

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

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that are anonymous, libelous, argumentative, sarcastic or contain accusations that are un-sourced or documented will not be published.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

PRES. DONALD TRUMP The White House 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW Washington, D.C. 20500 Comments: 202-456-1111 Switchboard: 202-456-1414 FAX: 202-456-2461 TTY/TDD Comments: 202-456-6213 www.whitehouse.gov	U.S. REP. PETER DEFazio (4TH DIST.) 2134 Rayburn HOB Washington, DC 20515 541-269-2609 541-465-6732 www.defazio.house.gov
OREGON GOV. KATE BROWN 160 State Capitol 900 Court St. Salem, Ore. 97301-4047 Governor's Citizens' Rep. Message Line: 503-378-4582 www.oregon.gov/gov	STATE SEN. ARNIE ROBLAN (DIST. 5) 900 Court St. NE - S-417 Salem, OR 97301 503-986-1705 FAX: 503-986-1080 Email: Sen.Arnieroblan@oregonlegislature.gov
U.S. SEN. RON WYDEN 221 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg Washington, DC 20510 202-224-5244 541-431-0229 www.wyden.senate.gov	STATE REP. CADDY MCKEOWN (DIST. 9) 900 Court St. NE Salem, OR 97301 503-986-1409 Email: rep.caddyckeeown@oregonlegislature.gov
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Let's really be honest with ourselves and each other

On July 15, Siuslaw News ran a Guest Viewpoint by Joshua Greene involving the recent Fourth of July celebrations and the encroachment of politics into our local government.

First of all, let me say that this was the 15th Independence Day that I've celebrated here in Florence, and I could not wish to be in a better place. I would agree that the July Fourth is to celebrate the USA and all it stands for, and that local political decisions should take everybody in the community into account.

From here on, though, my opinions begin to diverge from Mr. Greene's.

Things started to change in Florence and, indeed, nationally — not after the 2018 elections but after the those in 2016. When Donald Trump was legally elected President of the United States, the so-called progressives in this country went ballistic.

Even though conservatives endured the Obama administration in a mostly subdued manner, the "Left" decided they were going to form the "Resistance" to President Trump. This very quickly worked its way down the political food chain.

It was anti-Trump on *everything*.

The left-leaning bias began to manifest itself in the discussions and decisions of the local City Council and just as importantly within council-appointed committees.

Taking positions on political issues like climate change, immigration enforcement, sanctuary cities, gender equity, straw and plastic bans, etc.,

may be great for virtue-signaling but are beyond the scope of the council and did not necessarily represent a majority of community opinion.

The political demographics of this community are fairly evenly balanced. In the three voting precincts representing the Florence area during the 2016 elections, President Trump received more votes than Clinton; the two people representing the area in the Oregon Senate and House are both in the Democrat Party and, like the President, won their seats by fairly narrow margins.

GUEST VIEWPOINT By Ralph Nichols Florence

Mr. Greene must be aware of these voting patterns, yet he seems to ignore them completely. In my judgement, our current mayor and other council members ran and were elected as a reaction to what was a definitive leftward shift of the city government.

Mr. Greene is very condescending and seems to imply that council majority is controlled by a small group of the "far-right community." The reality is that the three council members Mr. Greene mentions in his viewpoint are thoughtful, successful citizens who just disagree with him.

I am not certain what Mr. Greene's point is in mentioning Sherry Harvey several times in this "viewpoint." Perhaps he believes he is "outing" her as

some kind "right-winger?" In fairness and balance, it should be pointed out that Mr. Greene has been legally enjoined from making derogatory references to other Florence citizens.

Mr. Greene makes a major point of the fact that Ms. Harvey reserved the Old Town Park location for the Fourth of July celebration. He gave a very detailed accounting of all the supposedly nefarious conservative political activities which transpired and presumably cast a negative view of our city on all those visiting Bay Street.

