

# O P I N I O N



## 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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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:

I just wanted to write in regards to the wilderness permit system the Forest Service wants to use for trails in 2020. This is absolutely not acceptable that our local forests are being turned into a bureaucratic moneymaking scheme. Trails should always be free, and if permits are necessary to limit the amount of visitors, those should be free as well.

We are seeing a very blatant lie taking place right before our eyes. The lie is: that these permits are meant to protect the forest and to help maintain the health of the trails and general area. If that was truly the intention of this permit system, there would be no fee. But it is very obvious to me that the intention is actually money-related rather than one of higher merit like what is being claimed.

This is very saddening and angering to me because I deeply care about this land and this

forest with all of my heart. It also disturbs me to see the Forest Service deciding to merely limit the amount of visitors to a trail rather than doing their actual job, which would include servicing the trails and maintaining them. Will these trails even need to be serviced at all when hardly anyone is using them?

And what about all of the residents who live here? How is that fair for us and how is limited access to a forest helping us all to be more environmentally conscious? Humanity, more than ever, needs a greater connection to nature right now, not further isolation. It's one of the biggest things that can help us to restore balance within ourselves and ultimately the entire planet.

Andrew Roe

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### Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Sunny 63/31	Partly Cloudy 65/35	Sunny 72/39	Sunny 76/42	Mostly Sunny 76/43	Mostly Sunny 71/40

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## Sisters Country needs action

By T. Lee Brown  
Columnist

Spring springs fast in Sisters Country. One day we're dodging dirty berms leftover from snowplows.

Next day, sand lilies stretch out their tender petals. Manzanitas roll out tiny pink blooms.

In my mailbox arrives another sign of spring: the voters pamphlet. I leaf through the local positions up for election.

It's mostly guys I don't know, running for positions I'm clueless about, in parts of the county I rarely visit.

Some provide only a few noncommittal words about themselves. I don't get a sense of their passion or values. I sure don't know whether they can listen to everyday people and take action on our behalf.

Many didn't send in a photo. I don't even know whether their eyes light up when they smile.

Then I see a smiling face and perk right up. It's Mande! Mande Seeley, familiar to most of us who frequent Sisters Park and Recreation District. She's running for Sisters School Board.

At SPRD, Mande makes people feel welcome in a solid, honest way. Her grin is a real one — infectious and fun.

Mande knows how to listen. She really hears what customers and other community members say.

If an issue comes up that she's not informed about, Mande is on it fast. She's always reading, always researching.

Then comes the important part: Mande takes action.

Ever notice the trash piling up in our beautiful town and surrounding woods? I often pick it up, grumbling all the way.

"Someone should hold a big cleanup event!" I've declared to the ponderosas more than once.

Well, someone finally did. That someone is Mande Seeley.

Community Cleanup Day now goes on twice annually through SPRD. Over 4,000 pounds of trash got picked up by citizens in the last year, thanks to Mande's organizing work.

Ever think it was mighty strange of SPRD to sell unhealthy snacks and soda pop in their vending machines? I sure did.

Most of SPRD's programming gets people moving, improving the community's health. Yet here they were, selling addictive junk food right next to a high school. Didn't seem right to me.

Guess it didn't seem right to Mande Seeley, either.

"As an advocate for healthy lifestyles, she has always been concerned about the District maintaining soda and snack machines that were frequented by students," SPRD's Interim Director Courtney Snead told me.

Those vending machines are gone now.

"Mande is a staunch advocate of healthy living," Snead said, "and SPRD patrons and staff are benefiting from her influence."

For our kids and our whole community, Sisters Country needs action.

Not just people with long resumes chatting about their past accomplishments. Not just a committee to commission a survey to inform the visioning of a strategic document.

That work is useful. Mande sat on the Vision Action Team for Sisters Horizons; I reckon she sees the value.

But we also need plain ol' action.

We'll get it from Mande Seeley. As a Sisters School District Director, she'll help kids of all income levels and backgrounds. She is a hands-on, active, working mom who understands the challenges faced by today's families.

"With a focus on nature, wellness, and more student-led and interactive learning opportunities, I believe we can do better for every kid in our district," Mande says in her statement.

I hope you'll stop to enjoy the sand lilies this spring. I hope you'll take a few minutes to read the voters pamphlet.

And I hope you'll join me in voting for Mande Seeley.

Note: These statements reflect my own opinion. Mande Seeley has no idea I'm writing this.

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