

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)

LETTERS

KIDS' CORNER NOT JUST FOR OLDER 'KIDS' TOO

Many thanks to the weekly Kids' Corner page in the *Siuslaw News*. I always enjoy "This Day in History" and the many varied puzzles are great for my elderly brain.

My neurologist recommends that I exercise my brain frequently with new activities, and Kids' Corner has a grand variety of word challenges, such as Hocus Focus and Kids' Maze as visual puzzles, and also the fun riddles.

After reading them, I send the pages to three of my young relatives accross the country.

Thanks also to Oregon Pacific Bank, First Community Credit Union and the Siuslaw Public Library for sponsoring the Kids' Corner.

—Ann Lathrop
Florence

RESPECTING CONSTITUTION, BIBLE IS NOT EXCLUSIVE

In response to Keith Kraft's definition of "far right" in his July 22 Letter to the Editor ("What 'Far-Right' Means To Me").

Mr. Kraft fails to understand that others can also respect both the Constitution and the Bible but may have different interpretations of them.

I believe that kneeling respectfully during the national anthem honors that anthem; the flag and those who have fought and died for it is an exercise in both the Constitutional right to freedom of expression and the Christian obligation to call out and address the ways in which we have failed, as a nation, to live up to the ideals of both Christ and the founding fathers.

I believe peaceful protestors — like the moms, dads and veterans in Portland — who are being gassed should be allowed to exercise their Constitutional rights to freedom of speech and assembly as well as their Christian right to stand for the oppressed — without being assaulted by American troops in combat gear.

Mr. Kraft's suggestion that BLM is led by Marxists reflects a misconstrual of what it means to be trained in Marxist theory.

Marxist theory raises questions like: "Why was the average CEO salary 30 times higher than the average worker's salary in

the 1970s, but today it is nearly 300 times higher?" It also considers the causes and potential solutions to those grossly unfair and inequitable conditions.

It is our Constitutional right and Christian obligation to raise and address issues of systemic inequality in our country.

While I agree most police are dedicated to protect and serve, because of the great power and responsibility they are given, it is appropriate to apply a higher level of scrutiny and hold them to a higher standard of behavior in order to prevent the abuse of that power and the abrogation of citizens' Constitutional rights.

And Christian compassion for those less fortunate than us calls for funding community services to assist with problems like mental illness, homelessness and drug addiction — issues a police force is ill-equipped yet often called upon to deal with.

It is true that a nation cannot exist without borders; it also cannot exist without immigrants. Conservative Justice Antonin Scalia ruled that refugees and immigrants have a Constitutional right to due process, and we have a Christian duty to treat them humanely. When I listen to Black people and attempt to view the world from their perspective (something I think Christian teaching in compassion compels us to do), it is clear that my white skin has afforded me advantages.

I'm sorry that Mr. Kraft cannot find it in his heart to do the same.

—Donna Mlinek
Florence

NON-PARTISANSHIP IS A TWO-WAY STREET

"Amazing, simply amazing" as my departed Aunt Vera would say if she were still here on this side of the grass, in regards to Joshua Greene's Guest Viewpoint in the July 15 edition of the *Siuslaw News* ("Politics Should Have No Place In Our Local Government").

He used up 28-1/2 inches of column print to complain of, and I quote, "far-right ideals governing by proxy — which does not represent all of our constituents."

He blasted three members of our local government as aligning themselves with our "far-right community, outspoken

pro-Trump supporters."

I would remind Mr. Greene that his left-leaning also does not represent all of our constituents.

Throughout his Guest Viewpoint, he ranted about non-partisanship. So I assume those who don't have liberal left-leaning thoughts or who conform to his way of thinking are displaying partisanship?

To my way of thinking, his entire Guest Viewpoint displays nothing *but* the lack of non-partisanship, which he so readily displayed.

"Simply amazing" as Aunt Vera would say, "simply amazing."

— Tony Cavarano
Florence

LET'S DO SOMETHING COOPERATIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE

In my opinion, our city council is being stubborn in its denial to allow even a formal discussion of the possible need for an official stance on the local impacts of climate change.

I hate to think that those opposed are ones who don't believe the scientific proof, or that the science is a hoax. We live in an area which may become greatly affected by climate change in the not-too-distant future.

This is a fact.

Certain stages of that unavoidable change should be discussed and prepared for on behalf of the people who pay local taxes. There needs to be community education to help prepare ourselves and learn ways to reduce our own contribution to the problem.

The council should reconsider the recent proclamation request put forth by Councilor Ron Preisler.

Every town must do its part to preserve tomorrow for their descendants. Our youth are looking at their futures right now; giving them reassurance that we appreciate their voices and needs in our community is of utmost importance.

Let's do something cooperative and constructive: I ask that Florence City Council members, including our Mayor, reconsider and allow the discussion with all egos aside.

—Wende Jarman
Florence

Climate proclamation about people, not partisanship

(Editor's Note: Viewpoint submissions on various topics of local concern or impact are always welcome as part of our goal to encourage community discussion and exchange of perspectives.)

The passage of a proclamation addressing Climate Change was never about me, despite Mayor Joe Henry's assertion that it was during the July 20 Florence City Council meeting. It was a group effort representing hundreds of Florence citizens, including those who drafted the proclamation, along with the climate activists who signed petitions in favor of it.

In the past, the Mayor has been given several opportunities to present and proclaim it but, instead, chose to attempt to unilaterally edit the proclamation at the last council meeting.

Nowhere in the City Charter or Council rules is the Mayor autho-

rized to do that. Why would we accept the edits of someone who is clearly a climate change denier?

So, our group changed the wording and asked the City Council — not the Mayor — to recognize the proclamation instead.

GUEST VIEWPOINT By Ron Preisler Florence City Councilor

Florence has a committee, the Environmental Management Advisory Committee (EMAC), which would certainly be able to work on the issues raised in the Proclamation if not for the mayor telling them they could not because it was deemed too political.

On the major issues we are facing today, including COVID-19, our economic situation here in Florence (high unemployment, business closures, city staffing at a high both

in numbers and cost), along with broader issues dealing with racial inequality and injustice, as well as climate change, the mayor has chosen to remain silent.

That is not leadership, it is ducking the issues that must be addressed if we are truly a "Premier Coastal Community."

In the first four years of my six years as the Vice President of the City Council, we accomplished a great deal. We then experienced a significant change in the attitude of the Council as the balance of power shifted to the Mayor once the latest council members were seated and almost unfaithfully acquiesced to his way of thinking and voting.

As a result, our city has sadly become like many others: Very divided.

Our city is better than that.

Florence residents deserve leadership that cares about the well-being of *all* its people.

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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.

Email letters to:
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WHERE TO WRITE

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