

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

GOVERNOR HAS NO RESPECT FOR OREGONIANS

The State of Oregon, under Kate Brown, was — and is — totally unprepared for any emergency. She has allowed the Employment Department to crumble through her lack of attention to updating equipment and personnel, thereby causing thousands of unemployed workers to go without any pay for months.

This shows that she has no respect for the people of Oregon that work for their living.

She had OSHA levy large fines for people trying to open or operate their businesses to put food on their family's table; she requires people in stores and restaurants to maintain 6 feet of separation or face fines or being closed down; however, she does not even see the need to make a statement on the close proximity of people — many without masks — in the protests.

This means that it is more important to maintain separation when in contact with one or two people, but *not* thousands?

She panicked in March and demanded the federal government send respirators to the state, then she sent them to New York where they are sitting in a warehouse.

Check out the "State and Local Pandemic Influenza Planning Checklist" 2005. You will see that most of the items on this checklist that the state should have done and checked off were not done.

If you are only interested in increasing taxes and not making the state better, then continue with this administration.

If not, demand changes.

— Robert Smith
 Florence

INSTEAD OF REMOVAL, LET'S LEARN FROM OUR MISTAKES

I was sitting on my back porch watching new Mallard ducklings work the edges of a reed bank along Sweet Creek while a Kingfisher noisily flew by. The Foxgloves now tower over the fields of multi-colored prairie flowers.

This peace and serenity is a stark contrast to the riot-tinged pandemic currently afflicting America.

Reading the *Siuslaw News*, I see that folks are debating the Confederate statues again. Removal wouldn't bother me a bit as they are just simple symbols pounded

from a sheet of bronze. However, I worry more about our country's unquenchable intolerance.

Removing a Confederate statue which lords 50 feet above descendants of black slaves seems a right and proper action. Sure, pull down Christopher Columbus, whom never set foot in North America, but rather only "discovered" slaves in the Caribbean.

I do wonder, though, at what point will we be "complete" in righting the pain of the aggrieved?

Robert E. Lee was declared a hero for his brutal actions during the Mexican-American war under democrat President James Polk; Lee did not fare so well during the Civil War.

A recent letter from Marybeth Marengo ("Lee Was No 'American Hero,'" June 17) advocated for the removal of his and other Confederate statues because, among other things, "they lost."

Did not the American Indians, whom killed many innocents, also lose? Should we remove the memorials to those Indian chiefs whom lost? Abraham Lincoln may have freed the slaves, but he supported the eradication of the Indians from western lands. Should we therefore remove the Lincoln Memorial?

Should not Lincoln also be removed from Mt. Rushmore while removing George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, both of whom owned slaves their entire life?

Muhammad also owned slaves his entire life and advocated for slavery in his Koran. Jesus advocated that marriage was only between a man and a woman, enraging some gays.

Mosques and churches?

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is the hero of the Civil Rights movement, but he was accused of being an unfaithful philanderer and laughing at a woman while observing her rape. Should his statue beside the National Mall be removed and his numerous boulevards renamed to ease the pain of rape victims?

Vladimir Lenin declared that Jews should not hold any position of power. Letter writer Joel Marks has not complained, so maybe Lenin's statue in Minneapolis can stay.

Oregon was the only state declaring entry illegal if one was Negro. Should Oregon be renamed?

Even the name *Siuslaw News* has been appropriated from Native Americans. Renaming or removing memorials, roads, bridges, buildings, rivers, lakes, mountains, teams, ships and towns may not be enough.

Maybe what we should ultimately learn from this is to try tolerance.

—Bill Shepard
 Mapleton

MASK-WEARING SHOULD BE REQUIRED IN OLD TOWN

On May 20, I used the City of Florence's contact page to submit a request for an ordinance to be put in place in the Old Town area requiring the use of face masks.

In response, AIC City Manager Megan Messmer explained that the City is taking its lead from state and county guidelines, which do not include such an ordinance or requirement.

I also received links to state health agencies regarding business requirements for employees to wear masks and what business can do to encourage customers to wear masks inside of businesses.

Let's be clear about this: both my wife and I are in the "at risk age group" and I have just about every underlying medical condition that would make me more susceptible to catching the COVID-19 virus.

Just about anyone who shops in Old Town would have to agree that maintaining social distancing within our shops is nearly (if not completely) impossible to achieve — let alone maintain.

The stores are just way too small.

Even with the huge sign that we installed by our front door, we still get some people refusing to do so, even becoming belligerent when we try to mention the face mask requirement.

In her response to my letter, Messmer assured me that my comments would be passed on to the City Council.

With the rather large senior population in Florence, I hope our city leaders understand the need to vote in an ordinance requiring everybody to wear a face mask within the confined spaces of our stores in Old Town.

—Andres A. Ruiz
 Florence
 Co-owner Wizard of Odds

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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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DEADLINES:

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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