

O P I N I O N

Editorial...

We are our own disaster relief program

Sisters has had a tough year. A hard winter has been followed by a brutal fire season that cut summer short and choked up the local economy.

Smoky conditions ripped the heart right out of the busy summer season, which is when most of our local businesses put together the bankroll that gets them through the winter. The eclipse didn't pan out to be an economic boon; Labor Day was smoky and slow and the Sisters Folk Festival was cancelled due to air-quality concerns. Those are tough blows to take for local shops and restaurants.

There may be some programs to help out those hit hard by what can only be termed a slow-rolling economic disaster, but in all likelihood, Sisters is on its own.

And we can handle that. We can pull

ourselves up by our bootstraps and be our own disaster-relief program. It doesn't have to be arduous, either. A little extra effort to dine out locally more frequently; a little extra sustained effort to shop local instead of buying online or at the box store will go a long way toward filling the hole left by the great summer smokeout.

Most shops in Sisters can order quickly what they don't have in stock, and Sisters is full of dining options for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Maybe this is a good opportunity to rediscover our hometown and keep our dollars at work in our own community, while reaching out a hand to help our neighbor.

Jim Cornelius
Editor

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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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:

A recent visit during "Solar Eclipse" week to Camp Polk Cemetery found the flagpole and American flag posted by local Sisters VFW and American Legion Posts, to honor veterans buried there, on the ground. The pole had been bent at the base and the flag ruffled in the dirt. On Wednesday, first day of school, the flag and pole at Sisters Christian Academy was lifted from the mount, and tossed into the parking lot, smashing the solar light system. The flag was stolen.

Both flagpoles honoring veterans have been repaired/replaced by an anonymous donor, and are proudly flying again. If anyone has any information concerning the two flagpoles, or knows of any other flags being damaged, please call 541-549-1132 and leave a message as VFW and American Legion would like to remedy the problem as soon as possible.

Bill Anttila
VFW Post 8138 Service Officer

To the Editor:

Thank you, Sisters Folk Festival Board of Directors. This was a very difficult and courageous decision (to cancel the event), and it was the right one. The renowned quality of the festival would have been compromised, and many who could not have enjoyed their tickets would have been forced to forfeit the value because of the smoke.

For these reasons, and in appreciation of what the festival has brought to my community, musically and financially, I will not accept a refund for my tickets. Use the money to put the festival back on its feet for an even better event next year!

Erik Dolson

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Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Patchy Smoke/Sunny 75/34	Mostly Sunny 66/32	Sunny 66/36	Mostly Sunny 71/36	Partly Sunny 74/40	Mostly Cloudy 61/38

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Jonah Goldberg

The Obama Department of Homeland Security concluded that left-wing "antifa" forces were engaged in "domestic terrorist violence," according to documents obtained by Politico.

Who am I to argue with the fine men and women of former President Obama's DHS?

In fact, as someone who has been fighting with antifa defenders for a good while, I feel a bit like the defense lawyer in "Miracle on 34th Street" when the U.S. Post Office confirms that his client is actually Santa Claus: Hey, don't take my word for it; "terrorist violence" is the term chosen by professionals working for a Democratic White House.

With this moral victory secured, let me now break with some of my friends on the right and say that I think it's a bad, or at least premature, idea to go all the way and label antifa an actual terrorist organization.

Many defenders of the antifa cause insist these loosely organized activists are simply anti-fascist, and that fighting fascism is some kind of get-out-of-jail-free card for lawlessness, violence and intimidation. That's nonsense. The state has a monopoly on all violence save for self-defense. In a nation of laws, people cannot exempt themselves from the rules because they don't like someone's ideas.

Giving a bunch of adrenalized anarchists unilateral authority to designate fascists strikes me as an incandescently stupid idea. Antifa's understanding of what qualifies as fascist includes conservative campus speakers, defenders of free speech and even plain old Republicans.

And yet, college administrators, local politicians and police departments, particularly in places like Berkeley, have given antifa protesters a kind of benefit of the doubt. And so have some in the media who think there's something romantically heroic about direct action and, in the Trump era, resistance.

This isn't to say that there have been no arrests. But university officials and local politicians have been intimidated on numerous occasions. In Portland, a parade was canceled because an email threatened violence if Republicans

were allowed to march in it. In Berkeley, Mayor Jesse Arreguin urged UC Berkeley to cancel "Free Speech Week" for fear of violence, giving antifa a heckler's veto. So much for the home of the free speech movement. Predictably, such responses have only emboldened the goon squads.

Still, the local authorities that are contributing to the problem are also the best solution for it. In fact, Arreguin has the right idea when he says antifa should be labeled a gang. Like many gangs, antifa is less of a sophisticated criminal enterprise and more of an excuse for hooligans to make trouble. Maybe local police departments aren't up to the task of combating them, but we won't know until they stop appealing them.

Meanwhile, officially designating antifa a terrorist organization would most likely be opening a Pandora's box. There is a huge difference between countering foreign terrorists, who have no constitutional rights, and domestic ones. The federal government is constitutionally empowered to fight foreign threats. The states are supposed to fight crime, even domestic-terrorist violence.

The groundswell behind the label "terrorist" for antifa is a call to blur that distinction. Although treating American radicals and vigilantes the way we treat foreign members of the Islamic State or al-Qaida might play well in certain corners of the populist right these days, serious conservatives should be very skeptical about granting the federal government new police powers, which could be used to other ends in future administrations.

Elevating antifa to the category of terrorist organization would fuel the worst trends in our politics. It would entice President Trump to indulge his strongman shtick, and it would give antifa the stature it clearly craves. It would also likely accelerate vigilante violence among the white nationalists. Launching a federal crusade against domestic enemies would only fuel the fallacy that anyone antifa attacks is a fascist. We should fight crime, whatever guise it takes, on the local level — as the founders intended.

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