

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)



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Siuslaw News

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LETTERS

BENEDICK ANNEXATION MADE SIMPLE

If the mayor or members of the city council don't find the time to read the actual file facts from Lane County and so many others on the matter of annexation — not just the biased presentations for annexation by the COF Planning Director — consider this: If you, your parents, loved ones or friends lived on Oceana Drive, would you vote for this annexation?

Of course not. It's wrong on many levels.

Don't turn Oceana Drive into a road of heartache for its residents and those of the adjacent neighborhoods. Do the right thing and deny this annexation.

—Jeff Talbot
 Florence

FLORENCE, LIKE EVERYWHERE ELSE, IS NOT IMMUNE TO RACISM

This letter is in response to Joel Marks' letter "America Is Not Systemically Racist" (Feb. 24).

First, I would like to state that while the Republican party of the Civil War era did in fact enact some of the first freedoms for Black people, neither the Dem-

ocratic or Republican parties of today are like those that existed in the 1860s through 1950s.

By the late 1960s, the Democratic party had abandon its former support of legal segregation while Republicans had come to embrace a white backlash to voting and civil rights.

Remember that in 1968, George Wallace left the Democratic party in protest to its actions, such as LBJ's war on poverty. But closer to home, lets talk about Florence and some of the obvious signs of prejudice and discrimination that I have personally witnessed.

1. My partner brought our Black friends to Thanksgiving dinner at a public place two years ago and came home telling me that, when they sat down at a table, the elderly white couple sitting nearby got up and left.

2. The harassment of the young girls protesting at a Black Lives Matter demonstration last spring.

3. The Confederate flags that I see on cars of residents here in Florence.

Unfortunately we have prejudice alive and well in Florence and we need to realize that we all can do better, we all can be a lit-

tle kinder and — no matter what political party you are in — we should all work at realizing that diversity is important.

We need to understand that all people should be treated fairly regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, age, ethnicity or ability.

—Maggie Bagon
 Florence

SEEMS LIKE A GOOD SIGN

I live in an area where it's easy to get lost and strangers often knock at the door for directions — although less frequently these days.

It has been a pleasant surprise in recent weeks to be told by people asking for directions that they had at first hesitated to walk up the driveway, but felt safe to do so when they saw the "Biden-Harris" bumper sticker on my parked car.

I never asked anyone who they actually voted for, but I hope my experience is a good sign that creating a feeling of safety and acting decently toward others are being recognized as core values of the new administration.

—Karin Radtke
 Yachats

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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The danger of totalitarianism here in the U.S.

(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.)

To name just a few of the characteristics of totalitarianism: restrictions of speech, a lack of freedom of religion, lack of democracy, political repression, control over the economy, massive censorship, mass surveillance, limited freedom of movement, state terrorism, fraudulent elections ... sound familiar?

This appears to be the direction our nation is heading if we don't address it soon.

Some of the preliminary signs witnessed in other totalitarian movements (Joseph Stalin — Soviet Union, Adolf Hitler — Germany, Mao Zedong — China, Benito Mussolini — Italy, K II-Sung — North Korea) are: 1) loneliness, 2) loss of faith in traditional institutions such as political parties, media, law enforcement, religious institutions and corporations.

A recent Pew report showed that the younger generation

trusts their college professors more than any of the above.

It pains me to see some Christians who say they have lost their businesses and careers by ex-

GUEST VIEWPOINT
 By Marshall Denton
 Florence

tempting to reverse that order. For example, Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Jared Huffman (D-CA) and Jerry McNerney (D-CA) are asking President Biden to pressure conservative Christians through a document called "Restoring Constitutional Secularism and Patriotic Pluralism in the White House," a 28-paged proposal on behalf of the Secular Democrats of America.

Among the decisions related to those recommendations have been the reversal of many policies instituted by President Trump, including the "Mexico City Policy" and others that essentially weaken or eliminate his anti-abortion policies.

As of Jan. 28, President Biden reversed President Trump's ban on billions of taxpayer dollars to fund abortions across the globe. More than 60 million abortions have been performed in the U.S. since Roe v. Wade.

Please, Christians, don't drink the Kool-Aid. We need to stand up, push back lies with truth, love (not violence) and be firm with our convictions.

pressing their opinions against a liberal agenda. It is one reason some Christians don't speak out; they are afraid of the repercussions.

The truth is, speaking out or standing up in a just and non-violent way is the only firewall against tyranny.

Tyranny was once what America fought to free itself from. Now, it seems tyranny is being pushed for implementation.

The church needs to take action and come together as one body and one spirit. Our country was founded in part on Judeo-Christian beliefs. The original intent of our founders was God over man over government. It seems many on the Left are at-

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