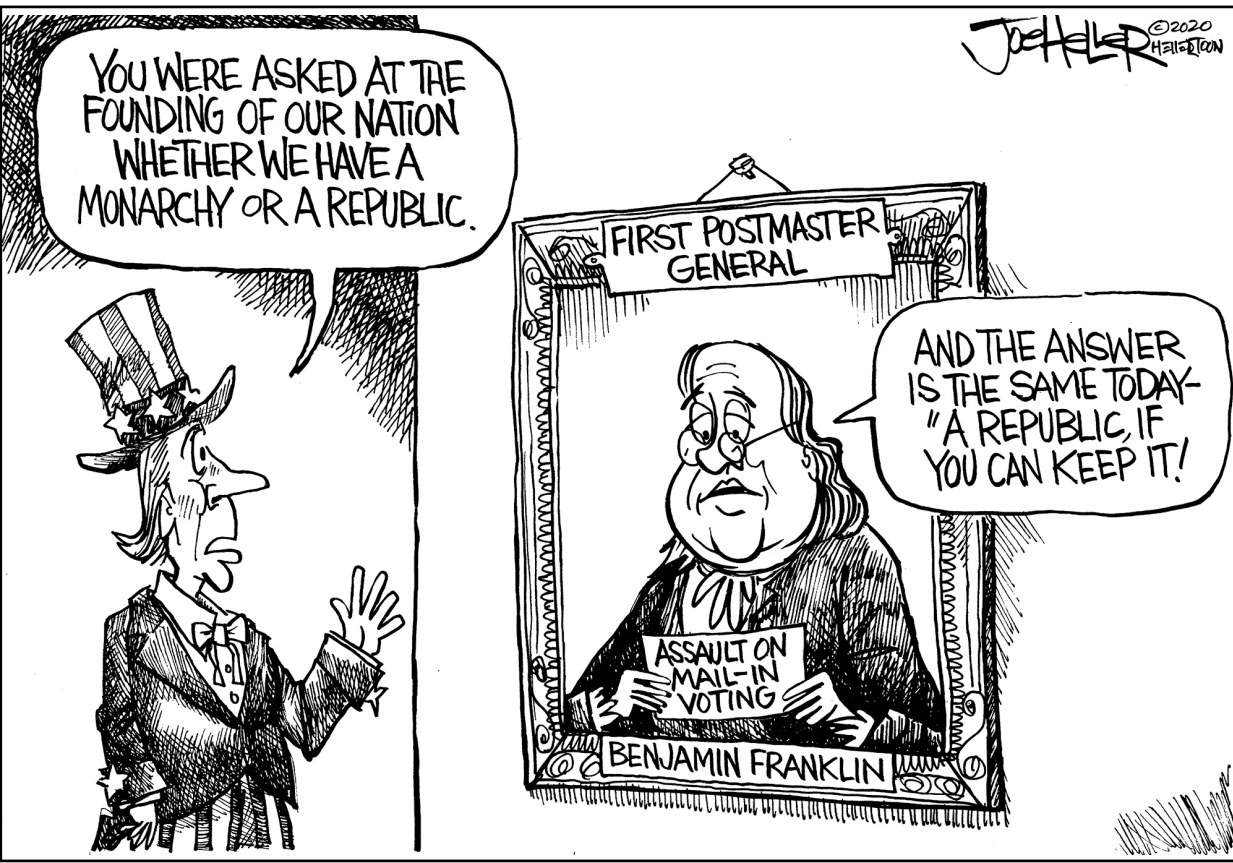


Siuslaw News
P.O. Box 10
Florence, OR 97439

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

THANK YOU, CITY OF FLORENCE EMPLOYEES
To the paid employees of the City of Florence:
I want to thank each and every one of you — Police, Fire, from the City Hall janitor to the maintenance crew and everyone in between.
You all provide such effort for little pay and even less thanks.
The current situation must make your job all the harder. We are all struggling with uncertainty; I cannot imagine being responsible for a community during a health crisis.
Thank all of you for your service to this city and the people who live here.
Your effort shows.
—Edward Gunderson
Florence

KUDOS TO THE COMMUNITY
I wanted to take time to thank various people and businesses for the exceptional experiences that I have had during this challenging time. Whether I am at a local grocery store, furniture store, restaurant, pharmacy, hair and nail salons ... the list can go on (I am sure many of us can name several).
I am always treated with what I know is a smile behind the mask. I can believe that greeting people and helping them through the long work day can be quite tiring.
However, I have found that at each venue I have seen patience and the desire to serve in a caring way.

