I have described are located on nerves. Accident victims and soldiers using handicapped parking spaces usually have their disability recognized.

According to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, MS is the most widespread neurological condition disabling adults.

Even if there are no outward signs of disability, the MS fatigue can make daily life challenging.

If you are someone with MS in the Siuslaw Region, the Florence Self-Help Group meets the second Friday of each month, beginning at 1 p.m., at the Florence Senior Center, 1570 Kingwood Street.

For more information, contact me at [Lloyd.f.little@gmail.com](mailto:Lloyd.f.little@gmail.com) or the Oregon Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society at 1-800-344-4867.



**WHERE TO WRITE**

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