

# O P I N I O N

**The Nugget will close at 3 p.m. on Fri., Dec. 23**  
**Early deadline for display advertising and events calendar**  
**for the issue of Dec. 28 is Fri., Dec. 23 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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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:

I would like to respond to Chuck Humphries Letter to the Editor (*The Nugget*, December 7).

I live in Crossroads. I have ridden my horse past the McKenzie Gravel Pit (Highway 242) for many years while people were in the gravel pit shooting. Recently, I have been walking on the same Jimerson Trail while people were shooting.

I have never been afraid and have never heard any bullets whizzing past me. Actually, I think that anyone that could shoot from the gravel pit into Crossroads or any place outside of the pit should deserve some sort of medal.

I have stood in the gravel pit. There is a very high barrier of dirt around the pit. The pit

is also surrounded by a thick forest.

The gravel pit has been there for many years, long before Sisters Trails Alliance ever showed up. It has always been a shooting area, even before the firewood man used the gravel pit.

How I wish that the U.S. forest could be managed by the U.S. Forest Service instead of the Sisters Trails Alliance. STA has no concept of private property rights. They think that all of the land (public and private) belongs to them. They want their trail to go right through the middle of Crossroads for their bicycle events. I want them to leave Crossroads and the U.S. forest alone.

Sharon Thorkildson

*See LETTERS on page 9*

### Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Sunny 34/20	Rain likely 37/25	Chance Rain/Snow 36/24	Chance Snow 32/20	Chance Snow 30/19	Mostly Cloudy 29/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)



Postmaster: Send address changes to  
**The Nugget Newspaper,**  
 P.O. Box 698, Sisters, OR 97759.  
 Third Class Postage Paid at Sisters, Oregon.

**Publisher - Editor:** Kiki Dolson  
**News Editor:** Jim Cornelius  
**Production Manager:** Leith Williver  
**Classifieds & Circulation:** Teresa Mahnken  
**Advertising:** Karen Kassy  
**Graphic Design:** Jess Draper  
**Proofreader:** Pete Rathbun  
**Accounting:** Erin Bordonaro

**The Nugget is mailed to residents within the Sisters School District; subscriptions are available outside delivery area.**  
**Third-class postage: one year, \$45; six months (or less), \$25. First-class postage: one year, \$85; six months, \$55.**

*Published Weekly. ©2016 The Nugget Newspaper, Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is prohibited. All advertising which appears in The Nugget is the property of The Nugget and may not be used without explicit permission. The Nugget Newspaper, Inc. assumes no liability or responsibility for information contained in advertisements, articles, stories, lists, calendar etc. within this publication. All submissions to The Nugget Newspaper will be treated as unconditionally assigned for publication and copyrighting purposes and subject to The Nugget Newspaper's unrestricted right to edit and comment editorially, that all rights are currently available, and that the material in no way infringes upon the rights of any person. The publisher assumes no responsibility for return or safety of artwork, photos, or manuscripts.*



## Rachel Marsden

**American Voices**

PARIS — An off-duty Turkish police officer gunned down Russia's ambassador to Turkey, Andrey Karlov, Monday at a photo exhibit on Ankara's John F. Kennedy Street, just across from the U.S. Embassy. The assailant, a member of the riot police, positioned himself right behind the ambassador, fired several shots at close range, and then ranted about Russia's involvement in the anti-jihadist operation in Syria.

This incident is symbolic of the chaos that plagues Turkey and permeates its foreign policy. Is Turkey fighting jihadism or sponsoring it? When it comes to fog of war, Turkey is the ultimate nation-state smoke machine.

The shooting fell on the eve of a trilateral meeting of Russian, Iranian and Turkish foreign ministers to address the Syrian conflict.

"We are convinced that those who planned this barbaric act aimed to undermine the process of normalization of Russian-Turkish relations, mainly in order to prevent effective counterterrorist measures in Syria," said Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

History suggests that Turkey is hardly going to allow rapprochement with Russia or any other country to deter it from having all kinds of wild affairs on the side — including with terrorist groups.

Turkey has managed to convince Russia and the United States that it's a key partner in the fight against terrorism, all while assisting the Islamic State and the Gulf states that sponsor it.

Turkey is supposedly America's "friend and ally" in the region. Turkey's Incirlik Air Base has served as an operational hub for U.S. and NATO to kill terrorists, even as U.S. Defense Department's "Syria Train and Equip Program" trained local fighters in Turkey, adding more tinder to the conflict.

Turkey has also sought better relations with Russia, now that Russia has established itself as arguably the most influential foreign power in the region via the Syrian conflict. It wasn't always so.

shortly after Turkey shot down a Russian fighter jet on the Syrian border, the Russian Defense Ministry conducted a show-and-tell of oil smuggling routes to Turkey. The smuggled oil, which Russia claimed was being bought primarily by Turkey, funded Islamic State terrorists to the tune of a reported \$3 million a day.

In the past year, Turkey has been both friend and nuisance to Europe, threatening to unleash a wave of up to 3 million Syrian migrants upon Europe if the European Parliament didn't cough up more of the 6 billion euros it pledged through 2018 to fund Turkey's Syrian refugee camps.

As part of a deal with Europe that was struck earlier this year, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan secured an agreement to lift visa requirements for Turkish citizens traveling within the European Union, provided that Turkey met a set of benchmarks. As of today, the restriction remains. A French official close to the deal told me that Erdogan has failed to meet certain basic conditions and is using antiterrorism efforts as little more than a convenient pretext for his own questionable political agenda.

Erdogan also managed to get the European Union to agree to "re-energize" negotiations for Turkey's inclusion in the EU. Great, that's just what Europe needs right now: a new member with an elusive agenda, questionable allegiances, ambassador-killing jihadists embedded in its security services, and a recent coup d'etat attempt that has yet to be reliably explained.

Turkey has positioned itself at the center of the global war on terrorism by telling every player involved what it wants to hear. Allying with Turkey is like dating a cheater. Anyone who's been with one knows that a cheater is only loyal if there are no other compelling opportunities.

Russia's ambassador perished tragically in a chaotic house of mirrors — one that will continue to impede any hope of lasting peace and stability in the region.

© 2016 Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

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