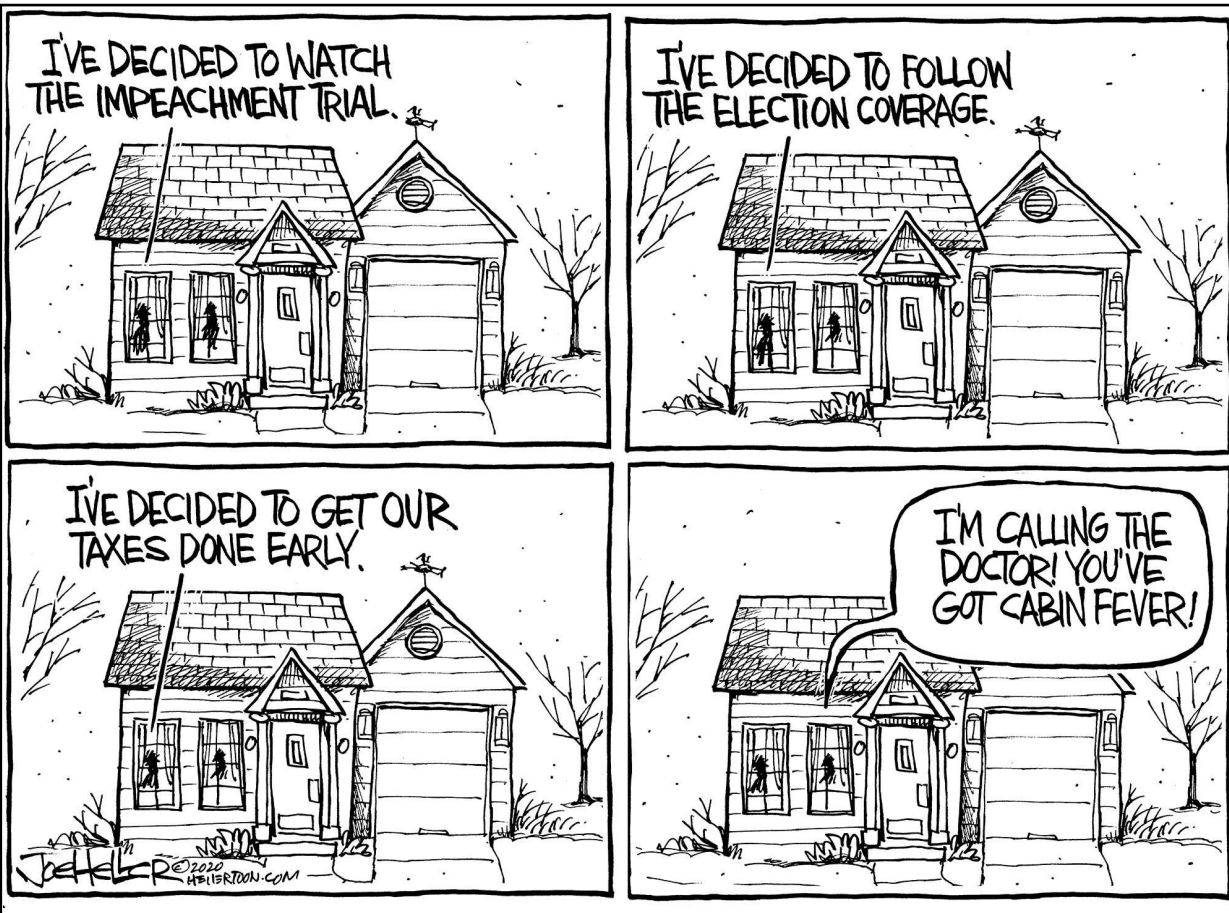


Siuslaw News
 P.O. Box 10
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Opinion

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)



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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that are anonymous, libelous, argumentative, sarcastic or contain accusations that are unsourced or documented will not be published.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

Kindness most powerful of actions in affecting change

(Editor's Note: The following is a speech given by Siuslaw High School senior Ramiro Ramirez during last Saturday's Martin Luther King, Jr. "Healing the Divide" event sponsored by the Bahá'ís and held at the Siuslaw Public Library.)

I am both privileged and thankful that I get to once again speak about the great man we know as Martin Luther King Jr.

Or just Dr. King.

Now, most — if not — all of us remember who Martin Luther King Jr. was. He was a man who fought for the equal rights of African American people.

He proved that "Separate, but Equal" could not work.

He endured the hardships of the Southerners who did not welcome change.

He provided the way to give the freedoms and rights all of us have regardless of race, sex and religion.

Fifty-one years, nine months, two weeks and one day after his passing (Yes. I did the math to get that result), his legacy still lives on to this day.

With the information I stated earlier, it is clear that the acts of

civil disobedience have worked. African Americans can now vote, sit anywhere they please in a bus, own homes and property, and have an increased pay salary. Some changes, such as bus

They would learn how to be cool under pressure after being shoved and told racial slurs.

Eventually, they made it and joined the rallies throughout The South.

And they were kind to one another.

Kindness helped others join in and brought together whites as well. You see, the power of kindness can really go a long way. Even in times of hardship, kindness can help multiple people through it — and eventually, you could even make friends with your "enemy."

Maybe that's why they say "Keep your friends close, and your enemies closer?"

So, to all the people fighting for equal rights, I encourage you to use kindness. Even if it doesn't change the opposition, don't feel offended by it — just acknowledge the fact that they can't embrace change with open arms. When the time is ready, they'll show it by action, because actions speak louder than words.

And kindness is the most powerful of actions we can share with others.

GUEST VIEWPOINT
 By Ramiro Ramirez
 Siuslaw High School Student

riding privileges, seemed to be almost instant while others, such as increased salary, took a while to change.

Pretty unfortunate isn't it?

You've fought for a long time and you deserve to have those changes, but all you get are some minor changes. We can all agree that that wouldn't be fair.

But there is one important factor that can help fight for change tremendously.

We can all agree that kindness has its excellent perks. Kindness throughout the rallies and strikes helped fuel the Civil Rights movement. In fact, before the African Americans joined MLK Jr.'s sit-ins, they would go to camps where they would learn to control their impulses.

LETTERS

PLASTIC BAGS ARE POPULAR FOR A REASON

I'm afraid I spoke to soon when I recently took sarcastic jabs at the new plastic bag-ban.

As my wife discovered, there is already a workaround in place at Oregon Walmart stores: They now sell thicker plastic bags with the word "Reusable" printed on them.

It is accompanied by words like "Sustainable," "Washable" and "Up to 125 uses," which is of course a wink-wink on par with advertising a V-8 diesel truck can get "Up to 125 mpg."

But hey, these are nice, big, green letters sure to be seen from afar, possibly to avoid getting mobbed on the spot by eco-activists.

It seems to me like it'll only be a matter of time before other large chain stores like Fred Meyer, Safeway and others

follow suit.

Like it or not, plastic bags are popular with customers because they have many secondary re-use opportunities and withstand rain without breaking — whereas paper bags fail on both accounts.

Now, maybe I'm ignorant and I'm sure there is a spreadsheet in Salem detailing the incredible im-

pact the new ban will have on the planet.

But darn if I can see the environmental benefit of switching to thicker plastic bags with print on them.

Can you?

—Matt Danielsson
 Florence

WHERE TO WRITE

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