

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

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, Ore. Postmaster, send address changes to: Siuslaw News, P.O. Box 10, 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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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.

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.

Mail subscription includes E-Edition.
Website and E-Edition: TheSiuslawNews.com

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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WHERE TO WRITE

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The meaning of all those 'little flags'

earthy smell of the fresh-cut grass, and the hushed snap of small American flags standing like sentries next to dozens of tombstones

"Well, they are usually trying to protect something," I explained. "Like where they live, or the kind of church they go to,

and stripes waved in the evening breeze. Hugging her knees to her chest, my daughter surveyed the hilly grass, and the long shadows stretching away from the setting sun.

"There sure are a lot of little flags out there," she said finally.

"Yes, there are." She was silent again, and I began to wonder if I had laid too much reality on her.

After a moment, she stood and brushed grass from the seat of her pants.

"C'mon, Dad," she said, and reached for my hand.

"You ready to go?" "Uh-huh," she said. "After we fix those other flags down there. Some of them fell over. We need to make them straight."

This Memorial Day, take time to notice the little flags. There are many.

And they all deserve our attention...

From the Editor's Desk
Ned Hickson

along the hillside.

"How come some of them have little flags, and some don't?" my daughter asked.

It was near sunset as we strolled through our local cemetery. Though we didn't have any family members buried there, I thought it would be a good opportunity to explain the meaning of Memorial Day to her.

"Do you know what war is?" I asked.

"When people fight," she answered, then clarified herself; "A whole bunch of people."

"That's right, but do you know why they fight?"

She thought a moment, then shook her head.

or the right to express themselves. These little flags are for people who fought for you and me — so that we could have all those things."

"And they died while they were fighting?" she asked, and crouched in front of a small flag that had fallen over.

She looked at me, and I nodded.

"A lot of them did," I answered, watching as she stuck the little flag back into the ground. "But not all of them. Some died later, after they were done fighting for us."

"But they still get a flag, right?"

"That's right."

We sat there for a moment, watching as the fabric of stars

Though we live in a time when the lines that divide us often seem more prevalent than the things that unite us, this Monday we can put those differences aside in solemn appreciation of the men and women throughout our nation's history who sacrificed themselves so that we can live — and even disagree — as Americans.

As adults, we tend to complicate things and ideals. It's days like today that I am reminded that a child's pure, unbiased perspective is sometimes our best source of wisdom.

It's been 18 years since I introduced my oldest daughter to the meaning of Memorial Day.

She was seven then, but I still remember the short gusts of warm wind on my neck, the

