

# OPINION



## 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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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 I just finished reading the commentary "Goodnight Molly" by Tom Donahue (*The Nugget*, April 3, page 8), I knew I had to write this little note. It touched me so, because I knew Molly slightly as Tom and Molly are my neighbors. You never saw one without the other (except for a few times Molly decided to come over and visit me, or the time Tom was relaxing on his lawn chair by the creek, and I saw Molly decide she would go and check things out, I hollered to Tom, "Molly's taking a hike." Tom had fallen asleep. She didn't get very far).

Having been a vet tech in California, I could see Molly having more and more trouble going on their morning walks, then one day Tom was walking alone. He came by and said yes, Molly had left him.

I had tears reading Tom's tribute to Molly,

having had a wonderful Sheltie dog named Boy that took care of 200 head of sheep on our ranch in California and losing him to a drunk driver, I can fully understand how Tom feels on losing not only a pet but a friend. I'll miss seeing Molly and Tom going for their walk every morning.

God bless you, pretty Molly, for all the joy you brought to Tom; and to you, Tom, for all the love and care you gave your girl. I'll miss seeing you together.

Sylvia Cara

♦ ♦ ♦

To the Editor:

This letter is in response to the April 3 edition of *The Nugget* article titled, "Cold Weather Shelter organizers address concerns."

See **LETTERS** on page 20

### Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Cloudy 49/38	AM Showers 49/35	Partly Cloudy 53/33	Cloudy 55/36	Cloudy 46/33	AM Snow Showers 47/35

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## TURNing toward localism

By Jim Cornelius  
Editor in Chief

I have become mildly obsessed with the AMC show "TURN: Washington's Spies." I got sucked into this Revolutionary War espionage drama on Netflix and have now made it nearly through its four seasons, sneaking in an episode almost every day in the early evenings.

The show is historically challenged in many respects, but — taken on its own terms and merits — it is compelling. It represents 18th-century America quite well in several ways.

"TURN" visually captures just how rural Colonial America was. Long Island wasn't a suburb; it was the boondocks. And, while New York and New England c. 1776 were no longer a wilderness, the landscape was, in many places, still heavily wooded and semi-wild. Distances were great; roads were mostly poor and communications slow.

And the human population was small and localized. This point is critical to understanding the evolution of the republican principles that imbued the founding of the United States. (Hat-tip to historian and author Dr. Brion McClanahan for articulating this nicely in a podcast on TURN — link in the online version of this story at [www.nuggetnews.com](http://www.nuggetnews.com)).

The largest city in the American Colonies in 1776 was Philadelphia, with 40,000 residents. Bustling New York City was home to 25,000 souls; Boston, the hotbed of the rebellion, boasted a population of 15,000 people.

As of 2017, the population of Bend, Oregon was 94,520. Sisters, Oregon, had a 2017 population of 2,701 — but counting its outlying residential areas, it has a population roughly the size of Colonial Boston or maybe Newport, Rhode Island (11,000).

The aphorism that "all politics is local" was genuinely true in Colonial and Revolutionary America. The republican form of government designed by the founders operates optimally when it is operating at a manageable scale. The structure has actually been remarkably

adaptable to massive growth and change, but it was never designed to be a centralized bureaucracy responsible for managing 320 million people's lives on a continental and transcontinental scale. It was, in short, supposed to remain a Republic, not an Empire.

Politics was never meant to be a full-time obligation or occupation — it was supposed to be a matter of public service to deal with the public business, with long and frequent retreats back into the private sector.

We should not wax romantic about localism — local politics can be mean and petty (as anyone who has been involved in a neighborhood beef or local land-use tussle can attest).

But, allowing for the necessary evil, political action should rightly be as "local" as it can be made. This is the principle of subsidiarity: Matters ought to be handled by the smallest, lowest or least centralized competent authority. Political decisions should be taken at a local level if possible, rather than by a central authority.

This means that, instead of seeking political saviors to sit in an imperial Oval Office, we should be worrying a lot more about who is running for school board or city council or planning commission or county commission. And we should be taking advantage of the politics of scale to wield our individual influence at that level, where our voices might actually be heard and heeded.

The local group Indivisible Sisters is hosting a gathering on Thursday, April 11, from 6 to 8 p.m. focusing on "Local Government in Our Daily Lives." Those attending can explore the role of Sisters City Council with City Councilor Andrea Blum and City Manager Cory Misley.

Learn how to run for election (there will be three openings next year).

The group will gather at the Sisters Public Library conference room, with a half-hour social kicking off at 6 p.m. For more information call 541-760-5320.

This might be a nice opportunity to make a TURN toward localism. The founders would approve.

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