

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)

LETTERS

MILTENBERGER KNOWS ISSUES, DUTIES

Upon reading the various positions of the candidates for Siuslaw School Board, I decided to then read the Mission Statement of the District and the Goals of the Superintendent/Board for 2021.

Among the things the school district mentions in those documents is the uniqueness of every child, high standards and expectations, the involvement of and communication to the entire community, including those historically under-represented, as well as standards focused on visionary leadership, effective financial management and an inclusive district culture.

Maureen Miltenberger is the candidate who is aligned and focuses her positions on the mission of this district. Her statements showed she was aware of the policies, regulations and goals that the district has put forth and, most importantly, knew the purpose and job of a school board member. Maureen is familiar with the new and vital Oregon Student Success Act (SSA), working with other community resources and focusing on helping all students of our district to deal with the continuing and future effects of the current pandemic.

Maureen is very student-focused, including experience directly with students and their needs while learning — especially inside the current school buildings.

We need a board member who understands their job as a member of the school board team and not anyone with vague or irrelevant positions, negative personnel or political manifestos, or undefined “-isms” that look backwards.

Maureen Miltenberger has my vote for school board because she knows the duties of the position which she is running for, and is focused on the positives of issues and policies for 2021 and beyond for all our students.

—Mary DeCeault
Dunes City

OSBA GUIDELINES ARE IMPORTANT TO CONSIDER

Having served on the school board in North Bend for six years, I felt the following information might be helpful as we face the election to fill school board positions here in Florence.

First of all, I would like to thank everyone who has stepped forward to run. It is a massive job, sometimes with little things and sometimes making decisions that no one is really happy with — but that the laws and financial restrictions may dictate nevertheless.

Maturity and life experiences make the job a lot easier.

If you check with the school board association (www.OSBA.org), Code of Conduct, some of the guidelines that they recommend are:

- The elected officials should be a representation of the community, so that a good cross-section of ideas can be shared. That may mean that you do not want an abundance of retired folks or you may not want family members serving together on the school board, which could lead to conflict of interest issues.

- The elected officials should serve with an open mind and not running for this position because they might have a personal opinion or vendetta about how they think the school district should be run.

- There are several areas that the school board is actually responsible for: the evaluation of the superintendent, approval of policies and procedures and approving the budget.

Please choose wisely with your vote.

—Carol Salisbury
Florence

VIEWPOINT NOTHING MORE THAN OVERT ADVERTISEMENT

While I greatly appreciate the *Siuslaw News* providing editorial space to concerned members of this community through the publication of the “Guest Viewpoint,” I must take issues with that element in the Saturday, May 8 edition, “School Board Needs Equal Representation.”

This viewpoint was nothing more than an overt advertisement for two specific candidates in the race for positions on the school board. While it seems other good, viable candidates endorsements are limited in length and relegated to the “Letters” column, Ms. Mann-Heintz was provided several column inches to expound on the qualities of her favored candidates.

Unless other candidates are allowed equal, unpaid, space, this is blatantly unfair. Of course, at this

point such consideration is moot, as voting is well underway.

—Jimmie Zinn
Florence

DON'T INSULT OUR INTELLIGENCE

It is axiomatic in the “course of human events” that men have certain talents and abilities — as do women — to preserve happiness. That is why when taking full advantage of citizenry responsibility as it relates to plebiscite opportunities in America, one must determine their voting strategy based on merit not gender.

In the May 8 edition of the *Siuslaw News*, there was a curious Ad (page A2) requesting those in Florence and the surrounding environs to vote *exclusively* for the fairer gender. Though my native intelligence is shaky at times, please Florence Area Democratic Club, do not insult our fair city's intelligence with politically correct pablum.

We will decide on who to vote for based on many different factors, including philosophy, credentials and who will be most for the citizens without personal pride of politics. Therefore I voted for those who will *serve* the area best and *not* based on diversity or gender.

My votes consisted of a good man: a builder who is certifiably non-political and will make a difference in curriculum, philosophy and culture for students for Siuslaw School Board position 4; and similarly a good man for position 6.

For the Democratic Club's information, for WLAD I voted for a good man and a good woman for commissioners who have not been tainted as yet by politics in order to help clean up that district — though possibly not agreeing on every nuance.

It is irrational and shortsighted to believe that gender should be strictly adhered to when using one's sacred voting privilege. I hope that the Florence Democratic Club reads our Declaration of Independence, Constitution and Federalist Papers to begin to understand their folly, even in this modern age. Although unfortunately for the Democratic Club, men wrote those time honored documents, just as men also wrote the 19th amendment.

God bless America.

—Joel Marks
Florence

New school board needs wise representation

(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.)

We (the school board) are in many respects at a critical juncture for our students and, therein, the future of our country.

I'm writing this Viewpoint to further, as the editor states and in the spirit of, "... community discussion and exchange of perspective."

I do have a different perspective. But before delving into that, let me set the record straight with regards to some things I find very troubling with Suzanne Mann-Heintz's Guest Viewpoint ("New School Board Needs Equal Representation," May 8).

First, she has seemingly identified herself as representing the school board. It clearly states: Guest Viewpoint By Suzanne Mann-Heintz, Siuslaw School Board.

She does not represent the views or opinions of the board nor does she have the authority to do so. That sub-heading, Guest Viewpoint, is the second place people look when scanning for context. The assumption they will make is that she represents the entire board and therefore the entire board believes and/or feels the same as she.

Secondly, this notion of unanimity is further promulgated in paragraph 14, where she writes, "The board speaks with one voice..."

I understand what she is trying to say here but the voters/readers will *not* and will again assume she

GUEST VIEWPOINT By Dennis King Siuslaw School Board Member

speaks about these candidates for all board members.

She does *not*.

So, to be explicitly clear then, I do not speak for any other Siuslaw School District Board members.

I'll begin my perspective by parsing out the word “equal” in Director Mann-Heintz's title and the word “wise” in mine, which interestingly is the type of language issue I see as critical for board members to wrestle with.

She states, and thereby implies, that Director Diana Pimlott's role and influence on the board will be diminished because she is the "... only remaining woman ..." and therefore the only way she can have a voice is for there to be "... more gender balance." This need for “equal” representation is to supersede all other personal qualities.

I, on the other hand, know that the reason Director Pimlott is admired and respected as a director is because she is wise. I look to her for her input on topics that come before the board because of her wise counsel. Her race, color, sex, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, genetic information, pregnancy or any other protected characteristic as outlined by federal, state or local laws have absolutely nothing to do with it.

Director Mann-Heintz implies, or wants the reader to infer, that old white guys are biased and, without gender balance, will lead the district into ruin.

Not true.

We need wise people on the school board. People who can truly weigh matters objectively without prejudice.

There are candidates on the ballot that are wise. I'll not publicly champion them because I find a sitting publicly-elected official doing so incredibly inappropriate.

So, on principle — and the fact that the Dunning-Kruger effect comes to mind (look that one up) — I'll simply encourage those of you who haven't voted to do so.

And instead of just calling two candidates, and to have real balance, call them all.

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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 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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