

O P I N I O N

EARLY HOLIDAY DEADLINES



The Nugget will close at 3 p.m. on Thurs., Dec. 24, and will be closed on Fri., Dec. 25

Early deadline for display advertising and the events calendar for *the issue of December 30* is **Thursday, December 23 at 3 p.m.**
 Deadline for classified advertising, announcements, letters to the editor and press releases for *the issue of December 30* is **Monday, December 28 at noon.**

Happy Holidays!

Letters to the Editor...

The Nugget welcomes contributions from its readers, which must include the writer's name, address and phone number. Letters to the Editor is an open forum for the community and contains unsolicited opinions not necessarily shared by the Editor. The Nugget reserves the right to edit, omit, respond or ask for a response to letters submitted to the Editor. Letters should be no longer than 300 words. Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned. The deadline for all letters is noon Monday.

To the Editor:

On December 6, at approximately 4:45 p.m., I was traveling east on Highway 126. It was very dark.

Someone lost a large Christmas tree in my lane; I hit the tree to avoid a head-on collision.

If people are going to cut trees in the forest they should be very sure it is tied down correctly. The Forest Service issues permits with numbers but does not keep record on who purchases.

Please be responsible; it cost me \$1,600 for their irresponsible act.

Sandy Boyer



To the Editor:

One commenter wrote last week: "Although it is no longer popular to be a Christian, the religion still does exist and should be afforded the protection given in Article 1 of the Bill of Rights, as should all other religions."

Agreed! And this is a time more than ever

for us to band together and support people who are a part of any religion, whether popular or not. Specifically, there are people of Islamic faith being reprimanded because some individuals who consider themselves a part of that religion are acting radically. This is where my mind went during the prayer at the tree-lighting. I do not automatically condemn prayers to God, but as a city-sponsored event wasn't the tree-lighting ceremony supposed to represent the whole community?

Yes, Christmas is a Christian holiday, but we all know that Christmas has become a holiday beyond religion. By the City Council of Sisters, Christmas was chosen to be the holiday to celebrate during this time of year (when there are many holidays that could be chosen) so shouldn't the ceremony represent us all?

I believe that the prayer was offered to everyone from the heart, with the intention of sending love out into the world. This is

See **LETTERS** on page 20

Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Snow showers 37/27	Rain 40/32	Rain 41/27	Chance rain 39/19	Chance rain 37/26	Chance rain 37/na

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Robert B. Reich

American Voices

A gunman killed three at a Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado. Later, in explaining his motive to the police, he reportedly said, "No more baby parts."

On November 23, gunmen opened fire on Black Lives Matter protesters in Minneapolis who were demanding action against two white Minneapolis police officers involved in the fatal shooting of Jamar Clark, an unarmed black man, on November 15.

Meanwhile, the FBI has warned of an upturn in threats against Muslims and mosques in the United States.

In Connecticut, police are investigating reports of multiple gunshots fired at a local mosque. Two Tampa-area mosques in Florida received threatening phone messages. One of the calls threatened a firebombing. In an Austin suburb, leaders of the Islamic Center of Pflugerville discovered feces and torn pages of the Quran that had been thrown at the center's door.

Hate crimes will never be eliminated. A small number of angry, deranged people inevitably will vent their rage at groups they find threatening. Some will do so violently.

But this doesn't absolve politicians who have been fueling such hatefulness.

Perpetrators of hate crimes often take their cues from what they hear in the media. And the recent inclination of some politicians to use inflammatory rhetoric is contributing to a climate of hate and fear.

Carly Fiorina continues to allege, for example, that Planned Parenthood is selling body parts of fetuses. Although the claim has been proven baseless, it's been repeated not only by Fiorina but also by other candidates. Mike Huckabee calls it "sickening" that "we give these butchers money to harvest human organs."

Even in the wake of Friday's Colorado shootings, Donald Trump referred to videos "with some of these people from Planned Parenthood talking about it like you're selling parts to a car."

Some candidates are also fomenting animus toward Muslims.

Huckabee says he'd "like for Barack Obama to resign if he's not going to protect America and instead protect the image of Islam."

Ben Carson says allowing Syrian refugees into the United States is analogous to exposing a neighborhood to a "rabid dog." In September, Carson said he "would not advocate that we put a Muslim in charge of this nation."

Since the attacks that killed 130 people in Paris last month, Trump has advocated registering all Muslims in the United States and putting American mosques under surveillance. He's also claimed that Muslim-Americans in New Jersey celebrated by the "thousands" when the World Trade Center was destroyed on Sept. 11, 2001, although there's no evidence to back that claim.

Indeed, much of Trump's campaign is built on hatefulness. And Trump not only fails to condemn violence he provokes but finds excuses for it. After a handful of white supporters recently punched and attempted to choke a Black Lives Matter protester at one of his campaign rallies, Trump said "maybe he should have been roughed up."

Trump began his campaign in June by falsely alleging Mexican immigrants are "bringing crime. They're rapists."

Weeks later, in Boston, two brothers were arrested for beating and urinating on a 58-year-old homeless Mexican national. One of the brothers reportedly told police, "Donald Trump was right, all these illegals need to be deported."

But instead of condemning that brutality, Trump excused it by saying "people who are following me are very passionate. They love this country and they want this country to be great again."

I'm not suggesting that Trump, Carson, Fiorina or any other presidential candidate is directly to blame for hate crimes erupting across America. But by virtue of their standing as presidential candidates, their words carry particular weight. They have a responsibility to calm people with the truth rather than stir them up with lies.

In suggesting that Muslims, Planned Parenthood staffers, Black Lives Matter protesters and Mexican immigrants are guilty of venal acts, these candidates are fanning the flames of hate.

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