

LETTERS

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by forcing a 45-degree entry into traffic.

Thank you, again, ODOT and City of Sisters for caring about the safety of me and my loved ones.

Gordon Golden



To the Editor:

Congratulations to all those folks who have been successful in obtaining the roundabout in Sisters.

I have traveled and lived in areas with roundabouts. So, roundabouts have never been a problem for me. However, this one is bad news and will make shopping, banking, doctor visits etc. longer to reach if you live north of Highway 20.

Traffic lights were installed and were wonderful, but they were removed. Now, I hope this roundabout is not a disaster like back-in parking. Everyone objected, but the City did it anyway and enforced it. We, the people, paid for it and then paid to remove it in order to return to the usual way of parking.

I am glad of my move from Camp Polk Road to a condo on the south side of Cascade Avenue.

Mickey Duehren



To the Editor:

I attended the ODA hearing regarding the airport's request to change their listing to Appendix M, and have done research on what this would mean for our community.

Residents need to know in plain English how this change would impact our peaceful community. Currently the City of Sisters has some control of activities at the airport through land-use and zoning. If the airport is added to ODA's appendix M the City relinquishes ALL control over airport uses to the state.

Loss of this control opens the hangar doors to helicopter tours, skydiving, gliders, ultralights, gyrocopters etc. All of which the airport owners have said they are actively pursuing. Just think for a minute how this might impact you. Planning to have a barbecue in your backyard? Hiking a peaceful trail? Fly fishing near town? Do you really want your daughter's outdoor wedding disrupted by a helicopter tour or when skydivers decide to scream during their jump?

If you believe you will not be negatively impacted, think again. Think of your property values. You don't live next to a freeway for a reason — why would you want a freeway overhead?

Let's keep local control of our airspace. Let the City know you support keeping local control to maintain our quiet community.

The flight school is fantastic and will not close no matter what category the airport is in. It's an approved use and only in jeopardy if the airport owners decide to end it.

Tom Hickman



To the Editor:

Last week the Oregon Department of Aviation (ODA) held a hearing to upgrade the Sisters airport to an airport of state concern. Much was said at the hearing of what would happen if the upgrade didn't occur, most of it untrue. SHS aviation students, misinformed, thought their program would stop, pilots talked about the airport closing, none of that is true. Actually the ODA admitted that if the airport upgrade was not granted, the airport would continue to function exactly as it does now.

So what would change? Well, the airport owners say they will have access to even more taxpayer money. That is in addition to the over \$1.3 million dollars of taxpayer money they already received to upgrade their runway and add a taxiway. Some think that at least some of that money might have been better used for schools, affordable housing or to repair our bridges and roads rather than spending public money to improve a private airport.

But the most important change would be the City giving up local control of aviation activities to the State. So, when it warms up and you are upset that the quiet town you moved to is overrun with even more skydiving activity, or the tow planes launching the gliders or the tour helicopter flapping over your house (all of which are planned according to the airport) and you call the City to control it, don't be surprised when they say they can't.

Why would a city voluntarily give up local control of something as significant as a local airport? Good question. Maybe you should call Mayor Chuck Ryan at 203-233-1881 or email him at cryan@ci.sisters.or.us and ask him. But don't wait too long, as the State plans on making this decision in the next few weeks and then as they say, "the fat lady has sung."

Bob Norman



To the Editor:

I am supporting Senate Bill 6 for humane trapping of wildlife in Oregon.

As a veterinarian, Oregon must advance the humane and effective improved animal capturing techniques. Over 37 states now

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Backyard bird count set to fly

By Jim Anderson

Correspondent

The National Audubon Society, in its quest to learn more about birds around our homes, has asked the public to help them understand what's going on in the metropolitan bird populations by taking part in the Greater Backyard Bird Count, and in so doing has helped thousands of bird-lovers become Citizen Scientists.

Each year, on February 17 and through Presidents Day weekend, Audubon, Cornell, and Project FeederWatch get their heads together and give backyard birds a closer look. This activity would be impossible without the help of bird-lovers who report the goings-on of the birds they feed.

The roots of GBBC are found in Project FeederWatch and are meant to focus on birds coming to backyard habitats — bird feeders, water features and the like.

The GBBC database is now embedded in the larger eBird database, and over the GBBC weekend any and all data will be included in the count, whether it's from folks

participating in GBBC or out birding miles and miles away from their backyard.

Several birders have now taken to making the GBBC weekend completely motorless. That means that looking out your kitchen window, sitting on your back porch swing, or walking the neighborhood sharing your neighbor's backyard feeders.

Participants are asked to count birds for as little as 15 minutes — or as long as they wish — on one or more days of the four-day event and report their sightings online at www.birdcount.org.

Each checklist submitted during the GBBC helps researchers at Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society learn more about how our metropolitan birds are doing, and how to help them by protecting the environment we all share. Last year, more than 160,000 participants submitted their bird observations online, creating the largest instantaneous snapshot of global bird populations ever recorded anywhere in the world.

To learn more, visit the official website at www.birdcount.org.



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Pygmy nuthatches at a backyard birdbath.

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