

## Editorial...

## Local option sustains Sisters schools

In a national climate that is ever more divided and divisive, where more and more people feel completely disconnected from the institutions that purport to serve them, it's nice to be able to make a decision that makes sense regardless of where you stand along the cultural/political divide, a decision whose positive results can be seen every day in classrooms right here in Sisters.

Sisters voters should vote "yes" on measure 9-121 to renew Sisters School District's five-year local option levy. The key word there is "renew"; the local option is not a new tax — it extends a levy at the same rate approved by local voters in elections since 2000.

There's a good reason voters have repeatedly signed off on the 75 cents per \$1,000 levy: It keeps Sisters schools functioning at a level that has earned them a strong reputation across the state. Local option keeps teachers in classrooms, keeps class sizes down and sustains innovative programs — including the Sisters Eagle Airport-partnered Flight Science program, Chinese language, IEE

(Interdisciplinary Environmental Expedition), the Sisters Folk Festival-partnered Luthier Program and Americana Project, Seed to Table and other agriculture-related projects.

Students come out of Sisters High School well prepared for the next phase of their lives. And Sisters schools continue to be a vibrant part of a local culture that values the arts and sciences and creating well-rounded and engaged citizens.

The downside risk of failing to renew local option is clear. Sisters schools continue to struggle to maintain and grow enrollment. Without local option — which supports approximately 15 teaching positions — that situation would become dire.

Support for 9-121 means support for local families, the local economy, and the Sisters culture. It's hard to find a tax measure that delivers the kind of payload that local option has, one that has such immediate and profound local impact, or one that is so easy to support.

*Jim Cornelius*  
Editor in Chief

## 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:

These past few months we've had information provided to us from the Community Planning Assistance for Wildfire and most recently Paul Hessburg on living with wildfire.

Both of these have a common thread, which is to be responsible to protect our homes and community by creating a safe environment around us from wildfire. I've been on a mission to do just that since late last fall.

Our development and one other on Wilt Road backs to some private property that has had hundreds of trees that were cut down by a local fire-suppression company. The company was hired by a private landowner, who acquired a grant to clear trees. The permit was issued by the state forestry department,

allowing the clearing.

To date, there has been little activity to clean this up. The permit expired December 2017, with no follow-up from the state. I started trying to get something done by talking to our local fire chief a couple of times, the state forestry department five times over a period of time, along with state and federal representatives with no assistance in resolving this fire potential.

The most help I received was from Patrick Davenport, our community development director, who provided me with some names and possible avenues to explore.

We receive a lot of talk on the expense of

See **LETTERS** on page 15

## Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Chance Rain/Snow 48/29	Mostly Sunny 53/30	Mostly Sunny 60/34	Mostly Sunny 57/30	Mostly Sunny 60/32	Sunny 62/39

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## The devil's details of firearms regulation

By Steve Nugent

Guest Columnist

Since the Florida high school shooting, there have been many gun-control proposals and even state legislation passed, at least in Florida. I am truly encouraged by the actions of so many high school students across this country and their growing influence.

The thing that concerns me about proposals to ban or restrict so called "assault weapons" and "high-capacity magazines" is that these terms are not explicitly defined. I am concerned that gun legislation, by using these terms, is risking the exclusion of many equally lethal weapons.

What needs to happen is a determination of exactly what capabilities and characteristics make certain long guns particularly deadly, compared to a typical rifle used for hunting. By deadly, I mean chances of survival if humans are shot, chances of taking the gunman down before mass carnage takes place, and capability to kill from long distances and at high rates. If one analyzes the lethality of all long guns based on these criteria, several specific attributes that make some guns more lethal than others become obvious:

- Semi-automatic or automatic actions in rifles, combined with high-caliber ammo.
- Removable magazines, on-the-fly.
- High-capacity magazines.
- Folding or removable stocks or fully plastic construction.
- Certain types of ammunition, such as armor-piercing, fragmenting, explosive, etc.

- All semi-automatic rifles, except for .22 caliber.
- Removable magazines on ANY rifle, except for .22 caliber.
- Folding or removable stock on ANY rifle.
- Fully plastic or mostly plastic construction of any rifle or handgun.

- I believe the federal government has a duty to outlaw long guns with these attributes and buy back all weapons with these attributes from legal owners. This should be done anonymously, so no gun owner is recorded. No driver's license should be shown etc., just exchange the gun for money. I believe this would actually make a difference in our children's and our own safety, and it would not threaten our Second Amendment rights.

I would argue that none of these five attributes are necessary for hunting or sport target-shooting. If a hunter needs to pepper a deer in order to kill it, he should not be hunting. For those who live in fear and paranoia from some threat from the U.S. government and have amassed caches of weapons and ammunition: give it up. The U.S. military has you outnumbered, out-gunned and

out-trained. This is why we have a good Constitution and the rule of law in this country.

These five long-gun characteristics must be banned, instead of some weak definition of an assault rifle. An important thing to point out is that many rifles that are not technically "assault weapons" are still semi-automatic and can accommodate removable and sometimes high-capacity magazines. Folding stocks and fully plastic construction can allow weapons to be brought into buildings and venues undetected.

My point is that simply focusing on banning or regulation of "assault weapons" and "high-capacity magazines" is insufficient and leaves too many loopholes open. Anyone with a will to do carnage will still find a suitable tool for that unless these loopholes are closed. Gun manufacturers will still make semi-automatic rifles with removable magazines that can do the same thing as an AR-15, they just won't look like an AR-15.

In order to significantly reduce the incidents of mass-killings in the U.S., we need intelligent, common-sense gun reform. I propose that the following attributes in long-guns be outlawed:

- All semi-automatic rifles, except for .22 caliber.
- Removable magazines on ANY rifle, except for .22 caliber.
- Folding or removable stock on ANY rifle.
- Fully plastic or mostly plastic construction of any rifle or handgun.

I believe the federal government has a duty to outlaw long guns with these attributes and buy back all weapons with these attributes from legal owners. This should be done anonymously, so no gun owner is recorded. No driver's license should be shown etc., just exchange the gun for money. I believe this would actually make a difference in our children's and our own safety, and it would not threaten our Second Amendment rights.

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