

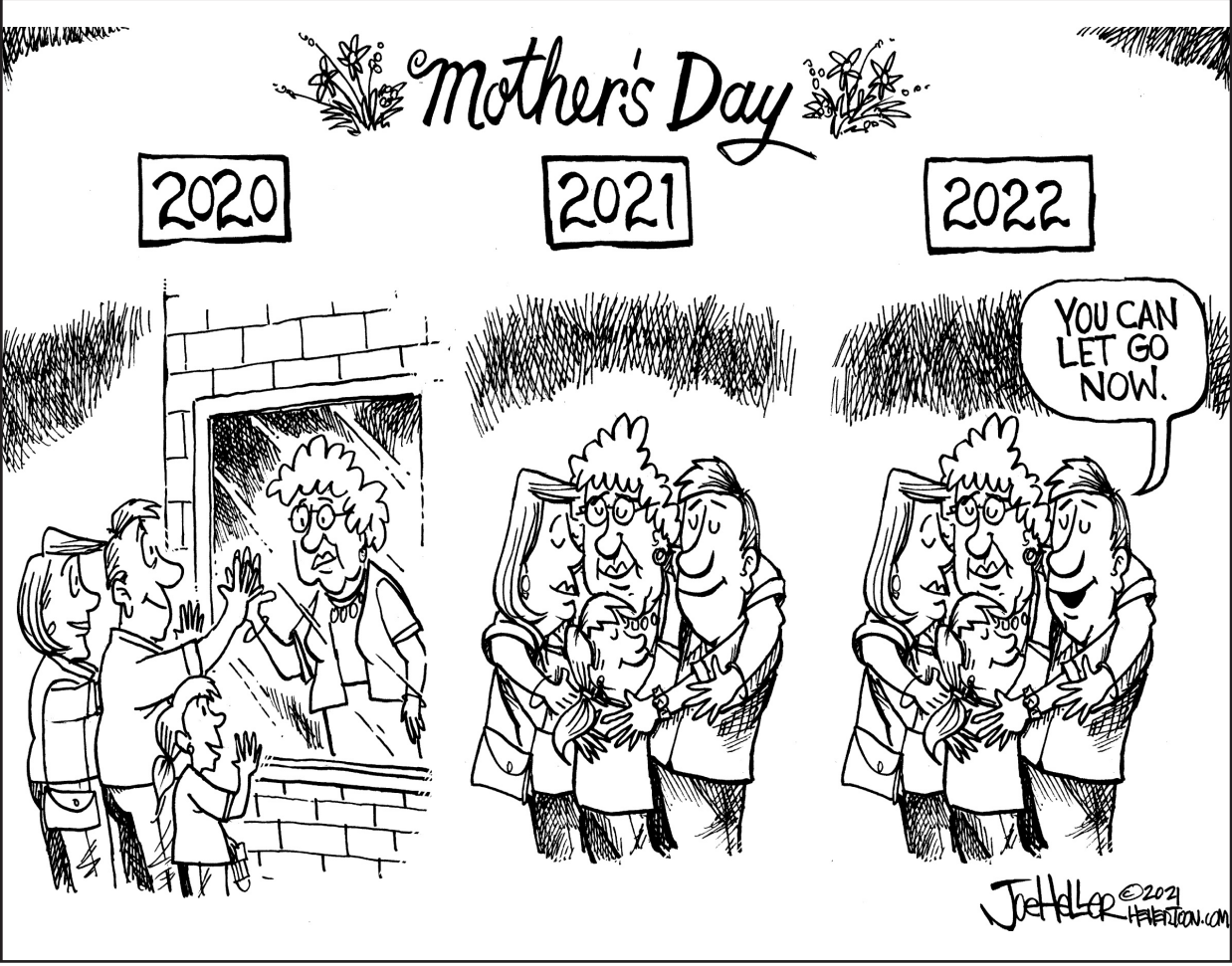
Cottage Grove Sentinel

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)



LETTERS

**SUPPORT OSU EXTENSION**

On May 18, Lane County voters have the opportunity to continue much needed funding for our Lane County OSU Extension Office and support its valuable programs.

These programs provide reliable, unbiased, research-based education and advice that strengthens local economies, sustains natural resources, and promotes healthy communities, healthy families and healthy individuals.

