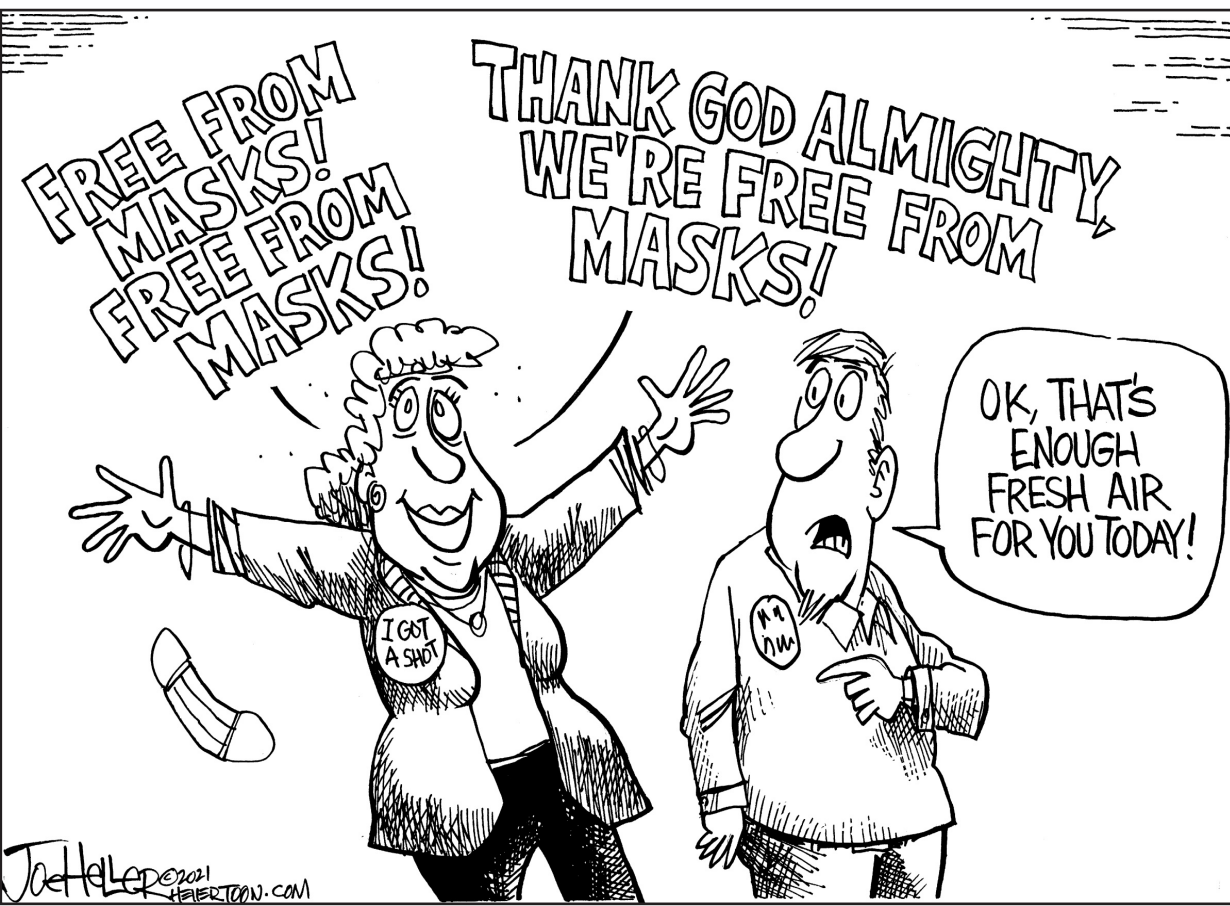


Siuslaw News
 P.O. Box 10
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Opinion

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

FREEDOMS HAVE RESPONSIBILITIES

"But this is a free country! I can fire my cannons! I can support the Viet Cong! I can bike down the left side of the road, with no helmet! So I it's my right to turn down oppressive vaccines!"

For the past 50 years, the U.S. has been lucky in the pandemic-public health department.

Some of us have forgot-

ten how contagious diseases are not always just personal choices. Few of us remember mandatory smallpox vaccines (RIP 1972).

Few of us have seen active TB or polio.

Few of us remember Typhoid Mary, who had a responsibility to wash her hands or stay out of public kitchens.

I hope we remember to thank our public health pro-

fessionals.

—John Egar
 Florence

YOU DID NOT FORGET

Thanks and gratitude to the sponsors of the full-page display honoring Armed Forces Day in the *Siuslaw News*, and in recognizing our serving and retired veterans.

You did not forget!
 —Delmer (Del) Neeley
 Florence

Reflections on another Rhody Days that wasn't



and safe, the normal tapestry and grandeur of Rhododendron Days was missing for only the second time since WWII. However, as a

family grew accustomed to the arrival of the Davis Carnival during the annual Rhododendron Festival and living so close

how different, when given an opportunity — or the right circumstance — to do so.

In the case of our annual Rhododendron Festival, when the carnival rides go up, people's guards come down. Whether a biker or banker, policeman or pirate, there is an unspoken agreement and genuine interest in having that shared experience together — and an understanding that it wouldn't work any other way.

Under normal circumstances, these same people would likely pass each other without a word, assuming they would even be in the same vicinity. But it's everyone's willingness to participate in that little bit of "crazy" that becomes a common thread we all share for a few days each year.

As more of us are vaccinated and, hopefully, infection rates of the COVID-19 virus slowly and consistently drop as a result, we can all look forward to the notion of sharing that common thread of a little well-earned "crazy" for Rhody Days in 2022.

From the Editor's Desk

Ned Hickson

community, each of us carries the spirit of our beloved festival within us. On social media, folks shared memories and photos, participated in the Rhody Run — both in-person and virtually — and some restaurants even offered carnival food like corn dogs and elephant ears.

For my first 18 years here at *Siuslaw News*, I was always assigned to photograph the parade route along Bay Street, where the bikers congregate, lining their Harleys along both sides for several blocks. I've had nightmares about tripping over a Fat Boy and sending a row of Harleys crashing like dominoes — and then being invited to the Olympics after setting a new sprint record.

I spent 20 years living in Old Town across from the Port of Siuslaw boardwalk. My

that we could practically high-five riders on the Tilt-o-Whirl without leaving the porch.

The banging together of carnival rides late Wednesday nights signaled the beginning of four days of craziness that transforms our quiet community into a beautiful example of controlled chaos shared by upwards of 20,000 diverse visitors.

During Rhody Weekend, you can usually see baseball-capped Korean War veterans talking with bikers whose leathers were stitched with Vietnam War veteran patches; young families posing with owners of classic cars built decades before they were born; "Captain Jack Sparrow" sharing a laugh with an out-of-town policeman. It is always an example of how easily we can find a connection with others, no matter

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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