

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)



Life as we knew it

its effects on every aspect of life in our area. In fact, if you go to our website (www.TheSiuslawNews.com) and search "coronavirus," you will find more than 400 mentions of

to help fill in the gaps. Groups stepped in to provide meals for their neighbors. The community helped celebrate milestone achievements with parades and

least in small steps — toward a semblance of "business as usual." It's not over, however. The federal and state governments are still asking us to follow safety guidelines for the COVID-19 pandemic. We still have to wear masks, sanitize often and socially distance ourselves from others.

From the Features Editor's Desk

Chantelle Meyer

the virus in our stories and posts. Some stories covered the "big" aspects of a global pandemic. These included climbing case counts and shifting guidelines for health and safety across every industry, as well as the first local outbreaks, first deaths and first access to vaccines. But looking over the past year, I was reminded of not only the big stories, but also the many *human* moments. Already in the first month of the pandemic, people were making masks and asking for fabric and monetary donations so they could help equip hospital and frontline workers. Local organizations collected other personal protective equipment (PPE)

online parties. We all got used to talking through computer screens. These were the new ways that the communities in Florence, Dunes City, Mapleton and upriver supported each other. Now, a year into the pandemic, life as we know it is changing once again. More and more of us are getting vaccinated — thanks in part to two large-scale clinics held at the Florence Events Center, where more than 2,100 doses were administered by Lane County Search and Rescue. In addition, our students are going back to school and sports are once again appearing in our B section. Restrictions are easing and we are heading back — at

It's hard not to jump back in, to embrace our new allowances — and *our friends* — and celebrate. But we have to remember that the restrictions are ultimately a way to save lives. Moving into the 13th month of the pandemic, *Siuslaw News* will continue to be here with our COVID-19 coverage as we document additional vaccination opportunities, county metrics, local cases and more. The time we have spent together as a community under COVID-19 has been — and continues to be — a tough time. But the unique community we've built in the Siuslaw Region pulled through. Now, we need to just hold on a little longer. Together.

Some history is in order for Idylwood concerns

(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.)

A recent Guest Viewpoint by Kenneth Chips regarding the CCRs for Idylwood reminded me of the years of construction in the Idylwood subdivision. I remember that it was the new and upcoming area with upscale homes that was cheered by many for bringing new homes to Florence. It was sort of out of the way from the city "core" and somewhat mocked at for being "way out there in the boonies." (The building of Bi Mart was considered so far out of town that some wondered who would go that far to shop.) Folks who bought in the Idylwood subdivision were happy as a lark to purchase such nice homes. And, at that time, the CCRs were "just the way it was" in Florence. Since then, I am not aware of changes in the CCRs regulated by City of Florence, but there may have been. And remember: No one forced anyone to buy a home in Idylwood. If they didn't like the terms they didn't have to buy. No doubt, most of the buyers were educated enough to

make an informed decision. New regulations may have been addressed over years-gone-by due to evidence of flooding in not only Idylwood but other subdivisions as well.

GUEST VIEWPOINT By Dana Rodet Florence

I remember at Heceta Beach Road, there was never a lake until it flooded due to blockage and no one bothered to release it. So, it now has the unofficial moniker of "Heceta Beach Lake." (Very funny.) My point is that the older streets in Florence that do not have sidewalks and gutters were probably before Florence "modernized" itself in the 1980s. Highway 101 was two lanes and anything north of about 36th Street was "way" north of town. As far as flooding goes, there are many areas of Florence that "flood" due to extremely heavy rains — perhaps once a year or once every few years. And there is not a lot that can be done about it without extreme costs that get passed on to the consumers and residents. Mr. Chips does use a bit of hyperbole when using such words as "wet-

lands" and "discrimination." Almost all of Florence is "wetlands." Also, I honestly doubt Benedick Holdings is using the pandemic as a tool to get annexation passed. It is going a bit too far to insinuate that realtors share in some responsibility for supposed damages that may or may not occur. As to the statement that "many seniors are not tech savvy," I agree some may not be. But I know dozens of seniors in Rotary that use Zoom every Tuesday. I think most seniors (including myself) know how to use a computer. And, if Idylwood is such a close community — and if folks from that community read the *Siuslaw News* — then I would suspect neighbors talk to each other about this issue quite frequently. Perhaps the more tech savvy neighbors could help those less tech savvy — not just for this particular issue but simply as a good neighbor. Perhaps the question of why a ballot is not available to vote on annexation could be directed to the city manager so she can clarify the rules. That all being said, I do believe the city better get it right in dealing with this issue. They better get it right with the construction of roads and gutters and flowing water. Lastly, check what socialism is. I don't think it applies here.

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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.

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