In last week's *Sentinel*, Friends of Extension Member Leigh Reider detailed the specific programs and services this funding request provides. Additional information is available at [www.FriendsofExtensionLane.org](http://www.FriendsofExtensionLane.org).

Since its founding at Oregon State College in 1911, this statewide program has been based in "Beaver Territory." However, Ducks (and all Oregonians) benefit greatly from a well-supported extension program. Driven by research, volunteers and public financial support, the OSU Extension Service provides taxpayers with a great return on their relatively small investment.

The unexpected life-changing events of 2020 are a stark reminder of how — going forward — we must remain vigilant and be prepared to succeed in the uncertain future awaiting us.

OSU Extension programs contribute to food security, economic development, wildfire resiliency and emergency preparedness.

For these programs to continue and to be successful they need our support and participation.

Please join me and others by voting yes on Measure 20-319.

—Cindy Weeldreyer  
Cottage Grove

**KEEP EXPERIENCE ON THE SCHOOL BOARD**

At a time of great potential for our town and schools, after a decade of economic disruption and challenges, our seasoned school board is poised to usher in the future we all want for our youth and school district.

Many of our current board members have children still in our schools and all have spent the last few years building the

policies that best support district educators in getting kids the job skills they need to meet the 21st century.

As a retired school board member, it seems to me that replacing our veteran school board leadership now with people green to a complex process, regardless of how well-intentioned, would be shooting our future in the foot.

Our children need jobs and training for that future; the entire state has finally figured that out and Salem is funding it better — our current school board and district know how to make that work in our town; give them the time they need to pull this off.

—Alan Baas  
Cottage Grove

**IN SUPPORT OF DUERST-HIGGINS**

It's an honor for me to say I support Sherry Duerst-Higgins for school board. She's experienced, knowledgeable and cares deeply about our kids and community.

She listens. And, she knows how to bring diverse groups of people together while providing leadership filled with compassion and conviction.

Please join me in voting for Sherry Duerst-Higgins for South Lane School Board.

—Len Blackstone  
Cottage Grove

**DON'T RESTORE MURAL, RE-THINK IT**

I am all for CG's historic pride. I understand that it is important and something to acknowledge and celebrate.

However, I don't understand the extreme push to get the outdated Buster Keaton mural restored. Honestly, the mural is downright creepy (This is no fault of the artist and I mean no disrespect; the character is creepy).

When entering historic CG, the mural is completely off-putting. It's not a good backdrop for photos. It really doesn't benefit CG whatsoever. We have such a beautiful Opal Whiteley mural and I find myself wondering why this huge BK mural is such a focal point?

If you look at the data from the Census, it shows that the de-

mographics of CG 65-and-older crowd is approximately 16.2 percent. This tells me that the majority of CG's population probably has no interest in "The General."

Ones who were interested in it are phasing out and that's just a fact.

Another factor is that the fundraising goal was \$1,100 shy of the goal. I think this speaks for itself in the public's interest in restoring the mural. Instead of the big focus on BK, why can't we have a mural that showcases "Animal House," "Stand By Me" and Buster? Especially when Animal House is all over the windows of the Chamber, right across the street.

I hope that the restoration is reconsidered and a more current mural is painted. Believe me, it will benefit CG and appeal to the many new residents and tourists that visit.

—Amanda Hogan  
Cottage Grove

**VOTING DUERST-HIGGINS FOR SCHOOL BOARD**

I have known and worked with Sherry Duerst-Higgins for many years. She has always been one to volunteer wherever needed.

We first worked together when she drug me onto the booster club in 1982. She led us to raise funding for many sports, sent a wrestling team to New Zealand and built a weight room for the sports teams.

She never stops.

She has served as a leader of many local, regional and state organizations. She has been honored by the Oregon School Boards Association for service on that board as well as many others. She is the driving force behind Community Sharing. Her many years on the South Lane School board makes her the most knowledgeable and prepared for her continuing that service.

Sherry is all about service to our kids, making sure they get a quality education and supporting a high standard for our educators.

It would be a loss to the community to not have Sherry on our school board.

—David Hemenway  
Cottage Grove

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**Letters to the Editor Policy**

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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