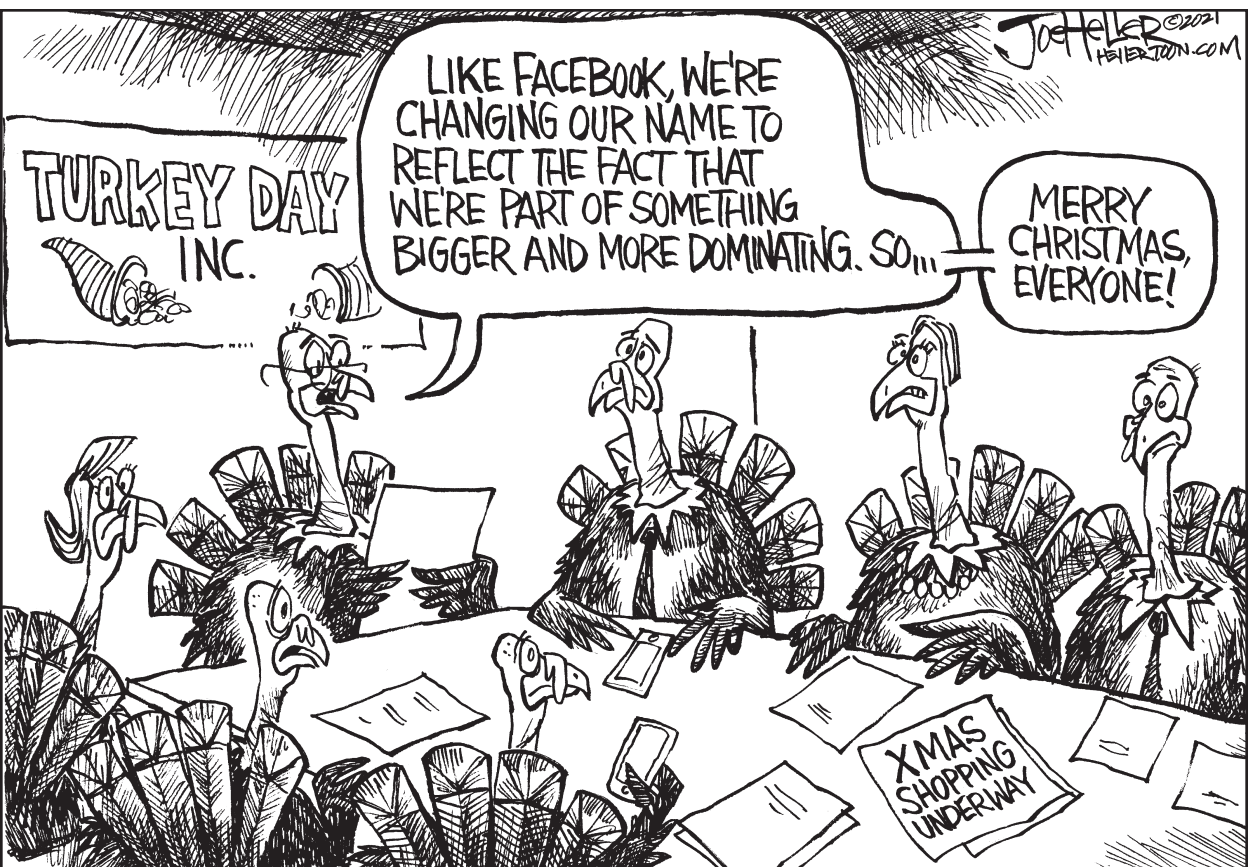


Siuslaw News
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Opinion

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.)

TIME FOR PEOPLE TO PULL TOGETHER

In response to Donna Dobson's Letter to the Editor on Oct. 23, which stated "The influence of this administration is reaching across America to tear everything apart," I suggest she turn off her social media accounts and deal with reality.