I want to thank the doctors, nurses and other health care workers who are serving the community when the rules and difficulties are in abundance. In my case, I have interacted with one of the COVID-19 testing workers who made the experience an easy one for me.
I especially want to thank my primary care physician, Dr. Egar of the Siuslaw Medical Clinic.
During these unusual times, accessibility to medical professionals has been challenging for many. For over two years I have been a member of this direct-pay medical experience. From the very beginning, the doctor/patient relationship was much easier to establish than previous medical encounters.
Medical help through conver-

sations via phone, email, text or in person have been beyond my expectations. Thankfully through this COVID-19 scenario, I have been fortunate to have quick and efficient responses.
Importantly, I want to thank my church pastor as well as other pastors and counselors for their efforts to help reduce fears by being available, especially when social distancing presents its own set of issues.
Also, I want to thank the everyday customer who has been polite and kind when navigating the stores in Florence.
Yes, these are difficult days ...but Kudos to you all.
—C.M. Drozdenko
Florence

WANTZ OFFERS MUCH NEEDED CIVILITY ON COUNCIL
Over 10 years ago, when my husband and I were thinking of relocating to Florence without knowing a soul, I entered a local church and was greeted with the warmest, most genuine smile and biggest of hugs from the Service Leader, Sally Wantz.
I came to know Sally's fabulous sense of humor, her kindness for every person she encounters, and to witness her as a force of nature when something needed to get done. I decided that if this town held folks like Sally, I wanted to know more. And we made the decision to move to this beautiful city.
Now, Sally is willing to step up for the whole community as a City Councilor. She will bring her energy, compassion, smarts and sense of humor to our city, making it an even better place.
Especially given the distressing lack of civility witnessed at recent city council meetings, I feel we simply could not do better than electing Sally Wantz as a City Councilor.
—Judy Plumery
Florence

WHY WILL NO ONE ENFORCE MASK WEARING?
On Aug. 16, at approximately 10:45 a.m., I entered a local grocery store. As I was placing my first item in my cart I was approached by a group of four females, two of whom were not wearing masks.
I asked them both to please put on their masks. One ignored me, the other stated she would

go by me and be out of my space.
I immediately found a store employee and pointed out the two offenders. The clerk stated that they were not allowed to request that customers wear a mask.
I asked to speak to a manager, so the clerk went to speak to the manager and again informed me there was nothing anyone could do.
I dialed 911 and spoke to the Florence Police dispatcher who stated that they would do nothing and that I could be cited for misuse of the emergency line.
No one approached the two shoppers to ask that they leave or put on the required face covering.
After purchasing the one item in my cart, I exited the store and began making phone calls from my car. I called the OSHA number for reporting non-compliance and found out they are not open on weekends. After contacting the store's corporate office for Oregon, I received a call from the store's assistant manager, who had been on lunch break when I was in there.
She stated that clerks were not allowed to ask patrons to wear face coverings because of liability issues but management was and was supposed to do so. The group in question was not approached or confronted by anyone but myself.
The next day, I contacted the OSHA's office for Lane County non-compliance issues (541-686-7562) and spoke with a compliance officer who discussed options.
But bottom line? There are no real consequences for individuals who aren't willing to follow the rules and potentially put lives in danger.
It is not optional to drive drunk; there are consequences. It is not optional to commit murder; there are consequences for that.
There are consequences for not wearing a seat belt, which only protects the wearer.
So why are there no consequences for endangering the lives of innocent people by not wearing a mask when it is a statewide mandate in public spaces?
Why will no one enforce this?
—Patty Harrison
Florence

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:
nhickson@thesiuslawnews.com

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 202-225-6416 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.caddymckeown@oregonlegislature.gov
U.S. SEN. JEFF MERKLEY 313 Hart Senate Office Bldg Washington, DC 20510 202-224-3753 FAX: 202-228-3997 541-465-6750 www.merkley.senate.gov	WEST LANE COUNTY COMMISSIONER JAY BOZIEVICH 125 E. Eighth St. Eugene, OR 97401 541-682-4203 FAX: 541-682-4616 Email: Jay.Bozievich@co.lane.or.us