

Opinion

Continued from
A4

LETTERS (from A4)

IN AGREEMENT

WITH LETTER WRITER

I am in total agreement with Matt Danielsson's Letter to the Editor ("Important To Remember How Far Equality Has Come," June 13).

Although Mr. Danielsson states he was not raised in the U.S., he seems to have a much better understanding of the situation in this country than most folks, and I thank him for his clear vision.

—Patricia Rhodes
Florence



It is one of the great ironies of history that almost every other nation in the world peacefully emancipated their slaves, yet the United States — a country supposedly founded on the principle that "all men are created equal" — required a bloody civil war to root it out.

After the war, the government at first supported the former slaves.

However, after Reconstruction they were completely abandoned. The history of race relations in this country has hardly been one of continuous improvement.

The United States did not enter World War II because of white supremacy. Remember Pearl Harbor?

In fact, during World War II, the United States military was completely segregated. Barracks, mess halls, medical facilities and military units were all strictly separated by race.

There were very few

African-American combat units because they were not deemed worthy. It is a great tragedy that the black GIs came home to second-class citizenship and Jim Crow laws; White supremacy was alive and well in America.

I believe everyone condemns the looters and rioters; I know I do.

The looters should not be confused with the tens if not hundreds of thousands of peaceful protesters who see inequality in this country and want it to end.

The property destruction is bad, but it is also bad that the looting gives people permission to ignore the real issue.

Although George Floyd was the flashpoint, the real issue is not exclusively Floyd's death but rather the systemic racism in the American criminal justice system, in education and in employment; it's not just about the police.

What about the woman who called 911 because

an African-American birdwatcher asked her to leash her dog? How about Ahmaud Arbery, the man who was murdered by three vigilantes when he was out jogging?

Anyone paying attention to the news knows I could give too many other examples. It's easy to support the police, who by and large deserve our support.

It's much harder to take an honest look at our society, acknowledge the inequalities and vow to do something about it.

We've heard the point of view of a white male. Perhaps the point of view of a person of color would now be appropriate.

—Vicki Philben
Florence

LEARN FROM OUR PAST FOR BETTER UNDERSTANDING

I believe that we need to educate our younger generations about past protests, riots and killing

in our nation.

Everyone should go onto the internet and search them out to educate themselves about cause and effect — something that should have been taught in school:

- Watts Riots in 1965 — South Central Los Angeles.
- Chicago 1968 Democratic Presidential Convention
- Kent State 1970
- "LA 92" The Documentary: The aftermath of Rodney King

Until we know what went on before, we will not be able to understand and fix what comes ahead of us.

—Win Jolley
Florence

SHOUT OUT TO SES MUSIC TEACHER

Dear Florence Friends and Neighbors: Please join me in giving a shout out to Siuslaw Elementary Music teacher Amanda Sarles, who was recently named Oregon PTA Teacher of the Year.

Each year, a deserving educator is honored with this award. Amanda was nominated by two of her colleagues and appreciates the recognition.

In an average school year, Amanda sees more than 600 students each week and, according to Siuslaw Elementary School Principal Mike Harklerode, "Her irrepressible energy and love for kids have become contagious in our school."

One of her students said, "She makes sure that

no matter what level of learning you're on you get what you need to learn. She makes me look forward every day to go to music."

During this strange time with alternative educational strategies and distant learning creating challenges and stressors for students, Amanda's classes have brought joy and relief to children with her daily offerings.

Nothing lifts our spirits or supports all our other feelings like music. Plato said, "Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything."

Thank you, Amanda, for making a true difference and being an inspiration to our students.

—Suzanne
Mann-Heintz
School Board Member
(and music lover)

THANK YOU FOR OUTSTANDING COVERAGE

Thank you so much to the *Siuslaw News* for its outstanding local news coverage and journalism.

I look forward to every edition, print and digital.

Furthermore, thank you for the full-page flag in the Saturday, June 13, edition; Happy 243 Birthday Old Glory!

—Jo Beaudreau
Florence

FEC FRIENDS NEED YOUR HELP

We, the Board members of the Friends of the Florence Events Center, hope you and yours are well and enjoying the ever-improving weather as we head into this ... unique summer of 2020.

During the mandated shelter-in-place time, our members were busy with a "rebranding" effort: a new name and logo are in the works for the Friends, with a focus on the core goals of our Mission Statement.

We have been conducting business via USPS, email, phone, Zoom and socially-distanced document hand-offs.

Yes, these have been extraordinary days.

Now that the Phase Two reopening of Lane County is well underway, we look forward to staging events such as the Curtis Salgado Concert and the Winter Music Festival, Art Gallery events, awarding performance grants to local nonprofits, conducting the Indoor Yard Sale and — last but not least — volunteering.

To accomplish this, we need your help. Your membership support will continue these efforts and keep the Friends a vibrant, essential 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.

The annual membership is only \$25, and we welcome business memberships. You can get as involved as you'd like, or simply enjoy the satisfaction of knowing you are supporting this nonprofit, which benefits all of western Lane County. Contributions are tax-deductible.

Thank you in advance, and we look forward to seeing you in person at "Florence's Living Room."

—Rachel Pearson,
President
Friends of the FEC

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