

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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Jenna Bartlett
Ned Hickson
Susan Gutierrez
Cathy Dietz
Ron Annis

Publisher, ext. 318
Editor, ext. 313
Multimedia Sales Director, ext. 326
Office Supervisor, ext. 312
Production Supervisor

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LETTERS

THE TWO NARRATIVES

ON GUN CONTROL

The gun debate continues to rage both nationally and locally.

National news outlets tend to follow a remarkably similar narrative with a common set of talking points that trickles down to the local grassroots discussions. However, this first narrative is in direct conflict with a second narrative that is pushed by the very same news outlets.

The first narrative is that *guns* are bad. Criminals shoot others with guns, so we need all sorts of bans and restrictions because people just can't be trusted with them. In extreme cases, the push is for the Second Amendment to essentially be abolished and guns banned outright.

Only cops should have guns.

The second narrative is that *cops* are bad. Listening to some of the liberal talking heads on the networks, one would think that a white hood was part of the uniform and that all cops hunt minorities

for sport.

There are literally back-to-back segments where a bunch of pundits nod solemnly as they praise former presidential candidate Beto O'Rourke's plans for mass confiscation of guns then, in the next segment, express outrage over how hopelessly ingrained the "racist structures" of our nation's law enforcement agencies are.

I don't see any connection in that line of logic. If cops really were so racist and notoriously trigger-happy, wouldn't disarming citizens — and especially minorities — be a bad idea?

I know the vital role the Second Amendment played in the Civil Rights struggles of the South during the Jim Crow era. Black protesters were severely beaten and in many cases killed until they started exercising their right to open-carry in the streets.

The southern Democrats tried to suppress these rights every way they could, while the Republicans generally stood by the Constitu-

tion.

Fortunately, southern Democrats of the time lost and the nation was able to move past this sordid chapter in the nation's history.

Today, both parties are singing the exact same tune as they did more than 50 years ago, with the difference that Democrats now claim they want to undermine the second amendment to "protect" minorities instead of oppressing them — presumably by exposing minorities to the "fascist death-squads in blue" (aka the police) without any means of defending themselves.

It seems to me you'd either have to concede that either: 1) The "cops-are-evil" narrative is much overblown, or 2) Give up the constant meddling with law-abiding citizens' right to own effective guns.

Or better yet, how about ditching both?

—Matt Danielsson
Florence

We can agree one one thing: We all love Florence

(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.)

While I am flattered to have my work receive such praise in a recent Letter to the Editor by Linda Farrell ("Mural Not Right Greeting For Visitors," Dec. 18) — and I really mean that — I would rather destroy everything I have ever created than cover another artist's work.

I am an artist, apparently a good one by that letter writer's standards, and I loved this mural from the second I saw it.

I testified for it twice at Florence City Council meetings. I spent hours helping paint it even as I witnessed locals driving by and shouting obscenities at the artists.

It made me ashamed, and some of you should feel ashamed as well.

I became friends with the artists — really good folk — and her roots on the coast go back to the 1850s.

They could not wait to get out of this hostile environment and they had my sympathy.

Shame on you Florence.

Now my name, and my work, has been brought into this "just

GUEST VIEWPOINT By Ed Gunderson Local artist

my opinion" nonsense; this is my response.

I am soul weary of the bickering, the nit-picking over the most inane things. If you don't like the mural, then don't look at it.

We have more available to us than at anytime in humanity, all with a simple finger swipe and two-day shipping. Any inconvenience can be negated behind our gated communities. No one on earth has it as good as we do.

Yet we are all furious — whipped into a mouth foaming frenzy — all the time. It is way past time that we

find things that we can agree on instead of finding fault with each other. If this is my moment in the local spotlight — one that I really did not ask for — then this is my message:

I love Florence. So do you. It's one thing we all have in common. I have loved this place since the very first time I came here. There is nowhere in the world as amazing as this place. While we will never agree on many things, this is a good place to start.

I want to start a movement: "I LOVE FLORENCE."

For a community our size, there's not another town on the coast, or in the state for that matter, that offers anything close to Florence.

It is easy to hate but takes energy to love. Florence is worthy of that energy.

"I Love Florence."

That is my one and only message. If we can not agree on anything else, surely we can agree on this.

Impeachment merely symptom of larger challenge

(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.)

It may surprise some people that — even though I am one who never wanted Donald Trump to be president, and I did not believe him when he said he would preserve, protect and defend the Constitution — I am not gleeful in the least about his impeachment. In fact, I am terribly sad over what has become of America the Beautiful.

My grandparents, refugees who escaped their homeland with nothing much and just their children — basically lived the American Dream. I grew up believing in the amazing promise that I, too, could enjoy the best that America has to offer.

As I pursued an education, meaningful work, good relationships, the next thing I knew the world went upside down as a popular presidential candidate ridiculed people with disabilities, and those who were different than him. He spoke in pejorative and disrespectful terms about half the population of the world (i.e. women). He had no political experience and had a

questionable history in business.

When he was elected president, he disregarded — and seemed determined to dismantle — our nation's meaningful alliances.

He created and fostered busi-

GUEST VIEWPOINT By Ivy Medow Florence resident

ness relationships that benefitted his own enterprises and those of his family; he cut programs that helped people who needed help — including farmers upon whom we all depend — and veterans who had served the nation for better or worse in its exploits around the world.

With letters and phone calls, I called upon elected officials from both sides of the aisle in the Legislative Branch of the government (Congress) to provide those checks and balances the founders of our nation envisioned as part of their role in government.

I was nonplussed when my appeals, and those of thousands of other concerned citizens, seemed to go unheeded and even unacknowledged. Slowly, I began to hear that this and that member of

Congress, particularly Republicans from the Senate, would not seek re-election.

It dawned on me that they were choosing to abdicate their responsibility by slinking off into the shadows rather than take action to at least challenge the transformation that was taking shape across the nation. Apparently because this president used tactics that were "outside the norm" and it was too tough a battle to fight.

And it's continued downhill from there like runoff down the mountainside — from both the left and right — with both sides carrying the angst of their resentments and inability to trust or listen to the other.

I do not want President Trump called to account simply as a method to overturn his election. That point of view ignores, minimizes and justifies much too much that has happened since his election.

On both sides, there is an utter lack of curiosity or initiative about how to rebuild with those who believe and perceive differently than they do.

This cripples our potential for creative problem solving, or even acknowledging that we are all going to suffer the same fate.

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.caddyckmckeown@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