He failed to point out, and critically so, that in the two preceding years of 2018 and 2019, the same park was reserved by the Florence Democrat club with the same type of activity occurring except — it was from the opposite point of view. In my understanding in 2018, Ms. Harvey and some associates actually delivered hot dogs and burgers to the democrats at the park.

I am definitely an "old school" kind of person. I believe in cordial discourse and equal sharing of ideas and philosophies. These should be reasoned and fact-based. What I am seeing and sensing now from the Left's proponents is that you either agree with them or you are a bigot, facist, racist, homophobe, etc.

Mr. Greene concludes his piece by saying that he wants everyone to "be honest with ourselves and each other."

I have tried my best to follow that advice in these comments.

LETTERS

WHAT 'FAR RIGHT' MEANS TO ME

A recent Guest Viewpoint on the Opinion page complained that the "far right" influence in Florence politics doesn't represent everyone.

I believe that Democracy allows for expression of different opinions. However, since I am apparently "far right," may I state what that means to me:

I believe in the Constitution as written; I believe that a Nation cannot exist without borders; I believe that not standing for the National Anthem dishonors those who served and died for that right; I believe that movements led by avowed Marxists are acts of treason; I believe that peaceful demonstrations for any cause does not include looting, burning and violent behavior; I believe that "privilege" is earned by education and hard work; I believe that the vast majority of police are dedicated to protect and serve; I believe that abortion is sometimes a necessary medical procedure, and its use for birth control is barbaric; and I judge people by their character, not the color of their skin.

I am a law abiding white male, a fact that does not require an apology. I owe homage to no one except God.

—Keith Kraft
Florence

TIME TO ASSERT YOUR HUMAN RIGHTS

The government is talking about taking away Medicare and Obamacare. A lot of people will be losing their insurance due to not being employed. This should *not* be and

will cause many families to suffer.

The time is now to join Healthcare for all Oregon. An all volunteer organization working hard to legislate healthcare for every Oregonian.

What about the many disabled and terminally ill people that are suffering a terrible quality of life? What about you or your loved ones should they suffer next?

At this very moment all across United States and the rest of the world, doctors are making the decisions of who gets the ventilators — and possibly keep on living — and those that don't. Either way you're going to suffer.

In other words, the weak and elderly will be sacrificed. Not quickly but very slowly and painfully. This doesn't do anybody any good, including the doctors.

Shouldn't the decision to live under those be ours alone? Make sure your advance directive is current with your end-of-life decisions. Treat this as the most important contract of your life — because it may be someday.

Oregon has a very restrictive death-with-dignity law. You have to possibly suffer for years until two doctors tell you that you only have six months to live. Then you have to have a sound mind and physically be able to write and verbally request access to the law. Then, if you still qualify, you have to physically be able to put the medicine in your own mouth and swallow.

Quite a few people in Oregon are living under unbearable conditions because of these restrictive laws.

Now is the time to speak up and support more compassionate end-of-

life laws in Oregon and to give us all Healthcare.

It's all a human right.

—Bruce Yelle
Florence

MASKS ARE THE RIGHT ANSWER

There are a few things that need to be addressed in Mr. Straley's recent Letter to the Editor ("Masks Are Not The Answer," July 15).

Given his science background, he should be aware that the common cold is not caused by bacteria; it is caused by one of several viruses (<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/common-cold/symptoms-causes/syc-20351605>).

The cold is in the same virus family as COVID-19 (coronavirus).

Yes, some studies have shown masks have 50 percent (or greater) chance of keeping the wearer from getting sick. In other words, you can cut your chances of getting COVID-19 in half for about a dollar. That's a deal.

However, the real benefit of wearing a mask is that they are extremely efficient in keeping *other* people from getting infected.

Remember, surgeons don't wear masks to keep from getting infections; they wear masks to keep their *patients* from getting infections.

This is backed by over a century of experience.

If you care about your friends and neighbors here in Florence, *please* wear a mask.

—Rob Welles
Florence