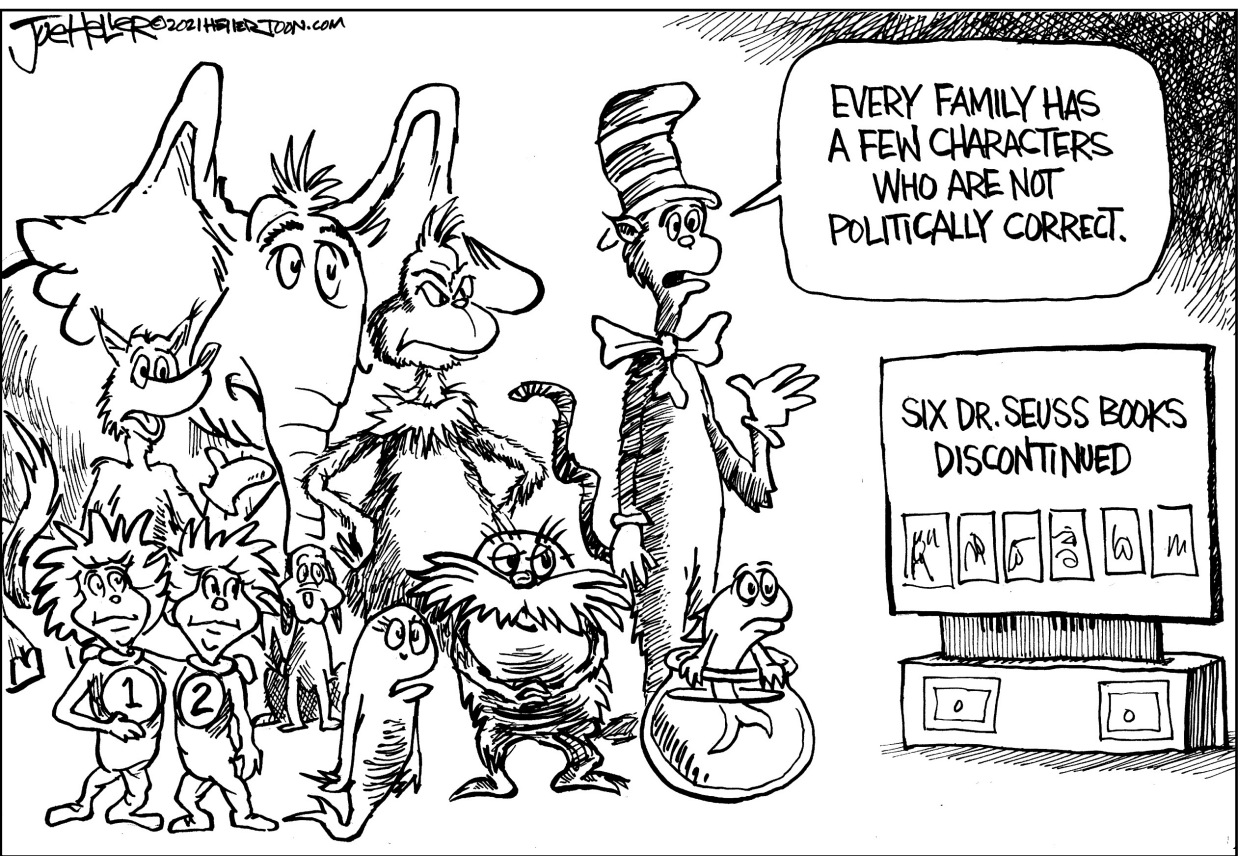


**Siuslaw News**  
 P.O. Box 10  
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# Opinion

**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

**A THRILL OF YOUR LIFE**

Health providers encourage us all to exercise whenever possible and to do so outdoors during COVID times. My preference is to walk or ride a bike since I have given up jogging some years ago to preserve my knee joints.

I often seek the beach or some other locations nearby using a portion — or all — of Rhododendron Drive (Fourth Street) as my pathway. Exercise enthusiasts suggest raising one's heartbeat to gain an aerobic rate for best results.

