

**O P I N I O N**



*To our friends and valued customers:*

**The Nugget will be closed from 11:30am to 1:30pm Thursday, December 8 for our annual employee holiday lunch.**

**Open at 9am – closed for lunch – open until 5pm**

*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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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:

I have enjoyed the Christmas parade for years, it is a tradition and a cherished one. Thank you to all the participants, you were wonderful and appreciated.

If not for the large number of fire trucks (thank you), I fear we would have had a very short parade this year. How about for next year we actively recruit participants, even participate ourselves (my job is on notice that we WILL have a float next year). Missed the bands, the little kids in tutus, the imagination and surprise of new participants, and many of our old favorites.

I challenge us to pump up the fun next year!  
Karly Drake-Lusby



To the Editor:

A dangerous situation exists very near Sisters. Target shooting at the McKenzie







gravel pit west of Sisters is endangering Crossroads residents and guests as well as users of the Jimerson trail, the nearby forest roads, and Highway 242. We all have a right to be in this forest, including target shooters, walkers, cyclists, equestrians, motorists, and others, and I'm sure we all want everyone to be as safe as possible while exercising their right to recreate in the forest. The McKenzie gravel pit is only about 650 yards from Crossroads and 170 yards from the Jimerson hiker and horse trail. In addition, between the pit and Crossroads is Trout Butte Creek, a favorite spot for children.

Bill Lewis of Central Oregon Shooting Sports Association (COSSA), who has 58 years of experience using target pits and 27 years designing them, visited the McKenzie pit and feels it is definitely unsafe for target shooting. Among other problems, the

*See LETTERS on page 23*

### Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Mostly sunny 26/17 	Snow 35/27 	Rain/snow 37/28 	Snow showers 36/26 	Mostly cloudy 38/25 	Mostly cloudy 39/na 

# The Nugget Newspaper, Inc.

Website: [www.nuggetnews.com](http://www.nuggetnews.com)  
442 E. Main Ave., P.O. Box 698, Sisters, Oregon 97759  
Tel: 541-549-9941 | Fax: 541-549-9940 | [editor@nuggetnews.com](mailto:editor@nuggetnews.com)



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## Keeping it civil in Sisters

By Kent Neff  
Guest Columnist

We have just suffered through the most negative and, likely, the most polarized presidential campaign in living memory. Regardless of our political leanings, many of us were thoroughly disappointed with the angry accusations, the incivility, and the bitter, personalized nature of the campaign. Sadly, the level of acrimony during and after the campaign has spread to other public and private places, including our schools. Even families have experienced bitter divisions because some members supported one candidate while the rest supported another. Friends, both local and outside Sisters, who are members of threatened minority groups, have stated that they are frightened and uncertain about their future in America.

We have considerable clout in what happens in our community, however. The positive culture that has long been present in our community is definitely at risk in the current toxic atmosphere that has permeated our country. We have influence as individuals, but we are much stronger when we come together in a common purpose.

For the last year, the Citizens4Community group has been raising awareness of the importance of maintaining civility as we deal with the many difficult and sometimes contentious issues in our community. The introduction of the 9 tools of Speak Your Peace has been well received. They are important aspects of how each of us can, by practicing those principles, make our own individual contribution to maintaining a civil environment in Sisters Country. Like the flu vaccine, which provides protection from the annual flu outbreaks, practicing civility serves as the vaccine

for disrespect and divisiveness in a community.

One of the issues that has been raised as we have promoted civility in Sisters is that having to be respectful encroaches on our First Amendment right to freedom of speech. We all want to be respected. If a person is in fear that he will be personally attacked if he speaks his mind respectfully, his sense of personal freedom of speech is negatively affected. Of course, some people are not put off by a conversation that becomes hostile and may even relish that. But when people choose to remain quiet, we lose important ideas from these citizens. In a disrespectful environment, residents become less likely

to participate in public discussions and organizations, and we lose their valuable participation. Unless we continue a proactive effort to maintain civility, the toxicity of the national

and state conversation will likely further invade our community.

In addition to making sure that we practice civility daily as individuals, it is also important that we learn how to speak up when we witness an act of incivility or bullying. All it takes is one or two people to speak up in a respectful way and state their discomfort with the tone of the dialogue to change the atmosphere. And this is a skill that each of us can learn with practice.

We in Sisters Country have at our disposal a large group of concerned citizens and others who value the friendly, connected, involved, and committed nature of our special community. It is something that, once lost, is difficult to get back. Let's all work individually and together to keep that part of Sisters the way we want it — a way that includes all of us.

*Kent Neff is a board member of Citizens4Community*

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