

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)



LETTERS

PORT HAS MADE BEST PARTS OFF LIMITS EXCEPT TO RVERS

Concerning a recent Letter to the Editor extolling the virtues of the Port of Siuslaw ("Port Looks Better Than It Ever Has," Feb. 19), I would like to add to that discussion.

First, the Port of Siuslaw sold off the most beautiful, historically significant piece of property bordering the North Fork River and the Siuslaw River, thereby giving up, forever, a location in Florence for a wonderful park and picnic area for the residents, tax payers, the Port District and visitors.

The port board member who bought the property has posted a "Closed" sign at the entrance, cutting off access to clambers, berry pickers, dog walkers and those who would photograph the two historic vessels parked near the entrance.

In my opinion, the port has abandoned our port as a home for a local fishing fleet; the port has never placed any of its 125 picnic tables in the public area along the boardwalk; the port is the major grower of Scotch Broom in the Florence area; the port now charges a fee to park and view the river; and it has cut off all access to the North Fork Estuary where residents and visitors can view the ducks and egrets that live there.

The port is now essentially private and off limits. Only RVers may view the most beautiful section of the Siuslaw River.

On another note, it's funny to me how Mr. Eckhart and Mr. Eales are published — in full — regularly and then complain the *Siuslaw News* is biased in the letters it publishes.

When one mentions TV stations concerning points of view, what happened to FOX News? They boast of having the biggest audience on TV. My guess is "Live PD" probably has the bigger audience.

Lastly, thank you, City of Florence, for the beautiful little park on Rhododendron Drive.

How about a name?

—Gene Olson
Florence

DISPLAY DURING GARAGE SALE INAPPROPRIATE VENUE

Some friends and I attended our Community Garage Sale at the Florence Events Center last Saturday (Feb. 22.)

We were horrified and shocked to be welcomed by some giant disturbing graphics of fetuses represented by a pro-life movement.

We were simply attending a family oriented indoor community garage sale, looking for pots and pans, musical instruments and other items you may typically find in a garage sale.

If I would have known that there would have been such an offensive display, I could have chosen not to attend.

We felt completely manipulated.

While I understand that freedom of expression is a crucial element of our democracy, I strongly felt

this was a completely inappropriate family event to do so.

The display was a personal violation of our rights.

—Gigi Lissan
Florence

PUBLIC TRANSIT EXPANSION HAS MANY BENEFITS

Thank you everyone who worked on the addition to the region's public transit system to include a route from Eugene to Florence.

It's such a great resource that creates an affordable option for travel from the Willamette Valley to the coast and back.

As a recent resident of The Dalles, in the Columbia River Gorge, my experience with the success of public transit is with the Oregon Department of Transportation's Columbia Gorge Express that started with a pilot project on summer weekends in 2016.

It expanded to daily year-round service in 2018 and expansion now includes a connector to Mt. Hood Meadows for skiers. Designed to assist with reducing the number of vehicles traveling to the Columbia Gorge with limited available parking options, the success included providing access to The Columbia River Gorge for visitors and Portland area residents without access to a car.

Public transit has many benefits, and this new connection from Eugene to Florence, coupled with the existing service to Yachats as well as the Rhody Express, will provide everyone — visitors and residents alike — access to affordable, energy saving travel.

—Beverly Sherrill
Florence

ALLOWING PROPAGANDA AT FEC WAS MAJOR BLUNDER

I attended the FEC Indoor Garage Sale Saturday and was offended and upset by the presence of a Pro-Life booth.

There, amid the vendors selling knives, plates, DVDs, birdhouses, clothing, jewelry, etc., were large photos of fetuses along with Pro-Life items.

To say that their presence was inappropriate is a massive understatement.

If they were merely selling items related to the Pro-Life movement, their presence would have been incongruous. But having photos of fetuses in utero used as propaganda for their cause made one feel that their political and religious agenda was being promoted by the FEC.

I met a number of people there who were horrified and terribly offended. Personally, I found the display emotionally upsetting and a violation of my personal right to attend a community event without being manipulated by those with a specific political or religious agenda.

I think very poor judgement was used in having this booth be part

of the vendor group. Yes, of course, let the group protest and hold its signs at public locations. But the use of our events center to promote a group that others find upsetting and offensive is a complete and total blunder.

I would hope that Kevin Rhodes and the "Friends of the Events Center" take the opportunity to have some sensitivity training and change their policy with regard to having any and all vendors display their wares.

—Judy Schwartz
Florence

HEALTHCARE COSTS ARE LUDICROUS

Each year, I have a biannual health checkup with my primary doctor. It includes a blood draw and then a visit to go over my cholesterol and blood sugar levels.

The first of this year, I had the blood draw and doctor visit. At the doctor's visit, I was checked in, a nurse checked my blood pressure then my doctor went over my recent blood draw results.

We spent about 10 minutes discussing my current health and about another 10 minutes talking about fly fishing for steelhead.

I recently received a bill from PeaceHealth. It included the bill for the blood draw (\$110) of which my co-pay was only \$10.

Then there were the charges for my doctor's visit, which included two charges of \$284. One was for "Professional Office Visit Level 4" for \$154 and the other one was for "Facility Office Visit Level 1" for \$130.

My insurance covered all of it, so my co-pay was only \$10.

What concerned me was the \$130 charge. I contacted PeaceHealth's billing department and asked what the "Level 1" billing included. I was basically told that the charge was for walking in the door of the clinic, checking in and then waiting for my name to be called.

I assume this helps them pay for heating, lighting and the salary of the person at the check-in desk. It may also have included reading our local newspaper and using a Kleenex to blow your nose if needed.

Our healthcare costs are ludicrous.

—Win Jolley
Florence

DON'T WANT AN 'EDITOR'S NOTE?' CONFIRM YOUR FACTS

In the words of Daniel Patrick Moynihan:

"Everyone is entitled to his own opinion, but not to his own facts."

For anyone offended by having an editor's note clarifying false or misleading "facts" in a submitted letter, the solution is simple:

Just confirm that what you are sharing is actual fact.

It isn't that difficult.

—Kenneth Janowski
Florence

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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.

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