

LETTERS

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To the Editor:

What is a roundabout's main purpose? It is to slow down traffic! Sisters already has a slow down problem. The solution is to speed up traffic! During the quilt festival, I saw traffic backed up past Indian Ford on Highway 20. Also, east of Sisters, traffic was backed up to the rodeo grounds. You ODOT people think a roundabout on a major highway will improve this problem? No way, that backup traffic will be the new normal a lot more days of the year. It will only back up traffic more often and cause more accidents as the public is not used to bottle-necks like that on major highways in any state.

The Associated Press last July 2015 reported in the *Bend Bulletin* that stoplight installation nationwide was about \$200,000. This Sisters roundabout project is reported at \$3,600,000 plus \$200,000 for an "artsy" centerpiece, is a horrible waste of public money. ODOT needs an oversight commission that understands basic mathematics and only approves state projects that are cost-effective. After all, this is the people's tax money that is being wasted here on only one intersection. Do we really have that kind of money to waste anywhere?

Eighteen other intersections in the state could have stoplights installed to improve safety with the amount of money wasted on our intersection in Sisters! ODOT could start with the Highway 20 — Tumalo intersection. That spot has been a major problem for years and years.

The city council could have paid for the stoplights themselves with their \$300,000 commitment and had \$100,000 left over! Sisters needs a city council and planning commission that has the best interests of the city and its citizens at heart. How could any intelligent group not understand the stupidity of wasting \$3,800,000 with no positive results but more negative results?

Where are all the common-sense people that don't want to waste public tax money? I think they passed on with the greatest generation!

Sadly, we could have had a much safer intersection over a year ago if ODOT had left the temporary stoplights in place permanently. The people of Sisters loved them!

Governor Kate Brown needs to get a little backbone and hold ODOT accountable now. Right here is \$3,600,000 that could be better used in fixing Oregon's decaying roads!

C. Childrey

To the Editor:

Kudos to the STA for their very timely and much-appreciated snow-plowing efforts. ("STA invites Sisters to get plowed, *The Nugget*, January 11).

It's unfortunate that the otherwise good-deed fundraiser was soiled by one of the group's members taking the opportunity to throw an ice ball at those within the community that openly express concerns about some, but not all, of the STA's initiatives. Additionally, to dredge up Alan Unger and the toxic Sisters-to-BBR asphalt path is just kicking rock-salt on a community wound that, at this rate, will never be allowed to heal.

It would seem, at the very least, incongruous and counterproductive to strike out at members of the community while simultaneously working hard to (re)-build goodwill and do good things within the very same community.

Greg Werts

To the Editor:

In the January 18 *Nugget*, I started reading the article by liberal columnist Robert Reich that opened with "Tyrants don't allow open questioning, and they hate the free press. They want total control."

Wow! I thought this was going to be commentary on the last eight years' administration. Of course, my exuberance was short-lived when Mr. Reich began blasting Trump — referring to him as King Trump, making up factless accusations, and claiming Trump's intent is to neuter the press corps. Well, maybe the press does need to be "fixed." A Gallup Poll done in September 2016 showed Americans' trust in mass media sank to a new low with only 32 percent saying they have a "great deal" or "a fair amount of trust" in the media.

Three fundamental principles listed in the MEAA Journalist Code of Ethics include honesty, fairness and independence. An objective review of the behavior exhibited in reporting from NBC, CBS, ABC, MSNBC, *New York Times*, etc. in this last election cycle clearly provide evidence why 68 percent of Americans have utter disdain and distrust of the mainstream press. Maybe if President Trump shakes things up by confronting their fake and extremely biased reporting, and allowing more members to attend press conferences, the "elite" press will begin do their job with some semblance of integrity, honoring the right given to them under the Constitution.

Jeff Mackey

To the Editor:

In a (late) response to a letter of January 11 regarding services in snowy weather, I have some suggestions:

First, take a winter driving class.

Second, shovel your vehicle every four inches to lessen the difficulty. Reach out to friends or acquaintances who might be able to help.

In addition, if you want to have 24-hour services you will find them in a big city. They have urgent-care centers, 24-hour pharmacies, and public transportation. Sisters is a wonderful place to live, but one must accept that there are different challenges to living in a small town. The pharmacies and the clinic would not be able to survive financially if they had extended hours.

This is a rare winter event—according to folks with long memories, we last had this sort of winter 25 years ago. It is different than planning for natural disasters such as earthquakes and tsunamis that could affect hundreds of thousands of folks.

Best of luck to all in these winter conditions!

Karen Sweigert

To the Editor:

Wild Wood Ranch was having a difficult time, just like everybody in Deschutes County, with an overabundance of snow. With only two of us trying to keep the half-mile of private road open, areas around the barn clear, roads between the hay barn and the areas where the horses were stabled open with a snow blower and shovels was an impossible task.

After paying several hundred dollars to have a person use a tractor for a first pass through and getting a bid of \$700 for the next time, our neighbor called to say that some volunteers working on behalf of Sisters Trails Alliance (STA) had a big truck with a hefty plow that were enthusiastically helping people that were in need of plow work for a donation to STA.

I know this community group does an amazing job building and maintaining more than 100 miles of trails near town, but I never thought they would be heading a plow angel task force.

Thank you, STA. You cleared our road so friends could get to us to help shovel the load off our collapsing barn. Your generosity of time and costly equipment will be forever remembered.

Tracy Stout



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