

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)

LETTERS

DYING PLANET? OH, PLEASE.

A recent headline I read stated, "Our planet is dying." That is nonsense. I know it, you know it, and so do the folks who continue to spout such nonsense. The planet is no more dying than that rock in your backyard, or the dirt under your feet. People die, animals die, insects die, plants die, trees die. Rocks do not. Dirt does not either.

Continents move, they do not die, they just change shape. The only way this planet will "die" is if a meteor or something excessively big slams into it and shatters it into a billion pieces.

I doubt even setting off the entire global supply of nuclear weapons would kill the planet. It would kill people, animals, probably most living things, and change the shape of the planet. But no chance in a million it "kills" the planet.

Parents, do not let your children learn such nonsense. It isn't factual by any stretch of the imagination. Teach them basic sense and how to learn for themselves. Teach them how to discern right from wrong.

Almost any subject of learning has so-called experts. Pick a subject and you could find at least a thousand experts, probably a million experts across the planet. If 1,000 experts say something is true, you could find another 1,000 experts that say the opposite. We are merely subjected to whatever the media wants us to believe. Headlines like "Our Dying Planet" certainly gets someone's attention.

I dare any person, expert or not, to prove to me that this planet is dying. Not only dying but I want a date when that will occur. Is it next week, next year, when? If it is soon, I want to know so I can cash in my retirement, sell my house and all belongings, and go to the highest mountain and meditate.

— Dana Rodet, Westlake

CLIMATE DISRUPTION IS AFFECTING EVEN PARADISE

We do not speak for Mike Allen but would like to weigh in on the May 29 Guest Viewpoint (GVP), "Time To Develop A Plan To Benefit All, Not Just Placate A Relative Few" by Sam Spayd, in response to his May 22 GVP, "Is Florence Essential in the Fight to Curb Climate Change?"

The newspaper published our related letter, "Read the Data, Let It Sink In," on May 26.

The May 29 GVP contains two major points: 1) volcanoes produce more greenhouse gases than the human race ever has and 2) city hall should focus only on immediate problems including overbearing state government, housing, jobs, infrastructure, and quality of life in Florence.

Regarding #1. The argument about volcanoes was advanced by an Australian geologist with conspicuous conflicts of interest as a director of numerous mining companies and as a shareholder in several. He is not a climatologist.

The Australian Associated Press fact-checked his claims and found them to be inaccurate; one source, NASA, reported that global surface temperatures have increased around 1.5 degrees F since 1980, not decreased by a similar amount as the geologist claimed (<https://factcheck.aap.com.au/social-media-claims/ice-land-philippines-volcanic-eruptions-didnt-produce-more-co2-than-humans>).

According to the U.S. Geological Survey and the American Geophysical

Union, man-made CO2 emissions are 130-135 times greater than volcanic CO2 emissions (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ian_Plimer). Volcanic ash dramatically dims skies, but it settles out in days or weeks and is not CO2.

Also, the volcano argument collapses under the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's graph showing the exponential increase in greenhouse gases since industrialization began 250 years ago. Then, atmospheric CO2 was 280 ppm (parts per million), about as high as during the previous 800,000 years (https://ccimg5-2020.s3.amazonaws.com/2020CO2Peak/2020CO2Peak_Longterm_en_title_lg.jpg). Today, it's 420 ppm — a 50% increase in the last two centuries over the highest levels in 8,000 centuries. Look at the graph.

Regarding #2. Addressing climate disruption and local problems doesn't have to be either/or. Climate disruption is categorically different from local problems. No one but us can fix local problems. Climate disruption is a global problem everyone is obligated to fix. Focusing only on immediate local problems is short-sighted.

Here on the Oregon coast, we may feel untouched by climate disruption, but we're fooling ourselves that it will never hit home. Oceans are acidifying, threatening shellfish and related economies, and the central Oregon coast is becoming more dry, even here in paradise.

— Rollin Olson & Madelyne Barnett
Florence

THE CHAMBER IS A CONTRACTOR FOR THE CITY

I would like to clarify, for those who would be misguided by Joel Mark's budget Letter to the Editor ("Budget Should be a Concern," June 2), that the City of Florence does not privately fund the Florence Area Chamber of Commerce.

The Chamber is actually a contractor for the City and is paid for services rendered.

The funds paid to the Chamber come from Transient Room Tax, which are restricted funds only available for tourism development (these funds are based on tax collected from guests using lodging facilities inside the City).

The Chamber performs tourism development, which is a primary support of our economic stability in the Florence area. Part of the contract is providing Visitors Services, along with other events and regional marketing. The Chamber owns the Florence Visitors Center privately, and it is not owned by the City

Tourism supports our economy to the tune of \$146 million per year and creates 1,900 jobs. The Chamber's marketing performance has exceeded expectations and continues to help support a sustainable economic environment for our community.

I hope this information helps to clarify the budget expenditure.

— Bettina Hannigan
President/CEO of the Florence Area Chamber of Commerce

COUNCIL CAN FOCUS ON MULTIPLE ISSUES AT ONCE

Sam Spayd wrote a Guest Viewpoint for the Siuslaw News which asserts that we should ignore emissions from cars, trucks and planes because there are already so many volcanoes in the world.

Mr. Spayd also claims that the Florence City Council cannot walk and chew gum

at the same time; that the council can EITHER solve climate change OR solve housing issues, but not both.

I disagree with Mr. Spayd.

First, anthropogenic climate change is causing massive changes in how our economy works. Fossil fuel companies are being forced by judges and board members to slash emissions. What will this mean for the use of fuel in airplanes? Will they need to switch to hydrogen or electric?

