

Cottage Grove Sentinel

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

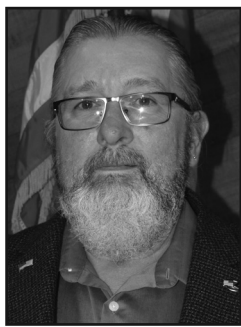
# Opinion

**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)



## Taking note of the positive in our community



Community members and teachers came together to give graduating seniors the best celebration they could under social gathering restrictions.

As summer 2020 approached, all of our events that make us unique were canceled. However, people still found ways to support each other.

Shopping locally and outdoor dining became more popular. Many restaurants were able to regroup and offer to-go

their doors to provide respite for those affected.

As a community, we also came together and collected supplies to be distributed to those who were directly affected by the fires. Those who had space offered to house livestock and other animals displaced by the fires as well.

During the holidays, people stepped up and donated goods and money to ensure local agencies had the

made available for people and their pets.

As spring approached and an end to restrictions could be seen, the community responded with positive plans to move forward. Those who could help others continued to be very generous.

I've heard and witnessed acts of kindness including buying a happy meal for a child; paying for someone's groceries; giving cash donations to our nonprofits; helping people carry groceries home; and many other small but meaningful gestures of kindness and helpfulness.

We need to highlight, recognize and remember all of these acts of kindness and humanity. As an individual and as a community, let's continue to focus on the positive and all of the things we have in common.

We won't always agree; but we can continue to make Cottage Grove a great place to live if we all practice kindness and focus on the positive.

### From your City Council's desk

Mayor Jeff Gowing

meals, which allowed many to enjoy their favorite restaurants' food while helping them keep their doors open.

As summer came to a close, we saw the worst fire season ever.

Although the fires were not a direct threat to Cottage Grove, the smoke caused breathing issues for many. Local businesses opened

resources they needed to continue providing much needed services to those in need of a little extra help.

Because of social distancing restrictions, providing shelter for homeless people on freezing nights needed creative thinking. Thanks to many volunteers, safe and warm accommodations were

In today's world, we see and hear so much negativity from social media; new stations; politicians and their agendas - to name a few.

All of this negativity sometimes overshadows the kindness exhibited by so many in this community.

Cottage Grove seems to be one if those places that rallies together and supports each other during the difficult times. Looking back to the start if the pandemic, The Woodard Foundation anticipated the struggles our local nonprofits would encounter and donated \$100,000 through the Community Foundation for the purposes of helping our nonprofit organizations through this difficult time.

As high school graduation approached and graduation was not going to be the celebratory event that it normally is, parents,

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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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- **Rep. Peter DeFazio**  
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### Oregon federal representatives

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