I can confirm gaining the desired aerobic rate at times as vehicles pass by me between 35-55 mph a mere yardstick or two away from my body while walking or riding outside the fog line.

The 1- to 3-foot of asphalt is your sidewalk or bike path (unless you add the ditch) from north of Wild Winds subdivision to Heceta Beach Road. Many courteous drivers slow or swerve partly away to give additional space, but when oncoming vehicles approach, this is not possible.

I can only hope that all drivers are not distracted by passengers, pets, children, coffee spills, radio announcements, avoiding potholes or daydreaming when passing. One warning to all is that if you are on the inside of a curve, be extra observant since drivers tend to "turn into" corners sharper and cross over the fog line.

I invite our mayor, city council members and Lane County officials to get the thrill of their life by walking or biking any portions of this road when busy with traffic (add in some rain or darkness for extra thrills).

I would bet they all agree it was a thrill of their lifetimes also.

—Joe Fyie  
 Florence

There was an efficient plan, smooth execution and an overall environment of care and concern for everyone involved — both volunteers and vaccine recipients. Thank you, volunteers. Thank you, Florence.

—Crystal Hall  
 Florence

**THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO DISREGARD TO GUIDELINES**

Across the country, we have experienced the state's mandate for the coronavirus pandemic to wear protective masks, adhere to social distancing and not expose yourself to eating or drinking inside an establishment that has by mandate been closed down.

In states like Florida and Texas, the mandates have been disregarded, establishments have opened and more people have been infected.

I never thought that I would see such disregard in our town but I was so wrong. Both The Little Brown Hen and Firehouse Restaurants have been fined a total of more than \$36,000 by OSHA inspectors, who reported also being threatened by gun-toting individuals.

Our local city council has not said much about that. And why wasn't our local police called in to discover, apprehend and possibly arrest those gun-carrying individuals who threatened state officials?

I still will not eat or drink inside any establishment until I think it is safe. Hopefully, I will not be required to carry my 9mm pistol when I go to the health club or movie theater.

—Win Jolley  
 Florence

**FRAMERS SAW DIFFICULTIES IN CHURCH-STATE UNIONS**

In response to Karen Mahoney's Letter to the Editor ("Forefathers Saw Inequities of Imposed Religion" March 6), I would like to add additional history on the issue of whether or not America's Founding Fathers intended this to be a Christian nation.

In short, they specifically did not.

While responding to Guest Viewpoint author Marshall Denton, Mahoney summarized some events and conclusions during the period between independence and ratification of our U.S.

Constitution supporting a secular government. When drafting the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson used generic religious language that all religious groups would respond to, not narrowly Christian terms.

Further, had a Christian nation been the goal of the founders, that goal would have been specifically stated in the Constitution.

The Founding Fathers chose a secular government not because they disliked religion, but because they saw the difficulties and inequities in church-state unions across Europe and wanted better for America.

From 1797, the Treaty of Tripoli states in Article 11, "The government of the United States is not, in any sense, founded on the Christian religion." This treaty passed unanimously in Congress and was signed by President John Adams.

Over the decades, several amendments to the U.S. Constitution have been proposed to include language explicitly acknowledging Christianity and/or the Christian deities as America's source of authority.

Such proposals have never been passed into law.

America's Constitution, by intent and design, provides freedom for all religions as well as freedom from any religion. My advice to those believing America was meant to be a Christian government is to get your religion from your clergy and your history from professional historians in peer-reviewed literature.

—Raymond Hull  
 Florence

**THANK YOU LANE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH, VOLUNTEERS**

My wife and I got our COVID-19 vaccinations at the Florence Events Center clinic this morning.

I am almost 73 years old, and I have never seen any government agency provide any service as efficiently as the Lane County Public Health Department did today.

I would also like to thank all those who volunteered to see that Florence area residents were able to get in and out so quickly and safely.

—Paul Floto  
 Dunes City

**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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