The world is experiencing the worst pandemic in history while trying to cope with massive wildfires, devastating floods and rising sea levels. Crops cannot be irrigated due to low water levels in reservoirs and populations in the southwest are threatened by looming loss of hydroelectric power. It is time for people to pull together as one and protect the future of our people and our land.

The Biden administration backs an infrastructure bill that includes increasing our seaport infrastructure, bringing our aging power grids up to 21st century standards, provide better public transit as well as passenger rail and freight rail and bridge investments. It will invest in clean drinking water and wastewater treatment, wide access to high-speed internet and conversion to clean energy.

The Build Back Better bill seeks to pull up the standard of living in this country to a sustainable level by lowering drug prices that are currently two and a half times more expensive than in the rest of the world. It would provide two years of free community college as a path to an associate degree or a four-year college degree, thus providing the country with educated people more ready to take on the jobs realized by the infrastructure act. The tax base would be broadened by working people who would now be realizing an income that can provide for their families. Health care and child support would help keep families in the work force.

Historically, stimulus bills have saved our country. The Roosevelt administration passed the New Deal and set a precedent for government to participate in economic, health and social affairs. The recent Obama American Recovery and Investment Act of 2009 canceled the greatest economic loss since the Great Depression. Affordable Health Care enrolled 15 million people, unemployment



numbers dropped from 10% to 4.7% and the country began the longest streak of private sector growth in history while stabilizing the financial system, and the housing market and saving the auto industry.

A third critical issue now faces our country, the rise of white nationalism and insurrection. The pandemic and global warming misinformation is being used to undermine our democracy and national health using social media conspiracy theories that lead to distrust of government and our institutions of learning. The movement toward authoritarianism and white nationalism, led by our former president, a denier of elections and the separation of powers and an admirer of authoritarian world leaders, is indeed frightening.

Insurrection requires chaos, fear and hate to fester until it has a life of its own, even at the expense of its own supporters. Republicans will not speak out against the attack on our seat of government or support the health protocols that have protected us for a hundred years or more.

Now we have Rep. Ken Wyler, Chairman of the House Finance Committee, circulating a 38-page Death Report with abysmally absurd conspiracy theories that he read on the internet. We need the stimulus bills to pass. Are we supposed to trust someone like Wyley and like-minded Republicans to get our country back on track?

— Karen Mahoney
Florence

THOUGHTS ON RESTAURANTS

When my wife and I moved from the San Francisco Bay area to Florence in 2000, we found the perfect small coastal town with a good infrastructure. What we soon learned is that there was an influx of places to eat, from fast food to decent food, but the turnover was much like a big city. Here

today and gone tomorrow.

With COVID-19, we have experienced a number of our local eating establishments being closed permanently, closed temporarily for not following COVID protocol or struggling to find employees and vendors to supply the quality level of product they once had.

Tourists support our economy and summer is the time when establishments make most of their money. Then, in the fall and winter months, they have to rely on locals for support.

Some of the turnover has been due to location. A block or two off Bay Street where tourists can't find you has always been a problem.

My wife and I and three other couples would celebrate birthdays by venturing out to eat. From Yachats to Coos Bay, we explored and discovered wonderful places to eat. Yachats has always been special, and there was one building that over the past 20 years has had about five wonderful restaurants, each lasting about two or three years. You would never know what you would find. Coos Bay was also a disappearing area. Find a nice place and the next month it was gone.

We recently lost Dairy Queen due to fire, and other places I assume because of lack of staffing and COVID. KFC, my favorite fast food place, we lost long ago and never replaced. Morgan's Country Kitchen that had the best breakfast was lost. We now have Burger King, however.

We are still fortunate to have places like Bridgewater, which has the best seafood in town, Waterfront Depot, which has always been a mainstay, Lovejoy's for a bit of England, La Pomodori for Italian and Hukilau for a taste of Hawaii.

There are still a few places for outings that have survived.

Eat well and stay safe.

— Win Jolley
Florence

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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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