

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

(Editor's Note: Viewpoint submissions on these and other topics are always welcome as part of our goal to encourage community discussion and exchange of perspectives.)

KUDOS TO ALL INVOLVED

We would like to thank Megan Messmer, Florence Assistant City Manager and Public Information Officer, for her quick response to an incident that occurred at our 99th Climate Strike on Friday, July 30, in front of City Hall, when a young man began shouting obscenities and tried to destroy and/or take our signs. In an attempt to retrieve the signs, one participant fell and cut his head on the sidewalk. When she saw this happening, Megan called the police and the EMTs, who responded quickly. The participant was bandaged by the EMTs and the police took an incident report. We took him to Peace Harbor Emergency, where he was well looked after by the doctors and nurses there. We also would like to thank those responding EMTs, police officers and the doctors and nurses that assisted. They all did their jobs with both efficiency and compassion. All who were there and witnessed this incident are concerned with the mental health of this young man who ran off after this incident. We hope that he is found

soon and gets the help he needs.
 — Pat and Mike Allen
 Florence

ELEVATE EDUCATION WITHOUT MISINFORMATION

Wednesday, Aug. 11, saw some 40 individuals from the community gather to ostensibly discuss "elevating education" in the Siuslaw School District. Unfortunately, it turned into a massive misinformation event that will only harm our students. It was disappointing to hear so many myths being perpetuated by obviously caring parents. I heard that we don't know anything about the Delta variant, there aren't outbreaks in schools over the summer, kids don't spread the virus, and only kids with underlying conditions die, so it's not worth masking every child. While the group is advocating "mask choice" and claim that they aren't political, "Unmask The Children" signs were printed and available to be handed out. Most of the claims seem to rely on a recent Youtube Video by Dr. Daniel Stock in Indiana, which have been thoroughly refuted. Most specifically, the claim that aerosol particles go through masks has been repeated many times and totally distorted. According to J. Alex Huffman, an aerosol scientist in Denver, the masks are affective because air

flows around fibers in masks, but the virus does not because the fibers block the virus. Stock also claimed our own immune system is better than a vaccine, despite many people getting COVID more than once, and studies showing increased immunity with COVID vaccines. Finally, the doctor claimed that Vitamin D, Zinc and Ivermectin treat COVID because it worked on 15 of his patients. I don't think that even rates a response. I am always ready to work with members of the community to "elevate education." I believe we can go back to teaching algebra and geometry to every student, that all students deserve the highest level of science and computer technology courses, that arts students deserve the same level of infrastructure support as athletes. I don't believe any student should have a "dumbed down" curriculum. But injecting politics of any kind into our school district is not the path forward.
 — Sandy Todd
 Florence

(Editor's Note: On Monday, Aug. 16, the Siuslaw School District Board of Directors decided to plan a special meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 1, for the exclusive purpose of hearing public comment concerning the start of the school year and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.)

THANK YOU, A MEETING AND HOPE

(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.)

I'd like to thank the Dunes City Council and mayor for their letter to the PUC in opposition to the proposed huge rate increase by South Coast Water Company. It explained the financial burden to the community and suggested the company could look for investors and other sources for offsetting their costs. It is worth reading. I'd also like to thank the Siuslaw News for printing letters and articles on the subject. The affected households discovered the time to act was quite short if SCWC's letter (dated July 1, 2021, not 2020) was the first view of costs. Also, the PUC hearing was supposed to have been in early August before the request was withdrawn by SCWC. The yearly increase of almost \$900 estimated was not a one-time cost, but a permanent increase. With over 100 households,

this could amount to a loss of about \$90,000 per year to our community (Florence businesses for example). The next letters, dated July 29 and Aug. 2, 2021 were very well worded dealing with company costs. I noticed no consideration for lowering or adjusting rates which could be

GUEST VIEWPOINT

By Ron Stanley
Dunes City Resident

among (perhaps *the*) highest rates in the nation. Now we have an informational meeting this Thursday, Aug. 19, (COVID permitting) at the Dunes City Hall. I hope this is not simply a presentation of costs and perceived justification for the same increase, but will include many other facets of the issue, fully addressed as outlined by the Dunes City letter of opposition and those of us who wrote officially to the PUC. Water is a commodity, but it is also power when it comes to customers who have no choice about

being massively overcharged unless there are safeguards in place. So, Oregon, the PUC, customers, Dunes City and the company as well all need to be very careful about allowing dangerous precedents to be set. I hope we will hear a well-balanced and fully prepared presentation offering many sources the company has searched for or is already pursuing to help with funding, not simply one point of view being presented again. These could include (but are certainly not limited to) investors, grants, and some of all that "infrastructure" money that's out there or coming soon. Thank you in advance to all who will present and receive information about the company's issues. I look forward to a good and respectful relationship between the company, its customers and Dunes City. South Coast Water Company is holding its open house on Thursday, Aug. 19, at 6 p.m. at Dunes City Hall, 82877 Spruce St., Westlake.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The *Siuslaw News* welcomes Letters to the Editor and Guest Viewpoints as part of a community discussion of issues on the local, state and national level. 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.

Email letters to cmeyer@thesiuslawnews.com

TO BE CONSIDERED FOR PUBLICATION:

- Letters must address pertinent or timely issues of interest to our readers at-large. In addition:
- Letters reflect the opinion of the writer. The *Siuslaw News* cannot verify the accuracy of all statements made in letters. Authors should ensure any information is accurate, fair and not from second-hand knowledge or hearsay, and include sources where possible.
 - Letters have a suggested 300-word limit and may be edited for grammar and clarity.
 - Authors must sign their full name and include their street address (only city will be printed), as well as a daytime phone number and/or email address for verification. The person who signs the letter must be the actual author. *Siuslaw News* does not accept anonymous Letters to the Editor.
 - *Siuslaw News* will not print form letters, libelous letters, business promotions or personal disputes, poetry, open letters, letters espousing religious views without reference to a current issue, or letters considered in poor taste. Letters also may not be part of letter-writing campaigns.
 - Writers are limited to one published letter every two weeks.

TO SUBMIT TO THE SIUSLAW NEWS:

Emailed submissions are preferred. All letters need to include full name, address and phone number; only name and city will be printed. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed. The newspaper, at the sole discretion of the publisher and editor, reserves the right to reject any letter that doesn't follow the above criteria.

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