

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)



While reading about the college scandal involving payments by dozens of wealthy parents to William Rick Singer to assure their children's acceptance into the upper echelons of higher education, I had to shake my head once again at the need to overhaul our college educational system and its dependency on rising tuition and high profiles.

As parents, my wife and I have been very honest with kids about the level of financial support they can expect from us for college. To do this, I used my annual donation to our local public broadcasting station as an example.

“You know how they have different levels of supporters? And how the more money you contribute, the nicer the gift they send you as a show of their appreciation for your support — like a T-shirt or really nice backpack, or if you're a gold-level member an entire season of your favorite PBS show in a special limited-edition boxed set on Blu-Ray?”

Our kids nodded.

“As a gift, we received a refrigerator magnet for a show

Are rising costs, scandals devaluing college degrees?

that was canceled three years ago.”

Blank stares from our kids.

I explained that the only free-ride scholarship we could provide will have already been spent on food and their unlimited texting and data plans.

My wife and I have attended very helpful scholarship fairs where local community organizations provided information about the many scholarships available. In addition, we've attended work-

ter much consideration and analysis, including a mathematical formula involving median income combined with cost projections, annual inflation predictions and an old abacus I found at a garage sale, I was able to determine what I believe is the biggest financial challenge facing students and their families when it comes to continuing their education beyond high school:

Colleges cost too much.

In fact, if I didn't know

\$9,410.

Which, by the way, is still \$9,310 more than we'll have saved up for our youngest daughter's college fund.

I should probably point out that I did not attend college and never acquired a degree. That said, it's not that I'm advocating *against* receiving a college education. I'm just saying that ultimately, with or without a degree, what matters most is a drive to succeed and willingness to work hard for it.

No degree can guarantee success over an individual's desire to be successful.

Do I want my doctor to have a medical degree?

You bet.

Should a lawyer be required to have a law degree?

Certainly.

Would I be ok with a doctor without a medical degree operating on the average lawyer?

Most likely.

The question is whether the rising cost of higher education — coupled with the revelation that those wealthy enough to do so can buy their child's way into a prestigious college through acts of fraud — are devaluing those degrees and our system of higher education as a whole?

Especially when compared to what can be achieved with a high degree of dedication and hard work instead — And the freedom to pursue your life's passions debt free.

From the Editor's Desk

Ned Hickson

shops discussing everything from how to apply for federal education grants, to tips on interviewing and properly filling out scholarship applications.

What we discovered about the scholarship application process is that there IS a lot of money out there, available from local organizations and clubs as well as county, state and federal funds specifically earmarked for college education.

It's essentially our tax dollars at work. And since I've been paying taxes nonstop since I was 17, I have no problem getting a return on my investment to help our kids and others receive a college education.

Here's the problem: Af-

better, I'd say colleges are being run by pharmaceutical companies — which would make sense since, coincidentally, most of the side effects found on drug labels are the same symptoms I felt while researching annual tuition costs: headache, chest pain, shortness of breath, vision loss, vomiting, loss of appetite...

According to the American College Board, the average annual cost of tuition at a private college is \$32,405. Or if you're looking for a real bargain, \$23,893 a year to attend a public college from out of state.

However, your best bet is to enroll in a community college as an in-state resident, where the average tuition is

LETTERS

REPRESENTING COLLARD LAKE ROAD TO COUNTY

On Tuesday, March 12, at the Lane County Board of County Commissioner's meeting in Eugene, eight Collard Lake residents attended the meeting, where three spoke on our behalf from the Collard Lake Road area regarding our ongoing issues with Collard Lake Road.

The residents of the area would like to thank County Commissioner Jay Bozievich, County Administrator Steve Mokrohizky, Public Works Director Dan Hurley and the rest of the Board for listening to and addressing our concerns.

We look forward to updates regarding this situation.

—Camille Thomsen
Collard Lake Road, Florence

NOW IS TIME TO GET INVOLVED, INFORMED ON MURAL

I have become aware that there are — and have been — opportunities to be more informed about upcoming decisions per Florence City commit-

tees. I must confess I didn't pay much attention to the Siuslaw News issue of Dec. 22, 2018, which had an image of the proposed graffiti-style mural for the CLPUD building.

Nor did I take an active interest in the PAC (Public Art Committee) efforts. I was busy with my job and other activities as many are. As I dug a bit more into the City of Florence PAC committee, I found published information that citizens of Florence need to review on the PAC's activities (and other committees & commissions).

There are other proposed “art” items to be aware of:

- www.ci.florence.or.us/boardsand-commissions
- www.ci.florence.or.us/bc-pac
- www.ci.florence.or.us/bc-pac/public-art-program

You can also sign up for an email distribution list for the PAC as well as apply to participate in any of Florence's commissions and committees. I don't know if there are more openings on the PAC committee or not. Now is the time to get involved, so ask if you can participate.

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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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.

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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:
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—Don Drozdenko
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