

O P I N I O N



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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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:

Here's a shout-out to *Nugget* contributors Sue Stafford and Diane Goble for beginning a frank discussion on truly affordable low-cost housing, in particular as it concerns elderly women living alone in Sisters and in the world. Many of my women friends know other women who also face this sobering future of not having enough income to pay for our residence, and being forced out to go "somewhere." We have been in a silent sense of helplessness, so I am grateful for this open sharing.

There needs to be something between working ourselves to death and an eventual poverty-based reliance on State and federal programs; something between working during retirement and outright destitution in a federally funded assisted-living facility, subsidized by our inadequate Social Security. Diane Goble speaks my language. I share all the same concerns. I find housing prices to be quality-of-life-threatening and potentially able to ruin an otherwise good life.

I am older, retired, living on a very fixed income (\$300 left over after I pay my rent).

I am poor now, but I wasn't always. I had over \$100,000 in mutual funds in the '90s and lost it. I never recovered. I inherited money, bought a home, and then lost everything else I had, trying to save my home during the 2008 mortgage crisis.

Ethical, honest and trying to honor my debt, I lost my savings, my IRA, some possessions, and was down to my last \$1,000 — headed for the same fate as "The Lady in the Van" (current movie). I can still work, but I am very concerned about what happens when I can no longer do odd jobs, can't pay my bills or my rent. But am not too sick or ready to die.

"The Van" might be in my — or our — future unless truly affordable/low-cost housing becomes an option for us elderly women and men. Personally, I dream of a low-rent (\$400/space is not low-rent) mobile home park for us, each in our own little RV and space, where we can live in freedom and dignity, until it is time to go. It's either something like that or someone's driveway.

Eileen Grellert

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Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Rain 51/36	Rain likely 51/27	Rain likely 52/30	Chance rain 50/32	Chance rain 49/30	Chance rain 52/na

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John Kass

American Voices

The Republican presidential campaign — and that vulgar candidate debate in Detroit — bring us to the root of the thing.

The Republican coalition is breaking apart. The GOP establishment's hold on power and treasure is weakening. The Republican insiders are worried and angry, and they've seized on Donald Trump and his economic nationalism and wild, bragging ways.

Yet the wise ones among them must certainly know that Trump isn't the cause of the problem. He's merely a symptom.

Trump is the once-useful barbarian the Republican establishment cannot control. Now some insiders are finagling a move to dump him at their convention in Cleveland.

But that will involve shaming Trump's middle-class and working-class supporters, who are drawn to his economic nationalism.

With Trump or without him, the Republican coalition has been slowly breaking apart for years.

It's like a solar system of odd planets, with free traders and Main Street, evangelicals, corporatists, Wall Street and neoconservative intellectuals who've produced the nation into wars.

All these pieces were part of a Cold War coalition, a Ronald Reagan coalition. But the Cold War is over, Reagan is long gone, and without that lost density to hold them in orbit, the planets are ready to spin out on their own into uncharted space.

The evangelicals have nowhere to go if they wish to remain a force in politics. Pro-life Democrats are all but extinct in Congress.

The free traders and Wall Street have made a killing over the past two decades as Democrats and Republicans encouraged and helped them move capital out of the country with NAFTA and other trade deals.

But Main Street paid the price, and is dying. Capitalism is a liberating force, but unfettered it can be destructive. One look at the shuttered factories and vacant storefronts will tell you that.

Politics isn't buildings. Buildings don't vote. And lectures about the price of labor in Indonesia won't soothe parents with two or three part-time jobs and no time for their children.

They don't want a government handout. And Trump appeals to them.

But Wall Street has been sweetening the tongue of Democrat Hillary Clinton.

The neoconservative war party intellectuals are abandoning the Republicans and moving toward her as well. They can see Republican noninterventionism rising, first with Rand Paul and now with Trump, and Mrs. Clinton is the fiercest raptor in politics now.

Without that coalition, the GOP establishment won't be able to use government to project power and graze and get fat and wealthy.

That's what terrifies them. So they'll fight to keep it, and destroy whoever might be in the way.

Republican establishment figures certainly must see the end of things, see it moving out there beyond their walls, some shadow on the horizon telling them it's just about over.

The change is inevitable. Political coalitions always rise, fall and are reformed into something new. But I sure don't think Trump and his boorish vulgarity are the proper vessel for this change in the Republican Party.

Paul would be riding the crest of the wave now if the neoconservatives didn't hamstring him at the beginning. Ted Cruz is clearly more conservative, though unlike Trump, Cruz talks eagerly of military adventures.

What Trump has touched on, perhaps unwittingly, is an American middle- and working-class anger so deep that journalists really couldn't see it. It's been looked at as some sort of mental condition, as evidence of illness or racism or some other pathology to be treated medically, or mocked by newspaper pundits and on social media.

It's out now, and it's raging.

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