

Editorial...

Local politics is a contact sport

There's an old saying that politics is a contact sport. The Cloverdale Fire District election that ended May 19 is the latest demonstration that that adage holds true at the local level, right here in Sisters Country.

The Nugget letters to the editor on the subject have been pretty civil, mostly keeping things focused on the issues. The behind-the-scenes vitriol, though, has been pretty intense. People get bruised in this contact sport.

People are understandably frustrated with the tone of civic discourse in Sisters Country these days — whether the subject is a fire district or a school district, food carts or a paved trail or ... it goes on and on. It would be nice if folks could keep a sense of proportion. The sky has fallen on the heads of the people of Nepal; there are hundreds of thousands of people dead or displaced in a horrific civil war in Syria. Those people would give anything to have our "problems" instead of theirs.

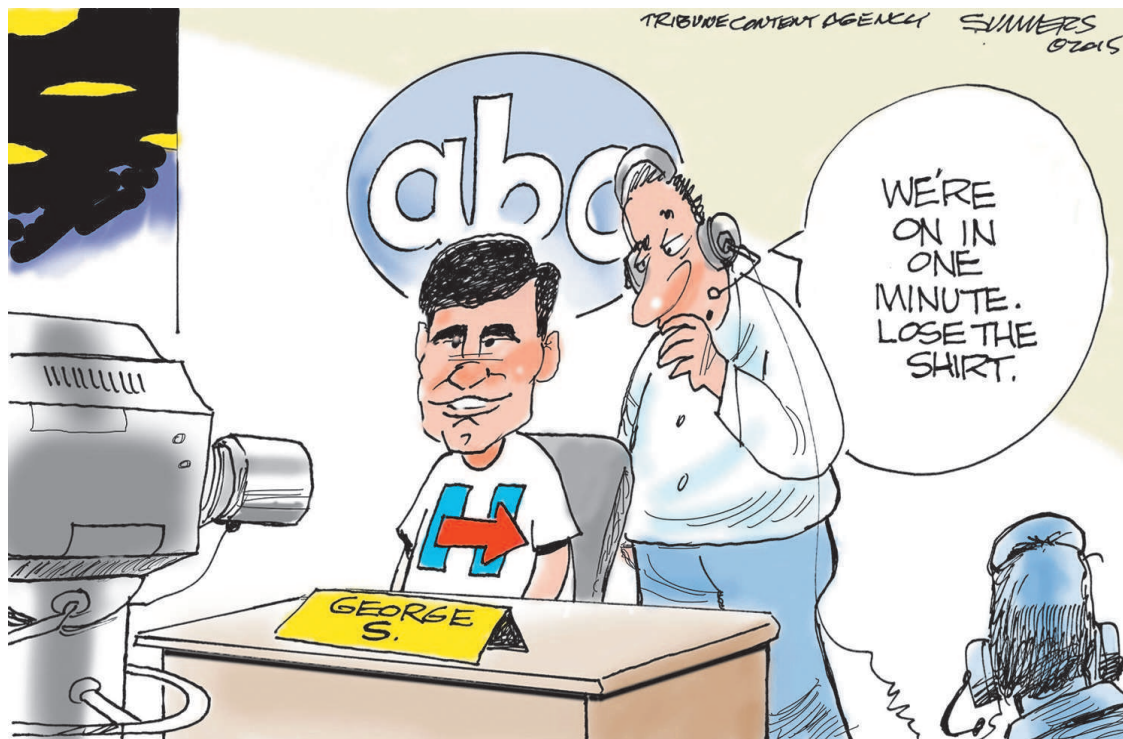
People tend to get involved in the fray when they get fired up. And, human nature being what it is, fired up usually means fed-up and angry. That means the fed-up and angry folks often set the tone of the discussion. Those who don't like that can do their part to shift the

tone. And they don't even have to wade into the muck and mire.

The Nugget's "Sisters salutes..." column has become mainly a forum for folks to say thank you, which is fine. But it was really conceived as a platform for folks in Sisters to point out things that they like about the community: people doing good things, often quietly and with no expectation of recognition, much less thanks. We invite you to submit more such tips of the hat to "Sisters Salutes..." Or write a letter to the editor about something you think is a good idea. And please keep sending in those story ideas about interesting people doing amazing things.

There are always going to be tussles in the community. That's a good thing, not a bad thing. It means people care. But while we wrangle over roundabouts or elections or whatever is on the agenda this month, bear in mind that our "issues" are luxuries to the vast majority of the world's population. And there are far more positives than negatives to focus on in this remarkable community in this beautiful place.

Jim Cornelius
News Editor



Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Showers 69/46	Showers 65/43	Showers 65/39	Partly sunny 66/38	Partly sunny 68/36	Partly sunny 69/na

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A right to privacy for BBR residents

By Isolde Hedmark
Correspondent

It is with great dismay that I watch the ongoing written battle of opponents and proponents of a proposed bike trail between Sisters and Black Butte Ranch in *Nugget* publications.

Inaccuracies, rude language and accusations are bad enough, but the notion that trespassing onto Black Butte Ranch's private property should be condoned because "parking and biking" has been going on for a long time, is particularly bothersome.

The only public part of the Ranch's bike path system runs from the east gate to the west gate and to the Big Meadow parking lot. Any path behind those points is marked "PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL AREA," and signed as "Property owners and registered guests only beyond this point." Registered guests include those lodging at Black Butte Ranch.

As Bonnie Malone mentioned in her recent article to *The Nugget*, homeowners purchased the Ranch from Brooks Resources in the 1980s.

Since then, Black Butte Ranch's facilities have been improved upon through multiple homeowner-funded assessments, and facility maintenance is supplemented by constantly increasing homeowner dues.

Black Butte Ranch is unique among other resort developments in the region, and its mission is to "Maintain and enhance a high-quality, family-oriented recreational and residential community preserved in its naturalness, with limited commercial activities and necessary regulations to preserve the safety, tranquility and future value for its owners, their families and guests."

It is this harmony

between the residential and recreational communities, this balance between commercial activities and privacy, and this stewardship of natural resources and the financial support for maintenance or renewal of facilities that make Black Butte Ranch special.

Developing a bike trail that ends at Black Butte Ranch will jeopardize much of what is presently enjoyed by homeowners and registered guests alike.

Homeowners and guests of all ages and abilities frequent the Black Butte Ranch trail system as soon as the paths are swept in the spring till the first storms in the late fall. The highest concentration of walkers, bikers and runners are undoubtedly from June through September with trail usage spiking on any fair-weather holiday weekend. Roads and paths are narrow, curvy and steep — in some places quite dangerous.

Any influx of more bike traffic due to a public path ending on Black Butte Ranch grounds would not only aid and abet more trespassing but also greatly diminish the unique Black Butte Ranch experience for homeowners and registered lodgers.

It will require additional police personnel to fulfill its mission "to partner with our community and the Ranch staff to preserve the safety, security and tranquility of the Ranch for the enjoyment of all." It will increase Black Butte Ranch's liability. And ultimately, it will necessitate higher homeowner dues and levies; more homes will come on the market with supply and demand dictating the future value for its owners.

And, Black Butte Ranch will no longer be that special place as we know it, but just another resort community.

Opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the writer and are not necessarily shared by the Editor or *The Nugget Newspaper*.