

Siuslaw News
P.O. Box 10
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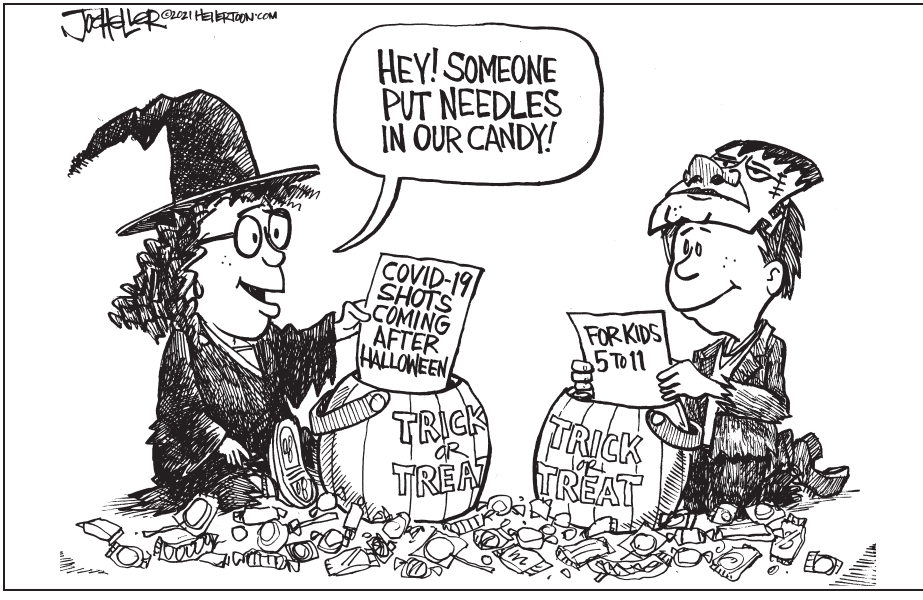
Opinion

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.)



EASY TO REPEAT A LIE
In response to Mr. Denton's letter on Oct. 9, I read on the internet that Hillary Clinton actually won the 2016 election, President #45's four-year term will be annulled, and every single thing passed during those four years will be rescinded.

that churches exist to provide spiritual teachings, not for political activism. If churches are to become political organizations perhaps it is time to take a look at reforming some of the tax advantages they currently benefit from.

A \$30 donation would supply a student with a nine-month subscription to the newspaper. On its face, it is a reasonable request, but in retrospect I am bothered by the single point of view often promoted by *Siuslaw News*.

generally ignored by the media. I was surprised that the *Siuslaw News* would fall right in step with most of those other media sources.

See how easy it is to repeat a lie? It doesn't matter how many times you or others insist that the election was stolen, you know and I know that simply can't be true — otherwise President Joseph Biden would not be in office today. Have you considered the fact that if Trump actually did win in 2020, he is automatically disqualified from running for office again, because a president is limited to two four-year terms?

In addition, on Jan. 6, a violent mob composed of radical right wing extremists attacked our Capitol because they believed the "big lie" about the presidential election being stolen. Numerous court challenges, recounts, and audits have proven that Joseph Biden won the 2020 presidential election and is currently the legitimately elected president of the United States.

For example: Some time ago, there were a dozen or so people gathered in front of Florence City Hall to express their opinion on climate issues. That group received a front page picture and a nice write-up explaining their views. Fast forward to Sept. 18, when 30 to 35 people expressed their point of view at the intersection of Highways 101 and 126 reference masking of children.

I have a simple question for the editor and subscribers: what happened to the fair and impartial reporting of events occurring in our community? There once was a time that the *Siuslaw News* took pride in the fact it reported all local events from a neutral perspective.

See how complicated it gets when a lie is substituted for the truth? With regard to politically active churches, are you familiar with the concept of the separation of church and state? Are you encouraging mosques, synagogues, The Church of Satan and others to become politically active or just Christian churches? It is my understanding

— Chandra Generis
Florence

No photographs. No article outlining their view. Nothing but crickets from *Siuslaw News*.

— Cliff Worley
Dunes City

WHAT HAPPENED TO FAIR & IMPARTIAL REPORTING?
I recently received a request from *Siuslaw News* to participate in Newspapers In Education (NIE).

