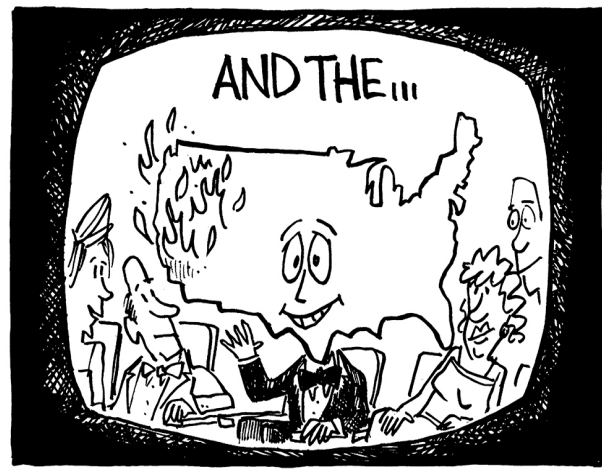


**Siuslaw News**  
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# Opinion

**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)



## LETTERS

### CAN'T PREPARE FOR WHAT WE DON'T ACKNOWLEDGE

We all know that a problem cannot be addressed until it is agreed that it exists in the first place.

We know there is a movement afoot in Florence to get the city to acknowledge the problem of climate change.

We know that at the coastal caucus, hosted here last summer, the problem was acknowledged by businesses dealing in seafood talking about the warming ocean and how it's hurting their sources of seafood.

We know that people familiar with the climate here have written Letters to the Editor reporting their observations that there is less snow, and less rain across Oregon, and that temperatures appear higher. These letter writers express concern about the consequences of these climatic changes in terms of our forests, our orchards and our other land-based industries.

We know that the city of Florence officially addresses the potential of a tsunami, with signage on the roadways, emergency preparedness trainings and more.

What we don't know is what is at stake for city counselors who carry and execute the town's vision of what may be possible, and if they will acknowledge this problem so its existence can become part of work plans and projects moving forward.

We don't know what is keeping the the city council of the City in Motion from acknowledging that climate change, the climate crisis or whatever you want to call it is really happening.

If we acknowledge the problem, we can incorporate solution-based strategies into our employment, land use, housing, public health and other plans.

I hope the councilors will ponder, individually and as a group, the answer to what is making it so hard for them to officially acknowledge that there is a climate crisis affecting our town and our region.

The consequences of decisions we make here and now will have lasting effects on everyone in this community, regardless of gender, age, political persuasion, socio-economic status or any other factor.

And by the way, at a meeting I attended recently, it was said that mayors and city councils up and down the coast are talking about climate change and how to respond and plan ahead.

The response from someone in the audience shouted, "Not in Florence."

—Ivy Medow  
 Florence

### OUR FATE DEPENDS ON OUR STEWARDSHIP OF THE EARTH

"Betelgeuse," the red supergiant star in the shoulder of the Orion constellation is fading. Scientists

believe a possible reason is that it may explode into a supernova that would be visible in the daytime sky for weeks — sometime in the next 100,000 years.

But I hope it happens soon.

I hope that the people of Earth will look up at that amazing light in the sky and realize that we — all of us, rich or poor, weak or powerful — are astronauts in a spaceship hurtling through space on a journey that began with forces of physics and gravity billions of years ago.

