

Cottage Grove Sentinel
116 N. Sixth St.
Cottage Grove, Ore. 97424

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)



Women provide crucial voice in true democracy

in Oregon, women represent the majority of individual voices and perspectives that make up our decisions as a state — and ultimately as a nation.

However, even in Oregon, which was among the first to provide that right, it took six ballot attempts — in 1884, 1900,

a personal level, there is no question that the wisdom and insight they offer each day as part of my own life has a profound impact that could never be duplicated by a men-only mentality.

Ask any of us male journalists in the newsroom and we will admit that the cumulative IQ in the newsroom seems to drop considerably without the influence of our publisher, Jenna Bartlett, and front office manager Meg Fringer.

On the home front, my wife Alicia, as well our daughters Elyse and Elizabeth, have always provided much-needed perspective in family discussions and decision making that help assure we don't devolve into an old episode of "King of the Hill."

I say all of this to illustrate how, on just an individual level, the value and importance of women's perspectives impacts my own life every single day — and why I can't imagine not having those influences and perspectives as part of our national discussion.

What an incredible loss it would have been if not for the determination of those like Abigail Scott Duniway to assure that we as a state — and eventually a nation — can benefit from the voices of women in the discussions that define our democracy.

From the Editor's Desk

Ned Hickson

1906, 1908, 1910 and finally 1912 (more times than in any other state) — before women's voices became part of the discussion in state decisionmaking.

It was a campaign that began as early as 1870 as part of the Oregon suffrage movement led by Abigail Scott Duniway, who utilized her Portland-based suffragist newspaper *The New Northwest* to fuel the debate in favor of securing women the right to vote.

In a not-so-subtle twist of irony, it was her brother, Harvey Scott, who was her biggest detractor, thundering his opposition in the pages of *The Oregonian*, where he was editor from 1866 to 1872.

Simply looking at the importance of women's perspectives on

One hundred years ago, Oregon ratified the 19th Amendment in 1920, joining 35 other states in ensuring that the right to vote could not be denied based on gender.

It's important to note that this came some eight years after Oregon had already begun permitting women to vote in state elections in 1912. Ironically, this was the result of a narrow approval of 52-percent of voters — all of them cast by men — to guarantee that right as part of Oregon's state constitution.

Today, it's hard to imagine our democracy without the crucial representation of women's voices in a nation where, according to the last census, women outnumbered men 161 million to 156.1 million — for a nearly 1-to-1 ratio.

In fact, there are only nine states where males make up more than 50 percent of the population: Alaska, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Utah and Wyoming.

In all the rest, including here

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The Sentinel 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 without documentation will not be published.

Letters containing poetry or from outside The Sentinel 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.

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