If we take Mr. Spayd's view that we can only narrowly focus on immediate issues, and not longer-term issues, the Florence Municipal Airport may suddenly find itself out of business due to lack of planning.

I urge the Airport Advisory Committee to adopt the view that we humans can address all of the issues and that ignoring how the world economy is changing due to the effects of climate change is not a recipe for success.

— Mark Baker
Florence

THE RESULT OF HUMAN ACTION?

I appreciate a recent Facebook post of side-by-side arguments made in a recent Opinion section of the *Siuslaw News* by Florence climate champion Mike Allen and "climate denier" — in quotes because this is my humble and perhaps not fully-informed opinion — Sam Spayd, whose name is vaguely familiar in connection with championing Florence restaurant owners who went rogue locally over Oregon Gov. Kate Brown's mask and shutdown COVID safety restrictions. Both opinion writers are as fine and articulate advocates of their positions as one might hope to find.

As I read both opinions, it seems to me their arguments come down to this: is climate crisis, as we witness and experience it today, the result of human action or not? Do we, individually and collectively, have responsibility and agency to affect a change in how this story of climate on Earth goes?

I don't believe Mr. Spayd forwarded any argument to challenge the fact that climate change is real. Rather, he argues that it's "esoteric" to say we collectively and individually have a responsibility to act and do so more wisely than we have been.

Let's simplify this argument. Let's say a certain Mr. Spayd plants tomatoes in his garden and then refuses to water them — nature will take care of it because it rains fairly regularly. He won't feed them to help them grow, because it's tough luck if they aren't strong enough to do that on their own.

When he complains to his neighbor about how poorly his tomatoes are doing, the neighbor responds with a bunch of "esoteric" BS about horticulture and studies of what works and doesn't work to produce a crop of fine, ripe and delicious tomatoes. Mr. Spayd could then be possibly jealous of the healthy plants his neighbor consistently produces, which provides yet another reason to disregard and make light of his neighbor's "esoteric" BS.

Mr. Spayd, with respect and an earnest hope to help you be more successful in growing tomatoes, I intend no ill your way as I say your garden most certainly requires more lovingly care and attention than you are presently giving it.

— Darlene Norwood
Florence

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Siuslaw News

Published every Wednesday and Saturday at 148 Maple St. in Florence, Lane County, Oregon. A member of the National Newspaper Association and Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association. Periodicals postage paid at Florence, Ore. Postmaster, send address changes to: Siuslaw News, P.O. Box 10, Florence, OR 97439; phone 541-997-3441; fax 541-997-7979. All press releases may be sent to PressReleases@TheSiuslawNews.com.

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DEADLINES:

Wednesday Issue—General news, Monday noon; Budgets, four days prior to publication; Regular classified ads, Monday 1 p.m.; Display ads, Monday noon; Display classified ads, Friday noon.

Saturday Issue—General news, Thursday noon; Budgets, two days prior to publication; Regular classified ads, Thursday 1 p.m.; Display ads, Thursday noon; Display classified ads, Wednesday 5 p.m. Soundings, Tuesday 5 p.m.

NEWSPAPER SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

In Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$79; 6-month in-county, \$56; 10-week subscription, \$25; Out of Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$102; 6-month out-of-county, \$69; 10-week subscription, \$35; Out of State — 1-year subscription, \$134; E-Edition Online Only (Anywhere) — 1-year subscription, \$65.

Mail subscription includes E-Edition.
Website and E-Edition: TheSiuslawNews.com

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Office Hours:
Monday to Thursday: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Friday: 8 a.m. to noon

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 unsourced 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: cmeyer@thesiuslawnews.com

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PREVENT ELDER ABUSE BY KNOWING MORE

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.*

June is Elder Abuse Awareness Month. This is the time where the community comes together to learn about abuse prevention, how to report abuse, and what the community can do to help protect our elders.

Communities all over the globe sponsor events that feature the issues and solutions regarding elder abuse and prevention. Senior & Disability Services (S&DS), a division of Lane Council of Governments, is proud to host four trainings open to the public entitled called "Let's Talk About Abuse" Tuesdays. Four Tuesdays in June, S&DS is hosting a free training to the public. The slogan this year that S&DS has chosen is "Know More,

Report Abuse." S&DS wants to ensure that our community dedicates June to "Know More, Report Abuse" by offering these free trainings to the public.

As the COVID-19 pandemic hit our community, we saw an increase in Adult Protection Service (APS) calls at S&DS. From 2019 to 2020, there was a 32 percent increase of abuse allegations investigated.

GUEST VIEWPOINT

By Emily Ann Farrell, JD

Director, Senior and Disability Services
Lane Council of Governments

As Americans, we believe in justice for all, yet we fall short to live up to this belief when we allow seniors in our society to be abused or neglected. We fall short when abuses of seniors are witnessed and they do not get reported. When older adults are abused or ne-

glected, their maltreatment impacts all of us. As a community, we can dedicate our time and energy to help prevent elder abuse, address the social issues, and find sustainable solutions.

Social isolation among older adults has continued to increase during COVID-19, which means this increases the likelihood of abuse and neglect.

We can design stronger community supports to keep connectivity alive and protected those who are the most vulnerable in our community from abuses. Older adults who are socially connected and protected from harm are less likely to be hospitalized, less likely to require nursing homes, and more likely to live independently in their community. As a community, we must "Know More" and "Report Abuse."

We must stay dedicated to elder abuse prevention for all older adults in Lane County.