

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)



As many of you have probably heard, seen on social media or possibly received in your mailbox, a glossy, two-sided flyer was delivered by mail to many residents in Florence this week.

In bold print on one side, the flyer reads: "Walk Away From The Siuslaw News," which also is the title of a hashtag with the same name (though, as of press time, there was nothing associated with it when checked).

On the flipside of the flyer was the accusation that "The Siuslaw News Has Gone Too Far," followed by a list of denunciations calling us "Divisive," "Fake News," "Unethical" and "Seditious."

Its objective was to convince community members to "walk away" from the paper by canceling

their subscriptions. To help facilitate that, our phone number and email address for unsubscribing was included at the bottom.

We first became aware of this after receiving multiple calls, as well as having residents come to our office, about the flyer they had received.

has been a unified agreement that attacking your local newspaper in this way is simply wrong.

And even cowardly. Regardless of whether someone agrees or disagrees with our reporting, feels we are biased or unbiased, thinks we lean right or left, liberal or conservative

nity to at least understand one another even when we don't agree.

This is the very principle foundation of democracy — with local newspapers providing the conduit through which these important conversations take place.

Through emails, phone calls, letters, people stopping into our office and social media posts — conservative or liberal, right- or left-leaning, Republican, Democrat or Independent — one thing each of those who have reached out to us agree on is that sowing division while remaining anonymous is wrong.

And "has gone too far" for many in our community.

Ultimately, a community is made up of individuals, each with the opportunity to be a powerful force for good.

But to do so first requires a willingness to stand with what you believe — rather than hiding behind it.

(we've been accused of all of these), we stand behind every edition that rolls off the press and is delivered into your mail box.

To the right of this editorial is a list of our staff, how to contact each of us and where our office is located.

You know us and, more often than not, we know you.

Because of that, we can openly agree or disagree; we can each defend our position or perspective; and we can create an opportunity

Most were openly angered by it.

A few were bewildered. None canceled their subscriptions.

In fact, the response has been quite the opposite.

Despite the intention the individual or group that coordinated this mailing may have had in furthering the division that exists within our small community — and of which our current investigative series has been chronicling since Aug. 8 — the end result of this tactic

From the Editor's Desk

Ned Hickson

LETTERS

HEARTFELT APPRECIATION FOR HELP OF STRANGERS

On July 10, I was in an automobile accident on Highway 126 about MP 27. My vehicle rolled over twice and started on fire.

A number of good Samaritans stopped. One blessed individual had a fire extinguisher. Able to put out the fire, a young man entered my vehicle while on its side and helped assist me up to the open window.

Another pulled me out.

Others kept me on the ground immobile (not knowing the extent of my injuries) until the fire department and ambulance came some time later due to the distance from the nearest emergency services in Florence.

How do I adequately thank these good folks whose names I do not know who stopped — some who risked their lives — and others who cared for me?

Never adequately.

They were selfless and I am here today doing well because of them. I do not even know if they live in the Florence area but do want to recognize such heroic people who cared so much about a stranger.

My heartfelt appreciation to them all, the two state police officers and Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue.

P.S. They all wore masks.

— Joanne Kittel
Yachats, Ore.

me to "walk away" from the *Siuslaw News*.

I can say I was physically sickened by this act. The general public is bombarded 24/7 by political discord — and enough is *enough*. We, as Americans, all have the right to our own opinions about everything in life. This includes politics, without the vitriol, the blame and all the expressions of hate.

It is truly disturbing to see our city heading in the same direction as many parts of our nation. At this rate, what's next?

Will we be told to boycott, march and "protest" in the streets in the dark of night and, God forbid, follow the examples of Portland, Seattle, Milwaukee and other cities under siege?

If this sender doesn't like what he (or she) reads in our paper, there's an easy solution: Don't Read It.

If you don't like what you see and hear on some TV networks: Don't Watch It.

Just leave those alone who express their views and do so without trying to coerce others with a different outlook.

Using the U.S. mail in this "in your face way," to me, is *very* offensive.

—Sue Hale
Florence

DOES PROPERTY HAVE MORE VALUE THAN LIVES?

There would be *no* riots or protests or looting without the deaths of unarmed black men and women by white police officers.

I do not understand the comments

about the destruction of property that do not mention the loss of so many lives.

Do they really value lost property over lost lives?

Is it truly acceptable that white men and women brandishing guns from their front porches and on public streets against peaceful protesters are allowed and encouraged by the current administration?

Do we really want vigilantes shooting innocent unarmed protesters in the streets?

Please think about what your Letters to the Editor are encouraging and promoting.

—Patty Harrison
Florence

HIDING IN SILENCE

I want to express my strong and unconditional support for the *Siuslaw News* and for the courageous investigative series it currently is publishing in an effort to heal the growing divisiveness in our Florence community.

I also am writing to condemn the cowardice of the malicious person who wrote a flyer with those lies and "fake news" about the paper — and then did not have the honor and decency to sign the flyer.

Shame on you, whoever you are out there, hiding in your silence.

Siuslaw News, please keep up your good work. The community needs you today more than ever.

—Ann Lathrop
Florence

PHYSICALLY SICKENED BY FLYER

I received a cowardly anonymous printed card in my mail instructing

Partisan politics has no place on councils or boards

(Editor's Note: Viewpoint submissions on this and other topics are always welcome as part of our goal to encourage community discussion and exchange of perspectives.)

I moved my family to Florence in 1955. I served 28 years with the Florence City Fire Dept., and joined a few other folks as well. I served on the city budget committee, went through the offices of the Florence Jaycees, spent 13 years on the Siuslaw School Board, served as director, vice president and president of the Florence Chamber of Commerce, have been a member of the Rotary Club, and have been the Rotary auction's auctioneer since 1970 or so. My son, Bob, joined me in the '80s.

Two of our sons still live in Florence, one spent 16 years or so on the school board and one is currently a school

board member.

I say all of this as my way of sharing that I and my family have shared and volunteered our time in this community.

GUEST VIEWPOINT

By Blair Sneddon
Long-time Florence Resident

Now to the meat of this — my first-ever letter to any editor of any newspaper in my entire 85 years.

Recently in our mailbox I received a large card vilifying the *Siuslaw News*. I was told I was on the list because I was a registered Republican.

No longer; a while back I re-registered as an Independent after finding myself disgusted with politics. To the mailer of that card I offer the following

advice: The words on the card are just plain BS.

The card's wording is that "their Fake News is unethical and seditious." The writer would have done well to check the dictionary.

"Unethical" is defined as "Not Morally Correct."

"Seditious" is defined as "Indicting or causing people to rebel against a state or monarch."

Siuslaw News is a newspaper, not a state or monarch. To they who sent the card with no name or identification on this piece of c--p, I object.

It is also my opinion that partisan politics has no place on city councils, school boards, fire boards, etc. Those folks are elected to represent all citizens of the city or district they serve.

I will be renewing my subscription (I do however feel some of the article are way too wordy).

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Siuslaw News

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NEWSPAPER SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

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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 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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