

LETTERS

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No more. Times do change.
Conrad Weiler



To the Editor:

We are annoyed by the commercial promotion and resulting acceleration in annoying aircraft noise. Being further from the airport than the Indian Ford folks, we don't have it as bad as they do. Nevertheless, from previous experience with airport noise and safety issues we'd be happy to work with a community group opposed to further airport commercialization.

Unopposed, we will have (sooner or later) flight schools with touch-and-gos, heli-tours, heli-skiing in winter, etc. in addition to one little parachute plane.

We are fine with a community airport serving community activities. Commercial activities totally change the picture. Mr. Campbell (airport manager) has already implied intent to increase air operations without consideration of civic nuisance.

The city council will do nothing. Their constituency is not in the most impacted area; they like the revenue; and they are probably more concerned with everybody being nice to each other. It was a naive, shortsighted move to develop commercial aviation in the middle of a quiet community. What were you thinking!? Well, I guess you were thinking it was on the city limits, so somebody else's problem.

Organize now! Cast a wider net than the Indian Ford Homeowners, and develop a long-term opposition strategy, because the airport owners are probably planning on just wearing you down and waiting for those most bothered by the noise to move. Hog farmers sniff and say "Smells like money." Well, airport operators hear planes and say "Sounds like money."

Meanwhile, pray for bad weather — or smoke.

Bob Albrecht



To the Editor:

Re: "Increase in airport activity irks some neighbors," The Nugget, June 22, page 1.

Really? Too much noise?

I have never found anything as peaceful as is skydiving. Safety? Chute open? All is well. Noise? Really, noise is three lawnmowers or motorcycles maybe, but skydivers and their planes?

The first jump I made, I came home and sat on the couch and stared at the wall for three hours and all was well with the world.

Dave Culver



To the Editor:

There have been several excellent letters

recently about the increased activities at the airport, which are filling our sky with the constant drone of planes and making a significant impact on the quality of life for many residents of Sisters Country.

The skydiving operation represents the most significant, and is undoubtedly a serious safety hazard. Automobile drivers are distracted as divers descend within a few yards of Camp Polk. It is highly likely that there will be an accident that might very well result in loss of life or limb.

The airport is planning much more expansion. They have applied for around \$500,000 of more public funds to add more commercial operations, jet fuel, and a helicopter touring operation.

I understand the motives of the owners of the airport and skydiving operations. They are shrewd businessmen and their singular motive is profit. Quality of life for the community is not their agenda, nor their responsibility.

However, Sisters City Council and leaders should understand that their primary responsibility is to ensure quality of life for the folks they represent.

The City says that this represents significant income to the City and it is a result of normal growth. HOGWASH. The increased activity at the airport is not normal growth but the concentrated efforts of the owner to increase profits. Whatever limited income from a few skydivers that might stop in town for a hamburger before jumping is far offset by a much larger loss of income to the many business owners in the city.

Sisters' leaders have not only ignored issues that diminish the quality of life for the thousands of folks that compose Sisters Country but have often disrespected them in the process. Those outside city limits are welcomed when they want money for schools or other community projects but shunned when questioning something that has an adverse effect on our lives and are told we are not part of the city.

There is a cost for this. We moved to Sisters over six years ago. We felt very much a part of the community. Like so many others, we get many guests every year and we always made an effort to shop, eat and support as many local businesses as possible, even though it frequently meant higher prices and perhaps fewer choices. No longer. We don't feel a part of the community any longer and are just as likely to spend our dollars in Bend or Redmond. Many, many of our neighbors feel the same way.

The local business owners are the big losers. Residents are big losers as the quality of life that brought us here diminishes. The airport owner and skydiver owner are big winners. The City Council and leaders are clueless as to the net loss this represents to such a fine community — particularly local business owners.

Bob Norman

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