

O P I N I O N



VAN HANDESMAN
THE NEW ORLEANS
ADVOCATE
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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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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:

As an airport supporter I am also concerned about excessive noise from the airport and I don't think the principals have adequately addressed that in a cooperative manner yet.

To that please let me introduce to the reader what the Aircraft and Pilots Association, a staunch supporter of General Aviation, has to say about that (paraphrased for space; Google, AOPA's Guide to Airport Noise and Compatible Land Use).

Many of the problems at airports today are the direct result of poor planning for compatible land uses. When trying to determine the best ways to resolve noise complaints at your airport, there are a few key issues to keep in mind. The sound you love, like the drone of a piston airplane, may be an irritant to others. Complaint about noise may really be masking fears about the safety of having an airport nearby.

It does not matter if the airport "was here first." Now that it has neighbors, their concerns must be taken seriously. Providing community members with a forum to express their concerns is important. Taking voluntary action, demonstrating goodwill, and encouraging community involvement with your airport can go a long way to creating positive relationships and reducing complaints. Sound or noise is a matter of perception.

I supported exactly those thoughts when I approached the skydiving persons last summer regarding the importance of establishing a community meeting where they could listen, but also to explain the efforts they are taking to help, and to consider inputs of noise abatement and safety from myself and other experienced aviation supporters.

I have professionally flown out of many

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Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Partly sunny 45/23	Partly sunny 44/29	Chance rain 45/29	Chance rain 42/27	Mostly cloudy 39/25	Mostly cloudy 42/na

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A despicable incident

By Eric Wattenburg
Guest Columnist

I attended Senator Ron Wyden's town hall meeting February 20, in Sisters, Oregon, at the Sisters High School auditorium, and there was an episode there that needs to be broadcast.

The auditorium was standing-room-only, probably 800 people attending. As one would expect, nearly all of the attendees were supporters of the Democrat senator, and the evening was dominated by the crowd clapping and cheering like it was a campaign rally (which these always are, as elected officials are ALWAYS campaigning). Each attendee had been provided with a green sign emblazoned with the word "Agree," and a separate red card with "Disagree." These cards went up and down all evening like cheerleader pompoms at a home ball game (no offense to cheerleaders).

Speakers were chosen by lottery. Most of the night was dominated by activist supporters bringing up the typical anti-Trump talking points and fear-mongering.

However, and probably to the chagrin of the liberal crowd, a conservative had his number chosen near the end of the evening, and he challenged some of the statements and positions taken by Senator Wyden.

I must admit that the Senator is very well-spoken, intelligent, wise, slick, and a consummate political professional; I came away from the evening with a new impression of the Senator in contrast to that which I have had up to this point based on the usual conservative vs. liberal positioning. He is a feel-good politician and adeptly handled the challenges.

But then came the despicable incident on the part of the entire audience, save for the two of us conservatives (not sure about the speaker's wife who was there with him, but she often held up her card in opposition to the rest of the crowd).

The speaker simply asked Senator Wyden if he accepted the outcome of the presidential election and the presidency of Donald Trump, and to his credit, Senator Wyden responded "yes," but with very little

comment otherwise.

The house was absolutely quiet and calm, not a clap or gasp or whimper to be heard, and surprisingly, no cards (that I could ascertain) went up in the air.

Now, mind you, I arrived just before the performance started, and since the house was already standing-room-only, the only place remaining for me to stand without obstructing the view of others was to position myself along the left side of the auditorium up near the stage, against the metal railing of the ramp leading to the stage, so I was above the crowd level near the stage, standing, and noticeably visible. I was wearing a black jacket; I am Caucasian, tall with a broad athletic build, mostly bald with a closely trimmed gray goatee beard — I easily stand out in a crowd and I might have been mistaken for a security guard.

I was stunned that not one person in the audience cared to display their pleasure or disappointment with Senator Wyden's appropriate and affirmative response to the validity of the electoral results — the bedrock of the Constitution of these United States of America.

So, I clapped deliberately and exuberantly to honor and thank the Senator for his patriotism.

Not one other attendee joined me. My clap echoed throughout the darkened auditorium like the howl of a coyote in the dead of our high desert Central Oregon nights.

What have we become as a society if we cannot acknowledge and be grateful for that most precious feature of our system of government — fair and open elections?

Here, I will criticize Senator Wyden for not making this point before or after this incident; he should have lectured his audience as to their complacency, particularly in the context of this gathering, taking place at a public high school, an educational institution that ought to symbolize more of those other precious bedrocks of our great country.

It's not about whether it's Right or Left — it IS about what is Right or Wrong.

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