Apparently, because the point those folks were making goes against the radical left position, it is

(Editor's Note: Siuslaw News covered one of the unmasking demonstrations in the Aug. 25 edition, giving it front-page placement and several photos. Future events were not submitted to us. The community is welcome to send in news releases and event information to editor@thesiuslawnews.com for inclusion in the newspaper.)

WHAT ARE YOU VOTING FOR?

(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.)

fully burdened cost to the district is over \$150,000 per employee. This is what you are considering in this vote: your \$42,356 income versus their \$150,000 income.

nesses know how hard you have to work to provide a service, provide a competitive and decent wage for your employees and, hopefully, remain viable and profitable despite every economic challenge. This government-run ambulance service increased compensation costs over \$210,000 this very year, knowing full well that "taxpayers will just pick up the tab."

The proponents of the two property taxes you each pay every year to provide a government subsidy to the local ambulance service would have you believe that this is a proper role for government. They can't imagine an ambulance service living within its means.

GUEST VIEWPOINT
By Larry Farnsworth
Local resident

Private ambulance services are efficient and cover all of their own costs to operate, including their own capital and equipment replacement needs, without charging taxpayers three times for an ambulance ride. Both the government and private ambulance services receive the same identical rates of patient service revenue reimbursement from Medicare, Medicaid and insurance, regardless of their stated charges. Each operates on the same income but have vastly different expectations or experience about expenses.

more than the chief of police earns in Florence. Fully burdened, each of these three supervisors costs taxpayers over \$200,000 per year. Each of them earns more than their own operations chief for supervising a small handful of employees. The entire operation has an entitlement tax and spend culture. Government boondoggle best describes this operation.

Most every business in Florence would love to have that kind of deep taxpayer wallet to dig into and to be able to offer their own staff that kind of compensation.

According to the U.S. Census, Florence households average \$42,356 in income. We have our seniors being nicked and dined to provide a starting salary of \$62,000 per year to first year paramedics. In just five years, this increases to over \$82,000 per year. Including all their benefits — expensive health plans, a \$3,000 cash bonus to pick up their co-pays and deductibles, a full month of vacation upon hire, free gym club memberships, cell phone stipends and picking up the 6 percent employee contribution responsibility for the underfunded PERS retirement program — the

Chief Michael Schick wrote in Western Lane Ambulance District's 2020-21 Budget, "We believe that the district's financial future to be questionable. Expenses over the last few years have been increasing annually at a much higher rate than our revenues. It is essential that the district take a multi-faceted approach to solve these financial issues by decreasing costs and increasing revenue."

Just a reminder about PERS. The proponents of the ambulance tax suggest that the \$3.4 million dollars that the ambulance district owes to the State of Oregon PERS retirement program for unfunded actuarial liabilities is small compared with the \$200 million owed by Lane County taxpayers, the \$5 million owed by the City of Florence taxpayers, or the \$10 million owed by the Siuslaw School District taxpayers.

Our local COVID-stressed busi-

He also stated, "It is the position of the district that the current contracted wages and benefits are not sustainable when used in long-term financial projections."

That gives us no comfort at all that we are being driven into a fiscal ditch by the PERS program. Taxpayers are being fleeced and the ambulance district continues to allow employees to supercharge their benefits with the use of vacation pay and unused sick leave redemption.

Vote No on the \$5.4 million property tax levy. This district needs to either live within reasonable financial means or let us switch to one of the great private ambulance services widely used around our state and up and down the coast. Vote no.

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DEADLINES:
Wednesday Issue—General news releases, Monday noon; Classified line ads, Monday 10 a.m.; Legal Notices and Display Ads, Friday noon.

Saturday Issue—General news releases, Thursday noon; Classified line ads, Thursday 10 a.m.; Legal Notices and Display Ads, Wednesday 5 p.m.

NEWSPAPER SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

In Lane County — 1-year, \$84; 6-month, \$61; 3-month subscription, \$37.50; Out of Lane County — 1-year, \$107; 6-month, \$74; -month subscription, \$50; E-Edition Online Only (Anywhere) — 1-year, \$65; 6-month, \$35; 3-month, \$15. Ask about our senior discounts.

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Siuslaw News

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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.

WHERE TO WRITE

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