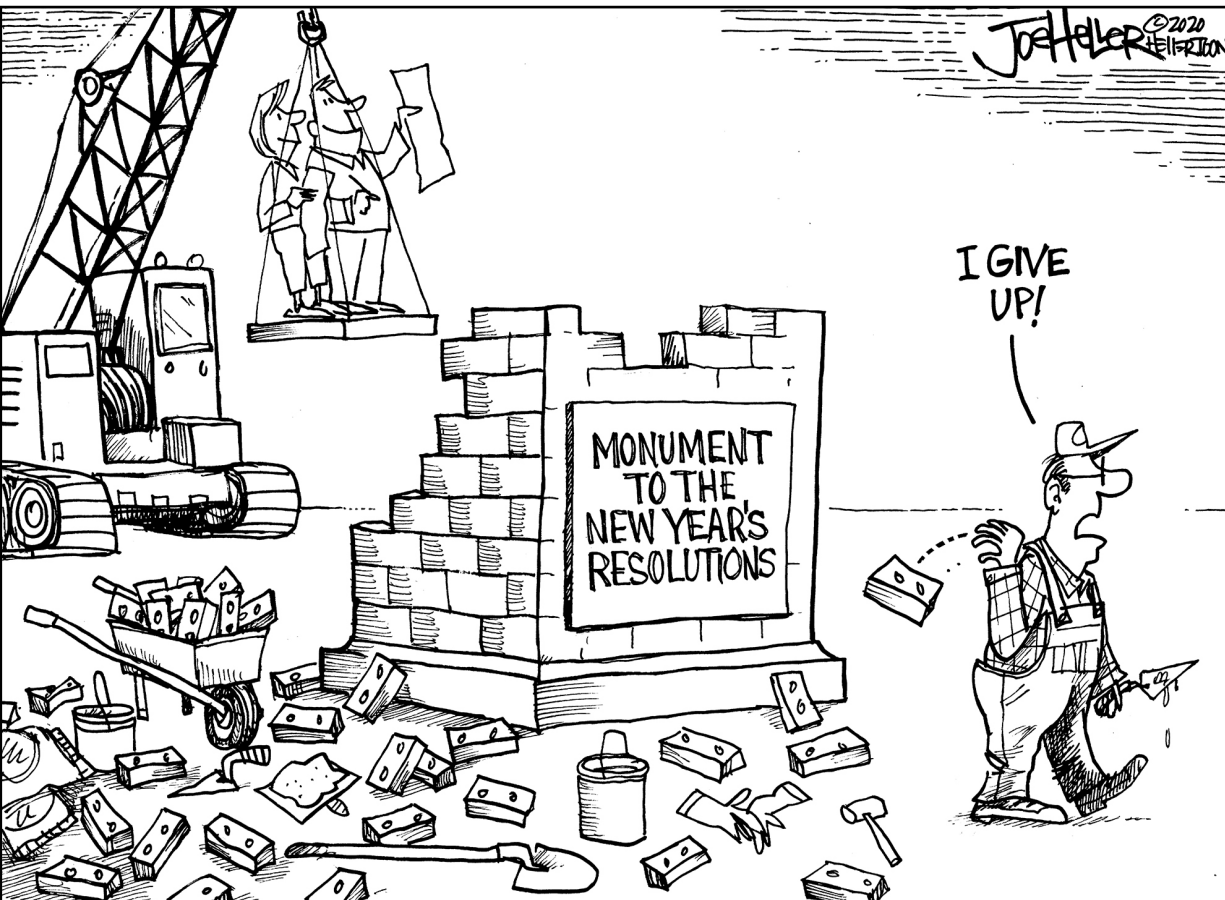
And it's a path over which we have no control whatsoever.

I hope that the people of Earth will realize that the only control we have over our journey is our environment — that the fate of all humanity depends on maintaining clean air to breathe, pure water to drink and unpolluted soil in which to grow food.

I hope that world leaders and corporate powers will look at the heavens and comprehend that we have been poor stewards of our spacecraft and take measures to undo the harm we have done in the last century.

I hope that if Betelgeuse waits to supernova for 100,000 years, there will still be people on the Earth who will look up in awe and perhaps gratitude for those in the 21st century who saved the spacecraft Earth and made it possible for them to experience that amazing event in the universe.

—Bill McDougle  
 Florence



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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, OR 97439; phone 541-997-3441; fax 541-997-7979. All press releases may be sent to PressReleases@TheSiuslawNews.com.

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### DEADLINES:

Wednesday Issue—General news, Monday noon; Budgets, four days prior to publication; Regular classified ads, Thursday 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, \$79; 6-month in-county, \$56; 10-week subscription, \$25; Out of Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$102; 6-month out-of-county, \$69; 10-week subscription, \$35; Out of State — 1-year subscription, \$134; E-Edition Online Only (Anywhere) — 1-year subscription, \$65.

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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)

### WHERE TO WRITE

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<p><b>OREGON GOV.</b>  <b>KATE BROWN</b>                  160 State Capitol                  900 Court St.                  Salem, Ore. 97301-4047                  Governor's Citizens' Rep.                  Message Line:                  503-378-4582                  www.oregon.gov/gov</p>	<p><b>STATE SEN. ARNIE ROBLAN</b>                  (DIST. 5)                  900 Court St. NE - S-417                  Salem, OR 97301                  503-986-1705                  FAX: 503-986-1080                  Email: Sen.ArnieRoblan@oregonlegislature.gov</p>
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