

**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)

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## Siuslaw News

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## Siuslaw News

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## Help keep emergency medical services public

(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.*)

The Mission of Western Lane Ambulance District (WLAD) is to provide quick, efficient, professional transport services and community education with the highest standards of excellence. WLAD provides Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to the citizens and visitors of Western Lane County, an area of roughly 1,000 square miles of cities, towns, forests, beaches and sand dunes.

We are a public agency, governed by a locally elected board of directors who live in the district. Our focus is on providing the best service possible for the residents of — and visitors to — our district because we believe quality and timely service coupled with our experience and

modern equipment saves lives.

Though we regularly staff two ambulances 24 hours a day, seven days a week, there are times we have four ambulances actively responding at one time — and still there is

### GUEST VIEWPOINT By Mike Webb and Rick Yecny WLAD board directors

a demand for more services. Last year, WLAD staff worked more than 53,500 hours for the people of western Lane County.

Our staff is of the highest quality: experienced, well equipped and well trained. Our medics know the area and often know our patients personally. The district's Paramedics and EMTs are trained to the highest national levels. WLAD employs full time: 11 Critical Care Paramedics, 3 Paramedics and 2 EMTs. We also

employ 9 part-time EMTs, along with our Mobile Integrated Health-care Paramedic. Our full-time employees average nearly 13 years' experience with the district. Several have been with us more than 20 years and one has 37 years' experience with WLAD.

We are funded by both taxpayer dollars and by patient service fees. Our tax rates have not changed since 2012, and there are no plans to change them now. Through our operating levy, property owners help support our operation by paying .45 cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. For a typical home with an assessed value of \$250,000, the levy costs just .31 cents a day.

This fall, we will be asking the citizens of our district to support the renewal of our current operating levy at the same rate it has been since 2012. We hope you will continue to support Western Lane Ambulance.

## LETTERS

### STAND WITH MAYOR AGAINST CLIMATE ALARMISTS

I am writing this in great opposition to the alleged Florence "climate crisis."

When we moved here some 28 years ago, this was the most peaceful, well-organized and genuinely friendly town. It was thriving and we were — and still are — privileged to live here with, among other things, clean air and magnificent weather.

We have gradually managed to move from a joyous, caring, generous, blessed and stable town to one that fears nonconformance to every single complaint, observation, thought and expression of political and other points of view.

Everyone is entitled to their opinion, but common sense must prevail. Florence does not have a climate crisis and has not added to the global climate situation.

Florence contributes only a minuscule fraction of the .7 percent of total carbon output for the entire state of Oregon. Expending time, money, valuable city and volunteer energy, as well potential tax dollars to create a subcommittee to deal head on with — and generate a resolution for — the Florence "climate crisis" is illogical and does not merit more than a short-range consideration.

Our city is still trying to cope with the coronavirus and our city managers have more than enough with which to concern themselves in the commission of their duties.

I stand with our Mayor for denying to conform to the wishes of just a few who feel Florence has a climate crisis.

As the old saying goes: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." There is no critical turning point in our magnificent climate here in Florence and surrounding areas as much as global warming alarmists may think.

Gentlemen, please consider the many more current and important issues for our wonderful city first rather than a potentially destructive, counter-productive and what I see as a fabricated Florence "climate crisis."

—Linda Farrell  
Florence

and kindness from hospice.

Bless you.

—Patsy and Jack Cowden  
Florence

### CANCELLATION OF EMAC MEETING RIDICULOUS

First, I'd like to apologize to any Environmental Management Advisory Committee (EMAC) member that was sick or unable to attend the recent meeting because of any personal or family problem — this is not addressed to you.

However, it is addressed to the members that chose to be absent because of their own agendas, those who do not represent the entirety of the citizens and public in the Florence area. If those EMAC members openly state that their attendance will not be present at a meeting because an issue might be adverse to their beliefs, then they have no business being on a committee that represents any community body, large or small.

All public/citizen representatives (committees) have a duty to listen to their constituents — this was simply a discussion meeting, not a mandate to enact laws. If non-attending members are so threatened by a mere discussion of how possible evidence of climate change could affect the area, then they should not be on any committee related to that subject — that's plain common sense.

It's time to get rid of individuals that attempt to control directions for short term gain; our very existence on multiple levels depends on it. We seem to be represented in our area by individuals of the mindset of a "no-limit restriction mentality" on growth and development at the expense of our environment, be it caused by climate change or other human interactions.

This is producing what we are currently witnessing/experiencing all over the planet in the form of horrific storms, loss of life sustaining species (salmon, etc.) and humans ourselves.

Let us hope that, skill and science eventually trumps brawn and superstition.

—Jeff Talbot  
Florence

### BOYCOTTING EMAC MEETING IS GROUNDS FOR REMOVAL

Regarding the front page article "EMAC Meeting Cancelled After Failing To Reach Quorum" (April 3), those members of the Environmental Management Advisory Committee who boycotted the March 30 special session of the EMAC — specifically, Michael Titmus (Chairman), Ronelle Kurt (Vice-Chairperson), Sherry Harvey, Josh Haring and Daniel Berry — should be ashamed of themselves.

Those individuals were appoint-

ed by the Mayor to represent the interests of the citizens of Florence. Their failure to address the concerns of the community — in this case merely a recommendation to form a climate change subcommittee — is a blatant abandonment of their duties.

Regardless of their personal position on the issue, they accepted the charge of the EMAC to sustain and improve the city's livability and quality of life. Failure to do so by boycotting this important planning meeting is malfeasance.

The Mayor should demand the resignation of these five individuals and appoint new members who are willing to work on behalf of all citizens. Failure to do so can only be interpreted as Mayor Joe Henry's tacit agreement with their actions.

The net result is the community is left without even the chance to discuss a strategy for the future.

—Dolly Brock  
Florence

### STIGMA OF SUICIDE CAN ONLY BE ERASED THROUGH OPEN DISCUSSION

The "From Editor's Desk" editorial "We Must Agree To Hear The Deafening Silence Of Suicide" (April 3) should be a call to arms for our community.

As someone who had both a sister and mother attempt to take their lives, although long ago, I can tell you the stigma has not waned over the years.

While we cannot affect change in the rest of the world, we absolutely can here in our own community.

We all need to learn the signs of someone who is in trouble. True, not everyone will display signs. But for those who do, we need to care enough to ask them how they are doing and be willing help them.

I am not saying we should try to counsel them. However, we should know where to get them professional help and make sure they get it.

That is the easy part.

The hard part is to regularly check in with them, let them know that confiding in you is safe and that you care about them.

Someone who takes their own life is someone that, for reasons known only to them, can no longer live in their own skin.

Ned is right: the stigma can only be negated by honest, open discussions.

Unfortunately, we seldom learn the "why" because the family, rightfully so, is in too much pain to talk about it.

However, talking about the "why" can help us all to become better educated and more sensitive to the struggles of those who are in trouble.

—Graham Ross  
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 unsupported 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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